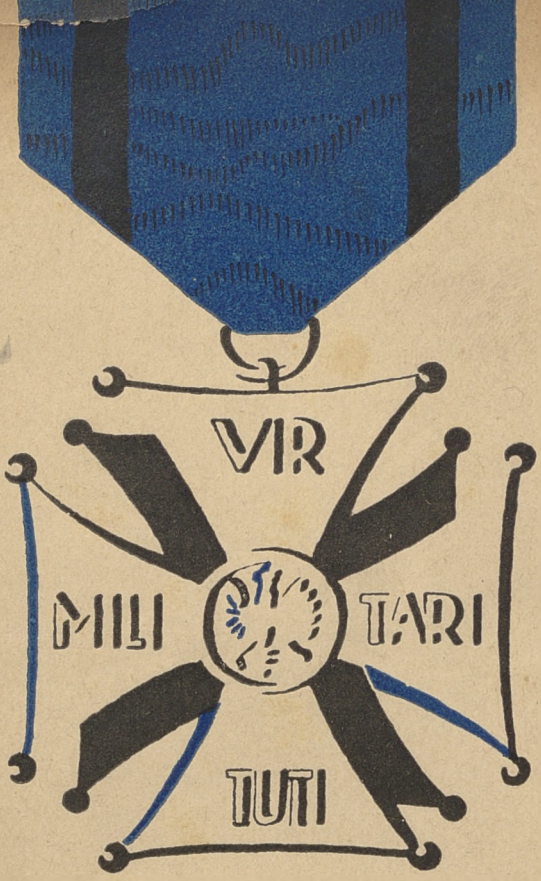


Polish Digest

august—1945

THE POLISH DIGEST

ROME * AUGUST 1945

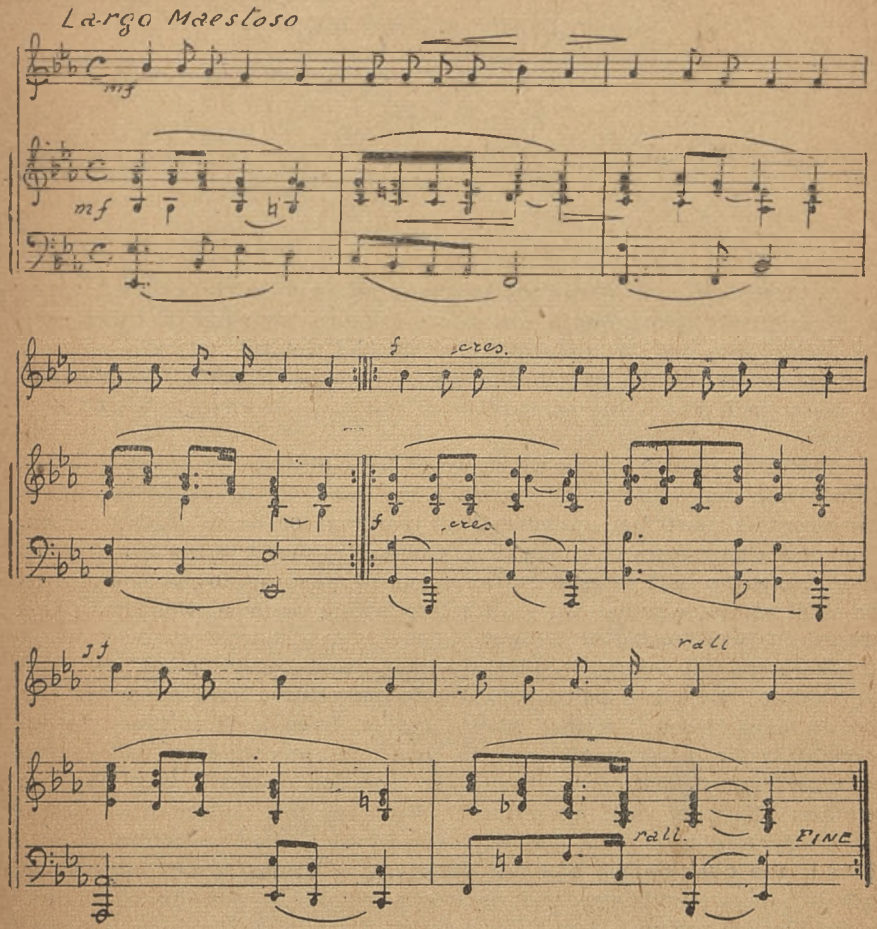
Cover by S. Lipiński. Cartoons by Z. & L. Haar.

POLISH ARMY
UBLIC RELATIONS BRANCH

Polish Military Printing Press

AN OLD POLISH CHANT

BOŻE COŚ POLSKĘ



O God whose power through so many ages
Blessed Poland greatly with honor and fame
Whose wisdom watches this war which now rages
Wilt Thou permit it that she lose her name:

Before Thy altars bowed in supplication
Humbly we beg Thee give us back our nation!

Before Thy altars bowed in supplication
Humbly we beg Thee give us back our nation!

Translation by
Raymond Ziminski

THE POLISH GULLIVER

by ZYGMUNT NOWAKOWSKI

In three days, your friend the secretary will be directed to come to your house, and read before you the articles of impeachment; and then to signify the great lenity and favour of his Majesty and Council, whereby you are only condemned to the loss of your eyes, which his Majesty does not question you will gratefully and humbly submit to — Gulliver's last days in Lilliput.

