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CONSTITUTION OF THE 3rd OF MAY, 1791



King Stanislaus Augustus entering the Cathedral of St. John in Warsaw on May 3rd, 1791, to take the oath to abide by the Constitution (From the painting by Jan Matejko).

POLAND SPEAKS . . .

General Sikorski's Broadcast to the Conquered Nations



FOR the second time in the course of this war I am in the United States, coming from Great Britain, that outpost of European Freedom.

After conversations with President Roosevelt and members of his Cabinet, I am addressing myself to the Nations, yesterday free and freedom-loving, now conquered.

I greet you in the name of Poland fighting, true to her great tradition "For Your Freedom and for Ours." Poland fights on every battlefield and in the diplomatic arena as well, ever alert to defend the equal rights of all Nations.

The greatest and most powerful of Nations — the United States — is fighting on our side and will continue to fight till the conquered nations are delivered from slavery.

Two decisive factors make our Victory sure: the spiritual forces of those who defend the Right, and the armed forces of the United Nations.

Our armed forces are steadily growing, and have greatly increased since the United States entered the war. The enemy knows it well and looks upon the future with fear.

Our spiritual forces, our honesty, our faith in the ideals for which we fight: the triumph of Right over Might, of Justice over Evil, of Civilization over barbarism, are a most precious element of Victory.

We must lose nothing of that strength of ours! It found eloquent expression in the Atlantic Charter signed by President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill. That Charter must be upheld unswervingly and at all costs.

The conquest of Europe and of the World was most carefully planned by the Germans who have availed themselves of every opportunity that could serve their purpose. And so it is that we are in temporary difficulties. But these will disappear as soon as the immense material resources of the United States are mobilized. This the Americans have already started to do with their inherent vigor. Once

the resources of America are thrown into the scale, the war will turn in favor of the Allies.

In my talks here the Germans were always referred to as Enemy No. 1. Their complete defeat is the indispensable condition of the triumph of the ideals for which we fight.

When in 1914, the Germans violated the neutrality of Belgium, Chancellor von Bethmann Hollweg said cynically in the Reichstag: "Necessity knows no law." Twenty-five years later, Kaiser Wilhelm's successor, Adolf Hitler, ordered his powerful army to attack and destroy Poland, and Poland opposed armed resistance to his lust of conquest. If humanity is to regain its peace and happiness, we must forever put an end to such base aggressions.

Today an attempt is being made to consolidate the "Lebensraum" by German brute force. Against such policies of violence — already applied by Frederick II, Bismarck, Wilhelm II and now by Hitler in all his fury — the America of Washington, Lincoln and Franklin Roosevelt has risen in its might, together with the Great Britain of Churchill, Russia, China, Poland, the Netherlands, Norway, Greece, Holland, Belgium and Czechoslovakia to oppose the principles of Right to the principle of Might. The war will last some time, but with your cooperation Right will triumph.

To all the conquered nations fighting together against the Axis, I wish to pay a sincere tribute. They represent an immense reserve army in the rear of the foe. I appeal to them not only to endure, but also to prepare to fight. The hour for that will strike when the victorious Allied armies invade the continent of Europe.

"We shall not fight isolated wars, each nation going its own way. Twenty-six nations are united, not in spirit and determination alone, but in the broad conduct of war in all its phases . . . Gone forever are the days when the aggressors could attack and destroy their victims one by one without unity of resistance."

— PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT

CONSTITUTION OF THE 3rd OF MAY, 1791

IN THE year 1942 the entire Polish nation commemorates the 151st anniversary of the great Polish Constitution. On May 3rd, 1791, the Four Year Sejm (1788-1792) accepted the new principles upon which the Polish State was to be based.

In the Constitution of May 3rd the Polish Nation sees not merely the text of constitutional provisions then given force of law. The nation sees in it the embodiment of great conceptions of fundamental importance. In times of good fortune the Constitution is a source of noble pride; in times of difficulty and sorrow it is a consolation and a hope, and above all a source of strength. Always it is a signpost pointing to the future.

For as Adam Mickiewicz, Poland's greatest national poet, has written:

"This law did not emerge from the mind of an isolated sage, from the lips of a few administrators, but was drawn from the heart of the great mass of the people; it is not merely written in black on white, but it still lives in the memory, in the aspirations of passing generations, and so it is a living law, rooted in the past, and developing in the future. . . . In the May Constitution . . . the national element, the child of past traditions, is nurtured on the new present-day needs of the Nation. Hence it has been well and justly said that the May Constitution is the political testament of the Poland that was."

The Constitution of May 3rd accepted the principle of the sovereignty of the nation:

"All power in civil society is derived from the will of the people."

Further, it adopted the principle of the division of authority. According to the Constitution three separate and equal authorities, legislative, executive, and judicial, were to exist in Poland.

The Constitution accepted the principle of religious toleration, which had been known in Poland since 1573. In the organization of the Polish Sejm the May Constitution assigned a basic role to the Chamber of Deputies.