This is the fourth spring which we Polish Gullivers are seeing in Great Britain and our fifth out of Poland. Even those among us whose nerves are strongest must feel an intensified yearning for home at this season. Four and a half years is a long time. Gulliver returned to his own country after five and a half years in Brobdingnag, whereas we do not know when we shall return, whether we shall return at all, or even whether we are present in Brobdingnag or Lilliput.

Sinse we left Poland in 1939, we have never ceased to ask ourselves all kinds of questions, all concerned with our return. Until fairly recently the question "when?" seemed almost cogent. Even a short time ago we thought in the category of time, but then our common sense bade us remember that of place, and slowly the question "when?" gave place to another: "To what shall we return?" But even this underwent a violent metamorphosis in its turn, and we began to ask: "Shall we return at all?" This is the question we still ask ourselves; it drums in our ears as we talk it haunts our dreams, and rises uncontrolably to our lips as we look at the English spring.

But even this question comes more ond more shyly, more and more rarely, and is quicker to seek a new metamorphosis, formulated in the words: "And what if we do not return?" What if we never return at all? It may be said without the exaggeration that many Poles have already drawn this negative conclusion. They have not yet accepted it, but it is becoming more and more real, and this spring, which is not the Spring of Nations has brought it into sharper relief.

War is not in general favourable to the development of such feelings as subtlety, kindliness or humanity. And in this connection, we have begun to see an ever thicker line drawn across the map of Poland. This line whether the Curzon Line or the Ribbentrop- Molotov Line, may be seen in almost every British paper. What is more, when reading accounts of the Russian advance, we meet such expression as "Tarnopol, in former Poland"or "pre-war Poland."

Let us consider the case of a Polish airman, born in this very Tarnopol reading this just before going out on operations. What goes on in his mind as he reads? What does a Polish sailor think of it, or a Polish soldier?

Two powerful propaganda-machines are now engaged in a battle for the soul of this soldier both employing the Polish language. The German machine uses a radiotransmitter with the attractive name of "Wanda." The second machine, which is Russian, makes use of the inspiring name of "Kościuszko." Both names sound false to our ears, for we are not mad, regardless whether the wind blows from east or west. Neither of these winds has blown us off course. And we know a hawk from a... vulture. On the contrary, once having set our course, we have followed it with exceptional sobriety and loyalty, and there is no fear that we should digress from it now. It is our firm will to go on with those allies whom we took at the beginning of the war. But we cannot go on with our eyes shut. Nor can we come across the expression "former Poland," day in and day out, with calmness. This causes us deep hurt, to us whom this war has hit hardest of all its victims. Do those who use or rather abuse the definition "former Poland" imagine that we, a people relatively tough and inured to all kinds of misfortune, are completely insensitive and unmoved in the event of a blow struck by an ally?

There are other forms of cruelty too, such as the unconscious cruelty which springs from the best possible intentions. Sometimes, when one of us, in talking to an Englishman, expresses the fear that we may not return to Poland at all, comes the answer: „Why not stay here?" accompanied by a rather helpless but certainly cordial gesture and question is hardly patient of words.

When we were young, most of us read Swift's book, and afterwards dreamed of far journeys to strange lands. But even Swift's imagination did not range so swiftly or so freely as to allow us to see the same people and the same countries change before our very eyes. Perhaps, during our „travels into several remote nations of the world", we have lost our sense of proportion. But we have sometimes thought in the course of our wanderings that the peoples whose hospitality we have enjoyed were alternately Lilliputians or Giants.

When our ship sank in September 1939, the waves cast us up in Rumania. When we awoke from our exhausted sleep, we found ourselves bound hand and foot, while over and around us marched a crowd of funny, small beings, or so they seemed to us at the time.

Then the scene changed, and we found ourselves in France, which at first looked like Brobdingnag. When Marianne welcomed us so cordially, we felt like Gulliver pressed to the bosom of a Brobdingnagian dame. In June 1940 the situation underwent a change, and our hosts diminished in our eyes to the stature of dwarfs, so small that we could hardly see them.

After the ill-fated French campaign, the Polish Gulliver left Lilliput, crossed the sea, and once more came to Brobdingnag. The people of this land have alternately diminished and grown in our eyes because we have not found the right measure for them. They are of normal height, and despite the war live a normal life. Perhaps this is why they cannot see that our misfortune is something abnormally large, and that it surpasses the imagination of a man who lives in his own home, or near its ruins, if it has been bombed. But at least they are *his* ruins and nobody questions his ownership, whereas we, reading of the utter annihilation of such places as Tarnopol, learn that Tarnopol lies "in former Poland."

How shall I finish this article, in order to be understood by my British readers? Perhaps the following story will dot the "i"s for me:

A Polish sergeant, who was a simple sort of man, and had come out of Russia by some miracle, was recently speaking of his life in the Siberian Tajga, in forced labour camp and prison. He was deported from Poland in 1939, and his wife and children too. But they were deported separately. He has not yet found them, and certainly he will never find them. This Gulliver learnt to know the knout, cold, hunger and disease in the course of his journey. He went through everything which may be experienced there. Finally he reached England after many appalling adventures. When he was asked whether, in the prison or the tajga, he had ever doubted about Poland, he answered very simply and calmly:

„About Poland? Doubt? Oh, Sir, if I had doubted, I should have died there. Perhaps I shall not return, but Poland will return."