The Constitution laid down that the elected deputies were "the representatives of the entire nation, being the repository of general confidence."

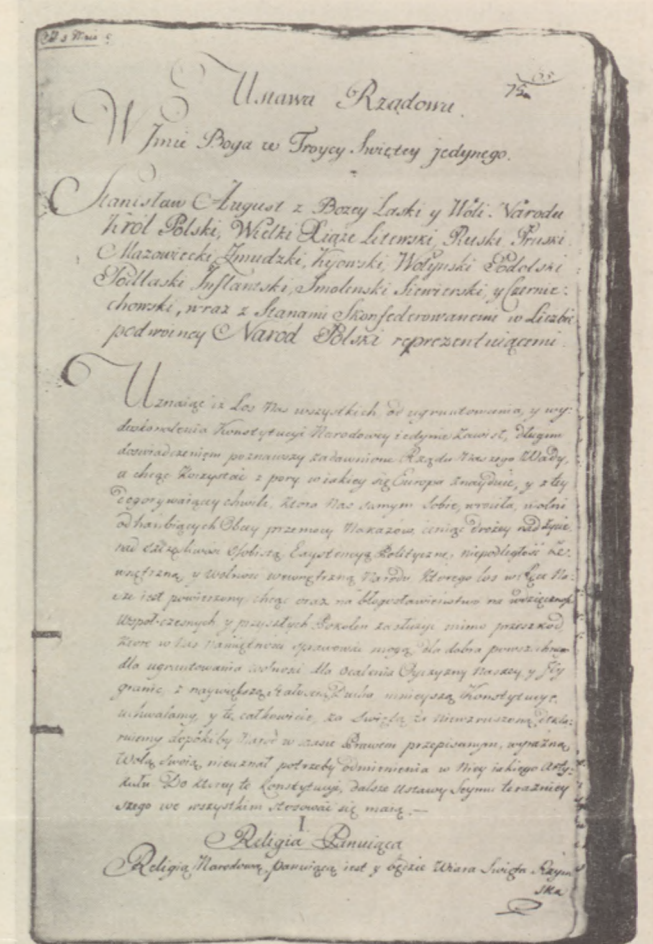
The May Constitution first emphasized the general principle of the necessity for a strong executive authority:

"No government can become perfect without a vigorous executive authority. The happiness of nations depends on just laws and the effect of laws depends on their execution."

As a further consequence the Constitution introduced the principle of parliamentary responsibility on the part of the ministers.

In laying the foundations for a new, better State system the May 3rd Constitution did not overlook the question of military power. It laid down that the entire nation, i.e., all citizens were obliged to defend their Motherland.

The Constitution did not ignore the question of mutual relations between the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The obligatory



" . . . Valuing more than life and personal happiness, the political existence, external independence and internal freedom of the Nation, we have resolved upon the present Constitution. . . ."

(From the opening paragraph of the Constitution of the 3rd of May, 1791)

force of the constitutional law was extended to both parts of the State which had been united by a factual union since 1569. The Constitution declared:

" . . . We decide that, as we have a single, universal and inseparable governmental law, serving all our State, the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, so we wish to have our common army and treasury united in a single indissoluble national treasury governed by one government. . . ."

Relations between the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania were thus drawn closer, by mutual desire. A common supreme administrative authority was set up, based on the principle of equality.

The reforms affecting the burgher class consisted of granting this class a number of rights which they had not previously enjoyed, and which had been the

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CONSTITUTION OF THE 3RD OF MAY, 1791

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privilege exclusively of the nobility and gentry.

The reforms of May 3rd, 1791, had grown out of Poland's own national tradition, had arisen out of Polish political thought. So it was a native creation, witnessing to the high level of the political and legislative culture of the Polish nation.

In certain States the Constitution was warmly welcomed by representatives of public opinion. British opinion reacted extremely favorably, and with profound sincerity. Edmund Burke, England's famous publicist and orator, expressed his opinion in "An Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs." He said, *inter alia*:

"In contemplating that change, humanity was everything to rejoice, and to glory in; nothing to be ashamed of, nothing to suffer. So far as it has gone, it probably is the most pure and defecated public good which ever has been conferred on mankind."

As soon as the news spread of the changes in Poland Anacharsis Cloots in Paris intended to send her an expression of the profound admiration of the world and its deepest gratitude. He greeted that "happy day in which the friends of humanity, with a gaze full of relief, would embrace the fruitful plains of Sarmatia, Gaule and America. . . ."

At a session of the Paris Municipal Council on May 24th, 1791, Garron de Coulon, made a long speech on the Polish Constitution. *Inter alia* he proposed that the municipality of the capital of France should send greetings to the municipality of Warsaw on the happily accomplished reform, and to celebrate June 3rd as a civic holiday to commemorate the event.

The Pope expressed his sincere and profound good wishes for the Constitution. The Swedes also gave it a friendly welcome, comparing it with their own reforms carried out twenty years earlier. In Holland a commemorative medal was struck in honor of the new Constitution.