TWO ODD RUSSIANS

Among the German soldiers taken prisoner by the English there were also two odd Russians. They did not know a word of Russian and used a language that nobody understood. A professor of Eastern languages was brought in but to no avail. Finally their prattle was overheard by a British sergeant who spent several years with his detachment, on North Indian frontier and was familiar with the language spoken in Tibet. — Yes the two mysterious individuals spoke Tibetian language. Here is the story the sergeant succeeded to squeeze out of both prisoners.

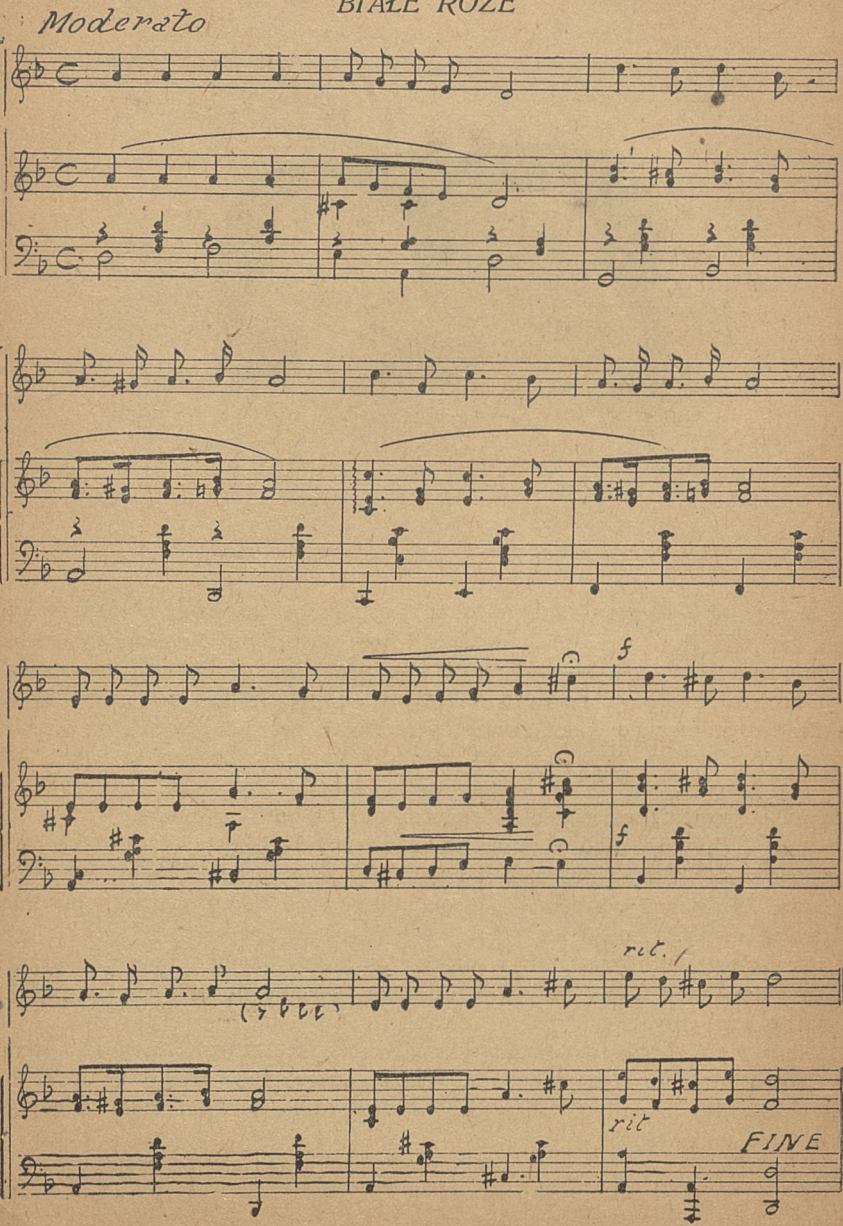
Some years ago two Tibetian shepherds inadvertently crossed the Soviet frontier. They were arrested and sent to a camp. Drafted into the Russian Army and sent to the front they were taken prisoner by the Germans and sent to Africa.

Transported to France they fell in the hands of the English. During all this time they talked only to each other and had no idea who is fighting who and why.

Now those shepherds should be attached to the British Army and sent to Central Asia to fight the Japs. Thus perhaps they would be able to find at last their native village still at loss to understand what is going on in this crazy world.

POLISH SOLDIERS SONG

BIAŁE RÓŻE



POLISH SOLDIERS SONG

BIAŁE RÓŻE

1. White rose-buds are blooming once again,
When, oh Johnny, will I see you, when?
Come and kiss me, as you used to do,
my darling,
I will pick you roses, pick them just for you!

2. When your scars of war are worn away,
We'll forget that one unhappy day,
When you left me, as you had to do,
my darling,
When your country needed and called upon you!

3. White rose-buds will bloom for him no more,
He lies buried on a distant shore,
On that some one plants them on your grave,
my darling
For the life you gave, oh for the life you gave!

Translation by
Raymond Ziminski

THE SONG IN THE NIGHT

by KAZIMIERZ WIERZYŃSKI

The author of this novel Kazimierz WIERZYNSKI belongs to the group of young Polish poets "Skamander." Member of the Polish Academy of Literature. After the war he went to USA and published some poems in Polish and a collection of novels in English — "The forgotten battlefield." His collection of poetry inspired by the Olympic Games of Brussels 1928 won the prize of the Olympic Committee.

The Polish Army in Canada was being formed in two places: in Windsor and in Owen Sound. From Windsor one can see Detroit, the high masses of the skyscrapers and the river, as big as a lake. At night mountains of windows blaze across the river; one might imagine fantastically that these were some new Black Hills chiselled with light in the darkness. In Owen Sound one goes to bed early. It's a quiet town without superstitions. Our soldiers were camped beside Georgian Bay. They could look at wooded hills and soft valleys. One of the wanderers from Poland said to me:

"If it were not for this bay one could think that we were in Poland, somewhere along the Carpathians."

He waved his hand at the spreading hills and forests in the melting spring snow; perhaps he was right.

In Windsor it was difficult to find anything of the Polish landscape. Looked for everywhere where there were Polish eyes, it was hidden here in people. But it happened that in this city I came to know perhaps the deepest truth about my country.

It happened under the influence of the talks about the war which I had with General Duch. He can say much; he knows many armies and wars. During the campaign in Poland he fought for the fourth time in his life; in France the fifth time. The General's uniform was worn by a man still young who had fought in Poland as a colonel. He had joined the army when he was seventeen. Short and stocky, he laughs freely; his calling has not destroyed his good nature. He does not carry his pack of adventures for exhibition, of course, but when opens it there is nothing more straightforward than those reminiscences.

Once I visited him to play a game of chess, but it did not go very well. We were talking about the fact that we are called incorrigible romantics by the world and that people frequently complain that we are difficult to

understand. The General regarded the traits which brought forth this opinion true of us but difficult of explanation to strangers because they were frequently incomprehensible to ourselves. Shortly we have gone so deep into the matter that we pushed the chessboard, on which the figures had long lost their freedom of movement, away, and my host told me about an incident which, since then, I cannot forget. It had to do with the campaign in Poland.

"Now," he said, "this war is a war of five continents and seven seas, as people commonly say. Then it was a war of the solitary Poles. On the twenty-second of September, 1939 we were being pressed by the Germans from the west and by Russians from the east. We were in the center, in the Lublin area, and were making our way south. In such situations there is nothing to fight for, but we then had everything in our heads except capitulation. That alone may seem incomprehensible to some, but that's how it was. That day we had captured a town forgotten by God called Miasteczko. It lies southeast of Zamość. In the evening we immediately struck through the forest which began on the highest elevation in the area. I should say, the edge of the forest, for that was all we could see before us. I knew from the map that it descended gradually to the south, toward the village Barchaczów. That Barchaczów stuck fast in my head like a nail in a wall. With it in our hands we gained roads, we gained passage toward Tomaszów Lubelski, toward Krasnobród, everywhere into the world. Without Barchaczów we were in danger of being squeezed between two walls.

"We struck, therefore, at the edge of the forest and took it by storm. It was already night when we got under cover. We shook the sand from our uniforms. Whoever could, fell asleep immediately. We had been fighthing ten days already; it was the usual thing in the Polish war. Before us was the Eighth Division of German infantry, partially motorized, with tank reconnaissance units. We were pushing it out of each hiding place with difficulty, but somehow we went ahead.

"The night passed quietly. The next day, the twentythird, we began further attacks. We wanted to break through with our previous impetus, but the Germans' firepower was too strong. The attack failed, and it was necessary to lie low in the forest until neighboring units moved up from the right and the left. A whole day was taken up by this, and the twenty-fourth of September had come. It was decided then to strike along the entire front. The first attack was entrusted to the left wing. It was to begin the attack at twelve noon and make for the little town Komarow which lay before it.

"In the meantime we had news from headquarters that the Russians were marching in form the east and were only thirty kilometres away.

This news brought everyone, from commander to private, to his feet. Everyone thought: attack, attack quickly. I inspected my positions — at that time I commanded a division and found everything in order. The artillery worked especially well. There was a good deal of it. Three brigades of light artillery and one of heavy — that means something. Twenty-four guns were firing from the first lines, the others from hidden positions.

"We waited for the left wing to begin the attack, but it did not take place. Instead I received a report from the right flank that the Germans had moved and were attacking us. The first lines of the attackers dispersed under the fire of light artillery which fired shrapnel point blank. Despite that the Germans began to infiltrate the forest. The wing was bent, and a counterattack was necessary. The men could not stand the tension. My staff telephone operator, a corporal, jumped away from his phone and stood at attention: "I'll join the attack, sir, please allow me." Our men were attacking about a hundred or two hundred feet away from my station and threw the Germans back with one push. The corporal returned covered with sweat and brought back a German light machine gun. For a moment the attack ceased, even though the firing did not stop and the artillery kept operating. There began again a nervous waiting. Our neighbors to the left were not giving any signs of life. Twelve o'clock had passed long ago.

"At two-thirty we tried again on our own; We attacked the Germans and at first everything went smoothly, but then it became more difficult. We couldn't beat them out of the dense undergrowth. After two hours the attack succumbed. Barchaczów was becoming more valuable by the minute. What should we do? This contredanse certainly would not bring us any closer; once they go forward, then we. The tension became unbearable.