On the other hand, Catherine II adopted a decidedly negative, indeed hostile attitude to the Polish Constitution. "The Poles have outdone all the insanities of the Paris National Assembly," the Czarina declared.

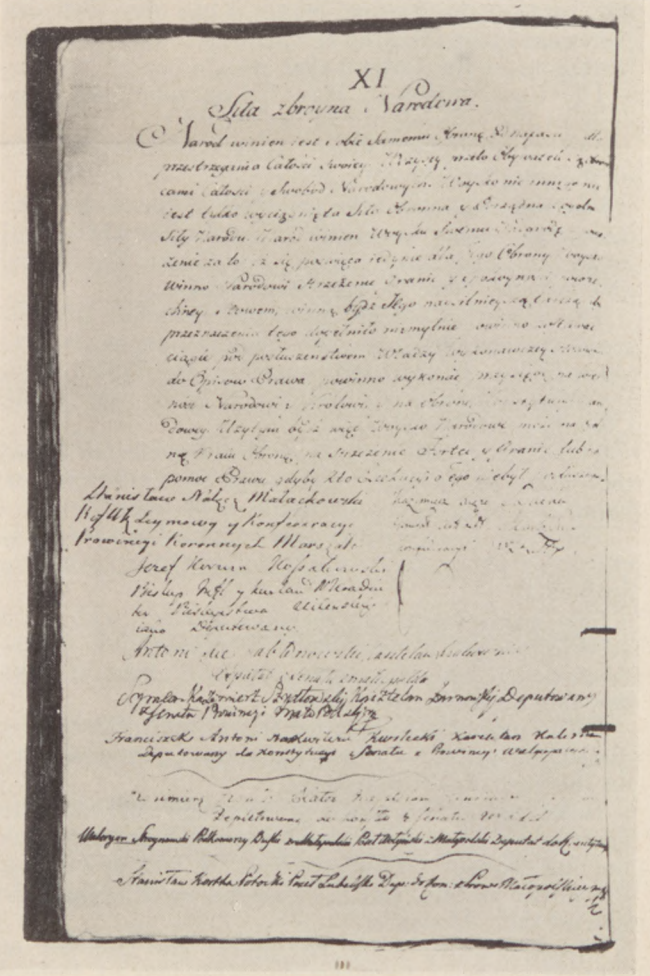
And what was Berlin's reaction? That could not be better expressed than in the scathing words of a writer in the "Edinburgh Review" for January, 1814. He wrote:

"By a treaty solemnly concluded with Poland in 1790, the King of Prussia had bound himself to make common cause with Poland against the aggressor. When Russia marched her armies thither in 1792 Frederick William declined to interfere upon the pretence that 'the Constitution of the 3rd of May altered the matter'. The royal memory is short indeed. Only two years before, on receiving the account of the Constitution being proclaimed, he had written with his own hand the warmest congratulations to the authors of it, professing that his ardent desire was 'to assist in consolidating the new Constitution and promoting the happiness of the Republic'."

Both Poland's neighbors, on East and West, took up a hostile attitude to the Polish reforms. On the other hand the opinion of prominent representatives of democratic States, such as the new France, and England, was favorable to the changes introduced in the State system, and shared in the Polish nation's gladness.

The freedom of the individual and the freedom of the nation, these two fundamental features of the Polish Commonwealth's State system, constituted not only the main principles of Polish policy during the period of enslavement, but gave the Polish cause a universal character. Wherever the struggle for freedom was fought there Poles were to be found. Fighting for their own freedom, they realized that they were fighting for the ideal of universal freedom.

Today also the Polish nation commemorates the anniversary of the May Constitution above all other dates in its history. For the nation regards the democratic and progressive quality of that Constitution as an unchallengeable and undeniable justification of its claim to independent participation in the life of civilized nations and as a symbol of its endurance and resurrection.



THE SIGNATURES TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE 3rd OF MAY

WIT AND WISDOM OF THE POLES

By HALINA CHYBOWSKA

"PROVERBS are the wisdom of nations" goes an old Polish saying. Proverbs are the outcome of each nation's experience, a reflection of its defects and virtues, but as human nature is essentially the same everywhere, the wisdom distilled into a national proverb may well be of universal application and interest.

Poland, in the course of her centuries-old evolution, has evolved thousands of proverbs which form an indispensable and revealing part of her cultural equipment. The proverbs included in the paragraphs that follow have been chosen with a view to highlighting certain fundamental Polish attitudes — attitudes that have undergone very little change since they first found conscious expression in concise, pithy form. It should be noted that many Polish proverbs are quotable little rhymes with a pleasing swing that unfortunately is lost in literal translation.

Poland as a country has always set great store by liberty and tolerance. This tradition of personal, political and religious freedom is attested by Polish proverbs: " 'Tis no business of the king's to forbid free speech", "Thoughts do not go to the bailiff", "Every man is lord on his own pile of rubbish." Even the lowly servant is conceded to be free to choose his master: "There are two fools in the world, the master who keeps a dissatisfied servant and the servant who serves a dissatisfied master." When the Inquisition bathed Europe in blood, Poland said: "To church when you please, but to the city-hall you must." One must not, however, abuse one's freedom, for "Who does as he likes, suffers what he does not like."

Fundamental in Polish mentality is the conviction that "Everyone is the blacksmith of his fate." The Pole, of course, firmly believes in God, but "It's a long way to the Lord." Moreover, "God does not give equally, to one man he gives a goose, to another an egg." Therefore, the Pole's advice to himself is "Call upon God, but don't spare your own effort." Should we seek the protection of the mighty, the Pole warns us "Never lean on a lord or a dry balustrade." It is only the hard way of self-reliance that



"WHEN THE DEVIL IS AT A LOSS, HE SENDS A WOMAN" Woodcut by MARIA DUNIN

we may hope to achieve success: "By dint of thrift and work people become rich."

The Polish people share the renowned Slavic hospitality. "A guest brings the Lord into the house." It matters little whether the home is humble or rich: "What the hut has it offers gladly." And a proverb insists: "Even bread and salt are good when offered with good will." However, just to insure that you will always be a welcome visitor, another proverb suggests: "Where you are welcome, visit rarely; where you are not welcome, visit not at all."

It is not surprising that the Pole's home is open to others. It is what he values most: "It's fine everywhere, but best at home," or, "Even the smoke is sweet in one's own little hut." That the Polish soldier is, when the need arises, a most fearless and stubborn fighter, has been demonstrated time and again. He does

not, however, in contrast to the German, look upon war as the height of his ambition. On the contrary, "Sitting at home, it's pleasant to listen to tales of war" and "Better cabbage at home, than veal at the war."

Like the Chinese, the Pole bows to the inevitable. He does not worry about death. He accepts the idea of the impermanence of man philosophically, stating in his matter-of-fact way: "There is but one way of coming into the world, and a thousand of leaving it." The Polish equivalent of the Chinese "The Great Wall stands; the builder is gone" is "The forest was, when we were not; the forest will be when we are gone." The futility of man's race with time is perhaps best epitomized in the following: "Time flees, death pursues, eternity waits." Nevertheless, each generation leaves its mark, for "People have built for us and we for people."

Death is not alone in being unavoidable. There is no escaping misery: "Go slowly, trouble will overtake you; go quickly, and you will overtake trouble."

Polish proverbial literature further maintains that "Death and one's wife are predestined from God." Women in general occupy an important niche in

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POLISH PEASANT COSTUMES



A "GORAL" OR HIGHLANDER FROM THE TATRA MOUNTAINS
A sleeved cape profusely ornamented, white trousers of coarse wool, a little round hat with a falcon feather, a wide belt — all this adorns the figure of the dancing youth.

IN THE area stretching from the great curve of the Carpathian Mountains to the shores of the Baltic, so many types of beautiful Polish peasant costumes appear that if one were to count them all their variations would run into hundreds. Each type has its own range of color, forms and style; while all taken together compose a wealth vainly to be sought in other lands.

These peasant costumes harmonize with various forms of the Polish landscape — dark forests, golden sands, green rustling woods, silvery lakes, spacious dales and rolling hills, boundless marches and peat-bogs. They do more. As a token of artistic intuition they express the national character — its love of vivid color, its artistry in ornamentation, its logic in thought and composition, and, most significant trait of country folk — its conservatism. The dress of the Polish peasant has retained many features that date back to remote ages.

The figure of the "goral" or highlander gives the finishing touch to a unique landscape. His dress bears the stamp of romance. The feather of a falcon or of an eagle adorns his round black hat, the low crown of which is surrounded by a string of shells from the Black Sea. On his chest a large brass brooch hangs with a bunch of trinkets; it has an air of such antiquity that investigators have tried to trace it to the fibulae worn by the Goths at the time of the barbaric invasions that overwhelmed Rome. As a walking stick, the small long-handled iron hatchet

survives; in olden days it was the battle-axe that broke the armors of knights. In perfect harmony with the weapon, is an armor-like leather belt of great width studded with brass spikes, and woven from the wool of his own sheep, the close-fitting trousers of white cloth that set off the shape and muscularity of his legs. Like the snow of the mountain slopes for the crocus in springtime, the white cloth is a perfect background for the vivid colors of the ornament embroidered on the trouser front and called "parzenica". This ornament is characteristic of the "gorals" and its design varies according to the ethnic group to which the wearer happens to belong. To complete the costume we must add the "serdak" or richly embroidered sleeveless fur vest, and a short loose cape of grey cloth resting on the shoulders, likewise lavishly embroidered, and fastened in front by a broad red ribbon. The cut of both these garments is very ancient. Its prototype was found in a tomb of the bronze age in Jutland, Denmark.