"All of a sudden, about five, the firing increased unexpectedly, and the news came that the Germans were again attacking our right flank. They were coming up in threatening force. I felt this was a critical moment: either we or they! „Everyone alive — attack" I shouted. Everyone went into action: the reserves. a company of sappers, the staff company, a platoon of phone operators, ordnance men, the divisional staff officers and I. We ran toward the right flank, into the center of battle. Bayonets, the Polish specialty, carried the men irresistibly forwards. The artillery threw its fire forward. Our attack brought the whole line to its feet. The attack became general. In my sector we pushed back the Germans with the first blow, then destroyed all resistance completely. I don't know whether any of them got off unhurt. We cleaned out the forest: on the battlefield we found eighteen light machine guns with ammunition.

"It was getting dark when I returned to my former station. After the hot day a cold wind sprang up; a welcome ally after such work. I sent patrols out. In the distance one could still hear the rattle of machine gun fire. From the reports I received after establishing contact with my

units there was no doubt that our victory was complete. Barchaczów was taken and the roads cleared.

„Among the booty we found light tanks, armored cars, and a fleet of trucks. Over thirty prisoners who escaped the disaster were interviewed immediately. Their information only confirmed the completeness of our victory.

"With what joy did I relax then! We were saved. The firing in the distance was dying down. With the wind came the cool night air. I was deliriously happy. I assembled the staff officers, and we got back to work. The locations of the units were checked, and they were moved that night. The corporal who had captured the German machine gun was shouting into a speaker, "All right, all right, but we gave them as big a beating as you did." A glow was spreading over the sky; Barchaczów, which had been fired by shells, was burning.

"Suddenly, there happened something which I cannot think about to this day without emotion. From the right, from the right flank which had borne the hardest trials in these battles, there floated an unexpected echo. At first it was difficult to determine what noise or shouts were carried in the air. All of us listened in surprise and quickly recognized that it was a song. The melody was becoming ever clearer, even though the wind altered the tones and shattered the words. The echo sounding among the trees repeated from all sides:

Poland is not dead yet,
While we are alive.

A silence fell on our people. It was interrupted by the corporal: "Barchaczów wants to know what's happening."

Someone answered: "They're singing."

We fell silent again. The song, begun no one knew by whom, was taken up by others; one could hear how it moved among the units invisible in the darkness. I'm an old soldier and have experienced much, but nothing like this has ever happened to me. The well known words resounded in that forest and in that night with a fearful meaning. It was being sung by men who had come through the battle only to confirm their words in a new battle. I listened to the song as though for the first time.

"Listening to the unexpected song I stood a long time without words, and then began walking in the direction from which it came. The wind rushed through the branches, and the flaming sky was a faultless compass. Before I reached the source of the song, however, the men stopped singing and everything became quiet. The song had passed as quickly as it had come from an impenetrable space."

That was all the General told me about the battle of Barchaczów that evening after the unsuccessful game of chess. Another time I learned that after the victory he had gone to Komarów to discover for himself what had happened with the neighboring units on the left flank. He found there a company of pre-induction trainees, about sixty boys, most of them high school students. They were gathered in a street under the command of

a lieutenant. "Please take us with you," they cried, as soon as his car stopped before them.

"I looked at their young faces," he told me, "they were no more than sixteen or seventeen; They even threatened me: "If you don't we'll go ourselves." What was I to do with them? I incorporated them into my troops and ordered that they be spared as much as possible. In the next battle near Krasnobrod twenty percent of those boys died. It was reported to me that they fought to the end; they, too, confirmed the words of the song. That is our romanticism, perhaps incomprehensible I don't know," the General finished.

That evening I returned home slowly. From the Windsor coast one could see the mountains of lighted windows in Detroit. Ice floes moved over the the leaden water.

Two events, the song in the night and the crusade of the young volunteers, fused within me as though flowing from one current. Nor could I forget that my chess partner had also been only seventeen when he entered the army.

Slowly I walked down the empty boulevard in the foreign Canadian city. How far I was from the land looked to yearningly wherever there were Polish eyes! But I did not feel lost in this remote country, and the strangeness helped me see more clearly things which lose their significance when they are near.

I thought of how, ever since Wybicki in a mazurka which became the national anthem hazarded a prophecy about the immortality of his country, this song has been sung among us by every generation — bass, tenor, alto, soprano. Their choruses gathered in places unknown to the world, among towns forgotten by God, beneath skies flaming over forests, and waited their turn like a company of soldiers. The song which sprang from them mingled with the groans of the dying, but those who remained alive took it up anew. The theatre of the world perhaps did not listen carefully to the agressive melody and wondered at the insufficiently understood choristers. But the time had now come when the meaning of the Polish song had become the refrain of universal liberty. The five continents and the seven seas were like the Barchaczów forest, lost among the great spaces of the globe. The sky blazing over the hidden village was now an infallible compass.

It was already late when I turned off the boulevard into my street. The mountains of windows in Detroit were dissolving in the darkness. From the river came the singular sound of grating, grinding ice floes slowly moving on the water. That evening I did not feel lonely in the foreign city.

THE POLES IN DEFENCE OF LONDON

THE LAST TRUTH OF LIEUTENANT WAŻNY

By ANDRZEJ POMIAN

It happened at about the same time when a small Warsaw boy, Henio (Henry) was given the honorary nickname „Tiger" for having captured a German tank during the battle of Warsaw. Several hundred miles west of Warsaw, another Pole, bearing the same nickname was treading a path from which there is no return. He died in Douai. His name did not provide headlines for the press of the world; his photograph did not appear next to pictures of famous film stars or sportsmen. No reference to his work was made in the film about the second battle of London. No censor was obliged to score his strange sounding name out of a war correspondent's report. No tribute has been paid so far to his memory; and yet, it was the „Tiger", Lt. Wladyslaw Ważny of the Polish Army, sent to France to help the Polish maquis there, who defended the city of London there, under the most adverse conditions.