Nowhere, however, do the features just mentioned manifest themselves more strongly than in the ancient "gorals" war dance with the hatchets, when the majesty of the mountains and the glare of the fire among the dark spruce trees add romantic charm to the spectacle. The clash and gleam of the battle-axes, the pistol shots, the hissing and whistling, the sudden leaps and bounds performed with chamois-like grace, all combine to form a whole dominated by an ancient rhythm of chivalry: "Hey! I make for the forest, my plume waves and shines, I make for the forest, the earth rings as I stride." Only men perform this dance.

Of all Polish costumes, however, the Cracovian is the most popular. Is it because the cloak contains the national colors — white and red? Is it because the cloak was worn by Kosciuszko, our great hero, the Chief of the First Rising? One thing is certain: its admirable cut and the decorative arrangement of colors stirs the wearer's sprightliness and fantasy. The cap alone puzzles one by its color and old-time aspect. The tuft of peacock feathers and colored ribbons reminds one of an Indian's head-dress improved by a stage costumer. The square-crowned cap called in Polish "rogatywka", known to Siberian tribes and forming part of Chinese ritual attire, was worn of old by the highest classes of Polish society. Today it is the head-gear of the country folk.

The "sukmana" or cloak of white cloth with a wide red hem and ornate collar covering the shoulders is of very ancient origin. Similar collars appear on the bas-reliefs of Persia, similar folded-back sleeves in Mongolia. Such were the origins of the Polish nobleman's dress.

But even this guise does not satisfy the Cracovian. So he dons a cap of knitted wool and a blue jerkin, girds himself with a broad leather belt, thickly studded with brass spikes, or else with a narrow belt with loosely hanging brass rings. In olden days these had a magic significance. They drove away evil spirits. Today they are an ornament.

Elaboration is even greater in the women's costume. The white embroidery of her bonnet and "koszula" or chemise, which does duty also as a blouse, contrasts with the strings of red coral beads and the colored ribbons. The woolen skirt of "tibat", a very fine and costly cloth of virgin wool is gay with color and the golden bodice or sleeveless jerkin shines like the armor of a knight.

What a memorable sight is that of a Cracovian wedding procession, dashing past blossoming orchards and blue-washed cottages! With singing and music it rolls up to the Rynek or Central Square in

Cracow and comes to a standstill before that most beautiful of Polish churches — St. Mary's. The bride in her showy crown of gewgaws, flowers and ribbons resembles an exotic princess. Peacock feathers wave in the breeze, ribbons flutter, brass rings jingle on broad belts, the rumble of the wagons and the clatter of the horses' hooves mingle with the singing of the bridesmaids and the music of the village band. . . . None can resist the charm of this native pageantry displayed against the background of Cracow's majestic architecture.

From there let us pass to the ancient principality of the Primate of Poland, Lowicz. Notwithstanding the proximity of Warsaw and the comparatively high standard of local agriculture, the costumes here have maintained all their exuberance and color, all their specific character.

One cannot but admire the comely Lowicz girls, whose dress, despite its gaudiness, is marked by a certain moderation combined with simplicity. There is a fantastic play of colors in the stiff pleated skirt — it recalls the third phase of the crinoline — in the wide aprons lavishly trimmed with braid, the brocaded bodice, the flowery embroidery of the

"koszula" or chemise-blouse, the corals, the beads, the braid and, if the girl happens to be a bride, a majestic wedding crown of stiffened muslin, tinsel and flowers. The dress bespeaks infinite patience, intuitive art and pride of freedom. It is a labor of love. When a Lowicz girl walks by in her pleated skirt one has to make room for her, she takes up so much space.

— My good woman, you are taking up the whole roadway!

— Well, can't I afford to?

She can. Her dress is evidence not only of her aesthetic taste but also of her easy circumstances.

To appreciate the full beauty of the Lowicz folk one should see the splendid procession on Corpus Christi day at Lowicz. Imagine a bright sunny day, a countless mass of humanity, shimmering beribboned banners fluttering overhead. In between the men's white and black cloaks all the colors of the rainbow appear in turn — the children recall the infantas pictured by Velasquez, the women look like the butterflies and bright flowers of our Polish fields and meadows.

— Dr. T. S.

Paintings by Zofia Stryjenska



LOWICZ WOMAN'S COSTUME



RICH ATTIRE OF THE CRACOW BRIDEGROOM, in typical "kerezze" or cape-like collar with gold embroidery and peacock feathers on his cap.

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Polish proverbs. Their good points are praised, their failings criticized — but in any case, they are to be reckoned with. "A good wife is her husband's crown." "Strong wine, a charming woman will make a fool out of the wisest." A relic from the distant past, but nonetheless a tribute to woman's superior insight is, "When the devil is at a loss, he sends a woman."

From womanhood to motherhood is a natural transition. The Poles, like all Slavs, are a fertile people — a factor of the greatest importance in their ability to survive centuries of aggressive attacks. Thus, "One can never have too many glasses or too many children." But it is not enough to bring children into the world. They must be trained to become good citizens, mature, well-balanced human beings. In short, they must master the art of living. Hence, the importance of building character, evidenced in so many Polish proverbs. "Even a mother who punishes is dear", "She is not the mother who begets, but who brings up", "What Johnny did not learn, John does not know", all stress the importance of early education. "A firm upbringing makes children strong and healthy" is still a sound precept.

Respect for intelligence and learning is an outstanding Polish trait. In his proverbs, therefore, the Pole expresses his impatience with stupidity, especially that stupidity which believes itself all-wise: "A beard does not make a sage", "There is no cure for stupidity", "The wise man does not speak until the stupid fellow has stopped", "Sometimes the egg wants to be wiser than the chicken."

However, wisdom alone does not make the perfect human being. "Intelligence and virtue make a good combination" an old proverb sums up. If one should require further proof of the importance of virtue, he need but consider the following: "Where harmony is, God resides", "He who envies his fellowmen, poisons his own life", "He counsels well who does not create dissension."

Introspective by nature and at the same time genuinely fond of people, the Pole has devoted much thought to the psychology underlying people's motives in their dealings with others. He knows, therefore, that "The man is not yet born who could satisfy everyone." He knows, too, that people are complex and that "You will eat a barrel of salt before you really know a person." Meditating upon behavior as an index to character, he came to the conclusion that "He who wrongs a friend in small things, will wrong him in great." His long experience has also

taught him that "When someone is too insistent in offering his services, either he has struck you or is preparing to strike."

Long before psychology came into its own as a science, he had formulated psychological statements such as "We prefer to talk about that which hurts us", "What the sober man has on his mind, the drunken one has on his tongue", "A crowd is a huge person", "He who has a gay youth, has a sad old age", "Fear drives people together."

As a result of her unfortunate geographical location, laying her bare to the attack of numerically superior forces, Poland has known many and bloody wars, which have left their imprint on her proverbs: "Where there are many commanders, the battle is lost", "It is well to fight in large numbers, but best to hold council in few." Particularly picturesque is the saying, "Better an army of stags under a lion's command, than an army of lions under a stag." A neat application of the golden mean is: "At war, do not push yourself forward and do not remain in the rear."

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NO SWEAT, NO BREAD
Woodcut by MARIA DUNIN

By ZYGMUNT NOWAKOWSKI*

THE Germans say, "I kill, therefore I am." The Italians begin from the principle, "I cry, therefore I am." The junior partners of the Axis might well say, "I have surrendered, therefore I vegetate." The Pole has the right to say, "I fight, therefore I am." Nevertheless, war is ephemeral, while thought is eternal. Let us revise Descartes' epigram and say, "I think, therefore I am . . . free."

Thought is the most independent of all domains. You might have imagined that nothing and no one could forbid men's thinking. But then you do not know the real Germans, as they are in Poland. I am not speaking here of the hundred thousand men they have assassinated, of the prisons and of the labor camps. From the first day of their occupation the Germans decided systematically to exterminate thought in Poland. They have put to death a hundred and three Polish scholars. In November 1941 all professors, painters, musicians, actors and journalists had to re-register: the concentrations camps of Dachau and Oświęcim will be filled again, fresh blood will flow. The Germans wish to stamp out thought.

They have not yet succeeded and they never will. This is their first great defeat. In spite of persecution and martyrdom, the Poles do not fear to give tangible expression to their thought and to spread it by means of their secret press. While Poles on this side of the barricade publish a number of newspapers in England, and every Polish brigade in Scotland or Egypt prints its news sheet, while here and in Palestine, Canada and England we have Associations of Journalists, there is in Poland something like an Association of Underground Journalists. It includes those who write, those who print, those who have the reckless courage to distribute the papers, and those who buy and read every number of the secret press. The whole population belongs to this syndicate. For the underground press is the expression of Poland's thoughts, her longing to be free.

The risk is tremendous, for actions that in other countries have only a limited penalty attached to them in Poland mean death. Those who distribute the secret papers are indeed out on patrol in enemy territory; the printers dig their graves with every letter they print. For the discovery of a clandestine printing press involves the death of dozens of people. Nevertheless the papers appear at the same time every day. The news is taken for the most part from the radio. Braving the death sentence, Poles listen to the radio in cellars, in the ruined houses of Warsaw, in any corner where they are safe from spies. For the papers must appear.

What a terrific gamble. One person writes the leader, another reports the events of the day, a third edits the war communiqués, others write party, professional and economic news. Someone prints the papers. Someone keeps guard. The printing presses

* M. Nowakowski is the Editor of *Wiadomości Polskie*, a Polish literary weekly published in London; he is also a well-known novelist, essayist and actor. He was recently elected President of the Polish Union of Journalists in Britain.



Some of the many patriotic underground newspapers published in Poland. One of them "Army and Independence" (*Wojsko i Niepodległość*) carries a photograph showing Mr. Churchill and General Sikorski inspecting the Polish Army in Scotland. The visit took place in October 1940; two months later the photograph was published "somewhere in Poland."

must be moved from one place to another. Others seize the papers damp from the press and run to distribute them.