Every day there came to the British capital from France wireless messages signed with the pseudonym „Tiger". They contained precise and accurate information about the position of flying bomb depots and launching ramps. The British Lancasters had never any difficulty on the following day in locating the sites and giving them a good punishment. Whilst here, on this side of the Channel, many hundreds of brains were doing their best to defend London, there, under the shadow of the Swastika, Lieutenant Ważny's brain did this work all alone. It was the hands of his men that changed secretly and inconspicuously the mechanism of the „buzz bombs" so that instead of flying northward, they flew in circles and fell on the heads of the terrified ground crews. It was the hands of his men that cut one day all the cables; on that day the B. B. C. speaker could announce: „No flying bombs today over Southern England, including the London area".

Although he saved many human lives. he could not save one: his own. When on the 26th August 1944 he came to his camouflaged headquarters, he found there already some gunmen of the Gestapo. With two quick shots

he disposed of two nearest standing Huns, and before the rest could move, he jumped outside. But he did not go far; the whole house was surrounded by men of the Gestapo, armed to the teeth. Lt. Ważny for a while thought he was facing a firing squad. Yet another jump round the corner and a hail of bullets from a machine gun pierced his breast and he could hear the machine gun's rattle before he fell to the ground. And then he became unconscious.

When after a lapse of many hours a friend's hands lifted his head, he was still alive. The henchmen of the Gestapo thought him dead and stripped him naked, leaving his body there where he fell. His last words uttered to his friend were: „Poland has not yet perished".

For a few days after his death messages signed „Tiger" continued to arrive in London, as precisely as ever. To those who knew of his death it was clear that the wireless operator was sending out some overdue messages; but those who received them could not help feeling that Lt. Ważny, even after his death, was still trying to defend London. Or was it London only? Wherever on the wide world a Polish man or woman, young or old is dying, his last breath will say just one word: Poland. For her we will fight till the bitter end. And this is the last truth of Lieutenant Ważny.

„G" FOR GENEVIEVE „L" FOR . . .

By Lt. J. M. HERBERT.

„Don't be childish," said Goral. „It could have happened to any of us".

I know it. I have repeated this to myself over and over again. But it doesn't help.

The broken arm hurts terribly. I probably have fever. The doctor has forbidden us to speak and threatened that he will separate us if we go on talking, especially as Zygmunt's condition is none too good; serious burns. But Zygmunt has fallen asleep now and the doctor is not in sight. The nurse also has ceased to honour us with her presence. So we are talking in halftones and Goral tries to console me as well as he can. But he doesn't know everything. He doesn't know all the truth. And I am the involuntary cause of what happened. This is all because of me; because of my carelessness; because of this arm which now hurts, throbs with all its pulses in the plaster-of-Paris dressing.

I broke it yesterday at 2 P. M. I stumbled on the steps when getting into the machine, just before the take off. I fell from the height of a few feet and landed with all my weight on my arm. Something cracked, and I was so faint that I was unable to get up alone.

I could not, of course, fly with them, and as there was no one to take my place, they flew without a rear gunner the five of them. Mercury was to take my place on the way over the target, and Goral on the way back.

„It is such an unimportant operation", said one of them, to calm me a little. „We shall manage, don't you worry".

Our doctor saw my arm and wanted me to go to hospital at once. I did not agree: I wanted to wait for Genevieve's return. They told me to lie down in the sick bay, but I could not stick in there. Worry for the crew would not let me sleep in spite of an injection. I probably had no

„bad premonition", but my head was seething with the thoughts of what was happening somewhere between the Bay of Biscay and the open Atlantic.

Three hours after Genevieve took off, with the help of Pryszczyk who had come to inquire about my health, I slipped out of the sick bay, eluded the doctor and drove to the airfield in the ambulance car.

The car jolted terribly, and the arm hurt again. We stopped in front of the hangar, at Genevieve's usual position. I lay on the stretcher, chain-smoking cigarettes and waited, waited, waited,,,

„What are you thinking about?".

This question brought me back from my feverish memories. Oh, yes. I am in the hospital. Next to me, on the right, Zygmunt is sleeping. On the left lies Goral. He is asking what, I am thinking about I have to answer...

„How..." I begin, and don't know what to say next, for I want to ask what has happened to Mercury, and recall that Goral does not know the whole truth yet. No, I can't speak about this now. He has lost too much blood; he is to pale and I myself would not be able to bear it.

But Goral takes it up with animation:

„How it happened to us? Don't you know?"

„I don't know." I answer truthfully. „No one has told me. But..." I look at Zygmunt who lies with his arms on the blanket, bandaged up to the shoulders.

„He is asleep", says Goral in an undertone. „The whole sweep was unlucky. First of all, the weather. No, first of all, your arm," he corrected himself quickly. „Secondly, the weather. We flew straight into the sun for an hour and there was not a single cloud in the sky. Buyak almost broke the glass in his turret, keeping watch. He did not see anything startling, for what can you see when are flying into the sun? Zygmunt, Koza and I looked at the sea. Mercury was complaining that his legs were getting stiff in your turret. He even said he must have longer legs than you have, for he sat folded like a penknife and couldn't move. But he at least was able to see something.

„At four o'clock Zygmunt did his magic with the sextant and soon afterwards we saw a British convoy just as we were told we would at the briefing. We flew nearer. There were two big destroyers and one merchantman of probably some fifteen thousand tons. And Buyak said: „Goodness gracious — lightning!"

„Are you crazy", I say, „or are you dreaming?"

The weather was like that of the Mediterranean not the smallest cloud in the sky, and he insists on lightning!

„I tell you, lightning".

„To which we all replied: „Where do you see it, you fool?"

„He was right, after all. „The destroyer to the right" he said. We looked. We looked. Lightning indeed! The Polish destroyer! Koza could not bear it and sent an open message to her: „A Polish Wellington greets the Polish ship in convoy!"

„And down below they began to signal with their flag! God knows what there is to it; a bit of cloth, like the next one with only an eagle on a red field, but we were as moved as if Poland herself had saluted us!

„They answered something, but I don't know what it was, for Koza listened alone, and he was so moved that instead of repeating it to us, he blew his nose loudly.

„Then another machine from the escort came near, so we couldn't speak to the Lightning. We left convoy, returned to our course and again we flew on into this terrible sun. We had it now on our right, but lower than before. In the west there was a belt of cloud over the horizon. Zygmunt was reminding us that in another hour the glare would be less. Small consolation; just then we should be on our way back.

„But, as you already know, it did not come off on schedule".

Goral changed his position in the bed, lifted himself on his elbows and hissed from pain: „This time they did get me all right, the swine".

„Are you in pain?" I asked.

„Yes, a little. But the thing is that I am as weak as a fly. I must have lost a good couple of pints of blood..."

I knew he lost so much blood that he nearly died. He was very pale, almost as pale as the off—white walls of the hospital.

„If Lucy should see me now...", he began, and suddenly stopped.

He looked at me very embarrassed, as if this name, or the entire remark had slipped out unconsciously; as if he had inadvertently disclosed something which should not have been told to anyone.

„Miss Lord"? I thought, „Miss Lord, Lucy. So it was he..."

I pretended to be looking towards Zygmunt's bed, but on the table there stood a mirror. In it I saw Goral's face, smiling and blushing. So that was it, Miss Lord had been „Lucy" to none of us.

I moved a little and reached for cigarettes. Goral spoke quickly now as if he wanted to end this moment of silence.

„About half an hour after we left the convoy. I saw two little points south of us. I was not quite certain so I said to Buyak that the glare made me see black spots before my eyes. And where are you looking? he asked.

You know him, he understands at once what you mean and his voice does not even falter though he knew perfectly well that I was suspecting something. „Towards the Bay of Biscay," I said. Buyak was silent for ten or fifteen seconds. And there was silence in the machine — only the roar of the engines. At last Buyak said, calmly again, as if it were without any importance: "Three twos from the south. I believe they are Ju-88".

„We weren't afraid to meet the Jerries but not six fighters. You know what it means; count their fire capacity alone".

I closed my eyes. Six Junkers! Some twelve cannons and twenty—four machine guns against one Wellington. If you deduct from the crew the pilot who cannot fire, there are three cannons and six machine guns against each of the remaining members of the crew. The Junkers are maneouvrable and quick; they can attack from any side; they can enter the combat whenever they wish, at any moment they choose; and they can always get away. But not a Wellington. The Wellington is a heavy unwieldy thing, big, slow, armed with only six machine guns. A fight against one fighter is very difficult for her. Against so many, it is quite hopeless. The very thought of the six Junkers paralyzed me.

Goral said something about distant cloud, about the distance from the coast, about the sun. I knew those details already. I did not want to remember them. I waited for something which would give a spark of hope, knowing beforehand that there would be nothing of the kind in his story. I felt some unjustified regret that he did not say anything of the sort. He merely mentioned what was true; that they were doomed. They did not „decide to sell their lives dearly", as one says for the sake of morale. Quite the contrary; they must have experienced a desperate, bestial fear; the fear which sometimes paralyses the muscles; which makes you hunch your head between your shoulders and await the blow; the kind of your fear you never mention, because you are ashamed.

Goral did not dwell upon these feelings; he spoke only of facts. Maybe he would not have been able to express in words the thoughts which cross the frightened mind at such times.

„The first two came towards us against the sun and dived. Before I could release the bombs and turn by 180 degrees, Mercury and Koza opened fire at them. The German bursts hit our wings. It was as though it had hailed for a second and then stopped. I did not hear nor see the bursts but I felt them with my nerves. Immediately afterward, Mercury shouted: „A German at the tail," and began to fire, so that panes rang round me.

„Well you know I don't like to have the enemy at my rear. It is silly, but I would prefer to get it in the breast rather than in the back. I made an avoiding turn left and down, and suddenly Buyak began to fire from

his guns, then Zygmunt. then again Buyak and — I don't know which of them hit it — both began to shout that the Junker was falling. I saw it at the last moment to the right of us, hitting the water. A jet of water came up—Versailles was nothing compared with this—and that was the end of it.