The distributors are often the little urchins of Warsaw, Cracow, Lublin and other towns. These expeditions are sport for them, but a special kind of sport. For the Germans are capable of shooting even children. The youngest of their victims, a little boy of Poznań, was ten years old. These distributors, barefooted, ragged and hungry, know full well the risk they are running. Yet they do not make use of secret ways: they run about in broad daylight, in the middle of the town, under the very noses of the myrmidons of the law. What folly, what courage; what a neck. The hurried purchasers do not stop for change. But the little newsvenders do not keep the change as a tip. They give it to the funds of the secret press.

It is perhaps mainly due to these heroic street urchins that so many different papers appear. The whole press is indeed one in its devotion to liberty, but there are many different types of papers, just as if the Germans were not there, just as though Europe

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CONSPIRACY OF A NATION

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had not collapsed. There is a large number of satirical papers with a wit that is sometimes more than Gallic, sometimes even vulgar and brutal, but always expressive. Verses and songs, caricatures and puns, the drawings that adorn the walls of public lavatories, are faithfully reproduced there with all their insolent eloquence, but awakening admiration and respect. They are fearless.

The secret press is illustrated. The illustrations are lively and topical; the tents of the Polish army in Scotland, a military parade with the King or Churchill present, the christening of a new Polish submarine, everyday scenes from the life of the Carpathian division in Libya, the decoration of Polish pilots. These illustrations present a number of problems to be solved. Think of the number of frontiers and seas to be crossed, of the rapidity with which these photographs must be obtained. What organization is demanded.

It is a tradition among us. There is in Poland a large industrial town, Łódź, which contains nothing but factories, warehouses and spinning mills. It has no old churches or ruined castles, not a vestige of the past, for it is scarcely a hundred years old. But Łódź has a museum unlike any other; it contains only one thing, the secret printing press used by Piłsudski to print the journal *Robotnik*, in 1905, the year in which there developed a special abundance of what was called "tissue paper", the secret newspapers printed on specially thin paper and distributed by women and children, newspapers which, sewn into clothes, arrived in Poland from London and Paris, and all the parts of the globe to which Poles had emigrated.

You must have this in your blood. When Rochefort openly and fearlessly made fun of Napoleon III in France, our secret press bravely mocked at Nicholas and Alexander. Yet one word was enough to get you sent to Siberia. When papers and books were printed freely in other countries, Mickiewicz, the greatest of all the Polish poets, paraphrased Horace's ode, *Exegi monumentum*, writing, "the Jewish pedlar smuggles my verse into Lithuania." For poetry itself had to enter Poland secretly. It was the same poet who said that the Germans were destroying everything, that treasures were being pillaged, and that the flames were devouring tomes of history, but "song remained the victor".

We have had a hundred and fifty years of practice in secret printing and distribution; we have learnt this in captivity. And we learnt it easily enough because, having formerly been free, we loved freedom of thought and of speech above all.

During the seventeenth century the Russians threatened Poland with war because of books printed there. The Tsar was angry because books about Polish successes were printed in Poland. In 1650 he sent his ambassador Pushkin to demand that the books should be burnt and the authors flogged, impaled and put to death. And this under threat of war. The Polish senators gave him the following reply: "The King and we neither order nor forbid the print-

ing of any book. Let the grand Tsar print anything he likes about Poland in his country and we shall not be offended or endanger peace on that account."

What a magnificent reply! And it was strictly true. It was really possible to print in Poland anything one wanted. Comenius (Komensky), "the great educator of the peoples", printed his books in Poland after being expelled from Bohemia. When Europe was the theatre of the bloodiest of religious wars, Poland made freedom of conscience a solemn law. When parliaments were vanishing in Europe, when the Cortes disappeared, when absolute monarchy was being established in France, and when in Germany the religion of the sovereign became automatically the religion of his subjects, freedom and the love of freedom reached their zenith in Poland. King Sigismund Augustus declared solemnly from his throne, "I am not king of your consciences."

That is why our thought is still free today. The Germans cannot imprison that. In 1904, when the Germans, pursuing their policy of extermination, were colonizing Poznań, driving the Poles from their homes by means of special laws, one of which forbade Poles to build new houses, Wojciech Drzymała, a peasant, built himself a house on wheels. He openly flouted the law. He was obliged to change his place of residence every day, but he remained on Polish soil.

And the printed word? Now that the Germans have sacked and closed all Polish libraries, we console ourselves by thinking of the antiquity and fame of Polish books. If Polish printers in 1941 can print so well "underground", it is because their predecessors learnt their trade long ago and not secretly, but in the Poland of the great Jagiellons. The first Polish book appeared earlier than the first English book.

In spite of tanks and all other technical inventions, this war will not be won by machines but by the spirit. Free thought will triumph. That is why Poles who might say, "We fight, therefore we are", prefer other words with an infinitely profounder meaning, for he who thinks, is, and will be.

**REMEMBER THAT THOU SHALT GIVE
UNTO POLAND WITHOUT HESITATION,
THY WORLDLY GOODS, THY PURSUIT
OF HAPPINESS AND THY LIFE.**

From "TEN COMMANDMENTS TO
POLAND", Polish underground press

"BURZA": A MEMORY OF DUNKIRK



O. R. P. "BURZA" IN GDYNIA

THE experiences of the Polish destroyer "Burza" which together with the "Blyskawica" took part in the Dunkirk operations, give a vivid picture of the hell through which British and Polish sailors passed during the evacuation.

On May 24th, 1940, "Burza" left a naval base in England for the coast of France, near Calais. After reaching French waters, "Burza" began to fire upon motorized German troops on the road near the St. Gotte hills. During this action a large formation of enemy planes approached in three waves, each including nine bombers, Junkers 87 type. "Burza," without stopping its fire on the enemy land forces began to fire at the planes flying in close formation.

The shells of the anti-aircraft guns exploded so near the planes that the close formation was broken up and very soon the planes began to dive in sections of three.

Of the nine sections (three planes in each section), four sections attacked two British destroyers that were operating with "Burza", and the remaining five attacked "Burza".

Immediately "Burza" began to zig-zag and repeatedly changed speed.

The planes of the first section machine-gunned the ship, aiming at the middle and the stern. The next four sections dropped bombs from a height of four to six hundred meters. Each time "Burza" was rocked by the explosion of large bombs near the side, stern and bow. The bombs fell in great numbers. The first series fell about five meters away from the stern.

Bombs of the second series fell at a distance of ten to fifteen meters from the sides of the ship. A later series fell much closer to the ship's stern.

From the last series of large bombs, a certain number fell in front of the bow at a distance of two to five meters away, a certain number near the left side of the ship, and two struck the bow of the ship, causing considerable damage. The German attack lasted about fifteen minutes and was one of the heaviest that our ship experienced. Over fifty large bombs and a considerable number of small ones had been dropped in the immediate vicinity of "Burza," but they were unable to sink the ship.

The English were less fortunate, for one of the accompanying English vessels was sunk.

The enemy suffered no small loss, either. Very soon, after the beginning of the attack, one of the bombers was hit by a shell from the anti-aircraft gun of "Burza"; it burst into flames and sank in a ball of fire a short distance from the ship.

A second bomber, attacking from starboard was not able to come out of its dive, violently turned on its wing and fell into the sea. The pilot was able to jump out and with the assistance of a parachute set himself on the waves. What happened to him afterwards, is not known.

Despite the shelling of the decks of the ship by machine-guns of the German planes, there were no losses in men. Only one sailor from the entire crew was slightly wounded. The crew behaved splendidly.

(Please turn to page 12)



A POM-POM CREW ON BOARD A POLISH DESTROYER

WIT AND WISDOM OF THE POLES

(Continued from page 8)

Polish-German relations form a special category in Polish proverbs. In a German neighbors since the dawn of history, feeling periodically the effects of Teutonic greed and aggression, the Pole came to know the Germans well. What he saw he preserved for posterity in proverb form. He saw clear as day that, all German protestations of friendship notwithstanding, "So long as the world will be, never will the German be a brother to the Pole." Analyzing the German mind, he succinctly remarks: "Germans are two-faced." But he found a remedy for German cunning — more cunning: "It is by cunning that Germans are beaten." And he heard Germans scream Hitler-fashion for so many generations that he finally coined the proverb: "The young oak creaks, the German shrieks."

The question might conceivably be asked whether

any hope for the future can be gleaned from Polish proverbs. The Poles are optimists by temperament, and their optimism is mirrored in their maxims.

Mistakes, inexcusable mistakes, have been made in the past by all concerned, but according to the proverb, "To admit a mistake is a step to virtue." International cooperation is consistent with Polish psychology. The proverb, "Mountains can not come together but human beings always will" applies to all human beings of good will regardless of nationality. Our final proverb is "If the horse knew his power, none would sit on him." If the peoples of Central Europe awakened to the realization that by setting aside their differences and working together for the common good, they can forge a union of unsurpassable strength, they need never fear that aggression will again rear its ugly head against them.



FEAR NO NIGHTMARE — HAVE FAITH IN GOD
Woodcut by MARIA DUNIN

"BURZA": A MEMORY OF DUNKIRK

(Continued from page 11)

Despite the lack of lights, continuous bomb explosions, shelling of the ship by machine gun bullets, all orders were immediately carried out and the commander of "Burza" showed unusual watchfulness and presence of mind. No manoeuvre of the enemy was missed by the commander, who, at the same time, took all necessary dispositions for defense and attack.

After repulsing the air attack, it was ascertained that the ship, having suffered some damage from the explosion of two bombs on the bow, could make only three to four knots per hour.

The commander of "Burza" reported this to the

Fleet Commander, and, after seeing that the second British destroyer could take care of the surviving crew of the sunken English destroyer, the Polish vessel left French water and went to an English port for repairs.

TO OUR READERS

In order to complete files for Public Libraries, and other institutions the Polish Information Center will be greatly obliged to any of its correspondents who can furnish it with copies of early issues of *The Polish Review* and *The Polish Feature and News Service*.