„For a while, not more perhaps than five seconds, none of the others approached and I was beginning to think that they would leave us alone when Mercury shouted: „Jerry at the tail and right". I turned sharply right; and dived; we were flying low then; at perhaps five hundred feet. I flattened out to two hundred and saw some fifty yards away to the left small dancing geysers come up from the sea. Then continuously from the left, then from the right, then in front of us, they attacked us in twos, in threes and hit us... burst after burst. The water was bubbling here and there. How to make any avoiding action in these conditions was beyond me.

„Suddenly Buyak cried: „Left and down, left". Instinctively I put the machine on the wing, kicked the rudder bar... she went into a slip... This was too sharp for the height of two hundred feet. I saw the bubbles disappearing on the surface, something struck me on the legs — I did not even know it was a shell — and I felt the machine falling...

„What a feelling. I gave a boost, pulled the stick hard — nothing doing — so I began to think; this is the end... I took a look; the wave was growing under my wing... then a shock. The water spurted on the glass plate, it shook us a little, we were brushing the water with our belly; a splash, a crack, again a shock; bullets falling on the cockpit, and suddenly something began to burn in the radio partition.

„I don't know by what miracle Genevieve flattened out again, but she did it on her own account. Anyhow, under incessant fire, we zigzaged to some fifty or seventy feet and Zygmunt snatched the extinguisher to put out the fire.

„Meanwhile Koza damaged a second Junker which turned back south, limping, the remaining four of them must have had very little ammunition left for they now began to fire sparingly. Maybe they also lost their enthusiasm for it, for they did not attack at short range. In spite of this, Mercury got wounded in the arm by splinters. I don't know how he could have escaped, for Zygmunt who went to see him said that there was a hole three feet wide in the turret, exactly at the height of the gunner's head.

„ We could not think of getting Mercury out of there, for a fire started again, and I was afraid for the boxes of ammunition. I made a terrible row about it. Zygmunt returned and began to put out the fire, while Koza and

Buyak fired at the Germans. One of the extinguishers was empty, the others pierced by shells, so Zygmunt put out the fire with his bare hands and his body; he lay down and yelled as it scorched him, but he put it out.

„The Junkers flew away and we began to survey the damage. Only then for the first time did I feel faint and in pain. I also saw that blood was flowing from my legs like water from the eaves. Buyak dressed my wounds and said with such conviction „these are only scratches" that I believed him. It did not even hurt much, only my legs were getting numb and became as soft as macaroni. I had trouble with the rudder bar and Mercury was no use, though Koza at last succeeded in dragging him out of the rear turret and bandaging him. So Buyak, having somehow dressed Zygmunt's wounds, sat next to me and between the two of us we flew Genevieve".

„If I had been with you", I began, but Goral interrupted me.

„If you had been with us, you would have been hit perhaps by that shell from the cannon", he said pointedly, „Mercury was lucky"...

These words shook me; Mercury was lucky. Oh, my God! one ought not to say such things; one ought not to say things having such a bitter meaning, even in ignorance....

„I will tell him", I thought.

But he was speaking again.

„Our wireless set was smashed into powder, the nose and the fuselage covering were in bits, the mechanism of the undercarriage did not work, the turrets were immobilised and, what is worst, the meter on one of the tanks pointed to zero. Buyak told Zygmunt about this, and Zygmunt, groaning, began to calculate how far we were from the British coast. After a few minutes he declared that we would not be able to make it; some thirty, or forty miles before the coast we would have to make a forced descent. Our dinghy was holed like a sieve by the German shells.

„Zygmunt and Mercury groaned. Every one was listening to the roar of the engines — was the tone even? I was feeling sick every now and then — I felt the blood streaming from all my wounds through the bandages. Koza had discovered his thermos-flask with black coffee, also shot through, luckily near the top. We succeeded in having half a cupful. I drank it and it helped a little.

„Well, so we flew on and on. Three quarters of an hour passed, and the meter of the second tank showed that it was still half full. Buyak saw it at once. „Everything is all right" he said. „The other tank is also undamaged, only the meter doesn't work. We have enough fuel to

fly at least to Sweden". We felt better at once and half an hour later we saw the coast.

„The coast. It is a big word A glorious word, as Columbus probably observed. But in Columbus time there were no barrage balloons. We had to face them for we had neither the strength nor the wish to avoid the whole zone, so we flew somehow between them. This was a trifle compared with the flight over the sea.

„Buyak wanted us to land at any field that came along but I was stubborn, we would reach our own airfield. We were flying over M., you know, forty miles south from here.

I nodded, and he interrupted his story and looked straight ahead, as if he was searching for our airfield, on a cliff cutting into the sea. After while he smiled, as if he had found it.

„Isn't it queer, I don't remember how I landed. Of course; they have told me about it, but.... Have you seen it?" I told him that I had witnessed their return; that I remembered every detail and should never forget it.

It was true. You cannot forget such things. They remain in your memory, as a complete picture. Fresh impressions tend to be chaotic, fragmentary and sometimes out of proportion, but time brings order to the details and gives them back their real perspective. This is how I saw Genevieve's return at that moment It all happened the night before last. I lay on the stretcher in the ambulance and chain-smoked cigarettes. Pryszczyk stood near the car and talked to the driver. I heard their indistinct voices through the thin partition covered with white oilcloth. A few minutes later the other mechanics arrived. Talaga mentioned my name, probably asked whether I had gone to the hospital. Pryszczyk answered something in a low voice.

„Sergeant", I called.

Almost at the same moment one of the engine mechanics (the long and the thin one — I can never remember which name belongs to whom; I think Ferenc is tall one, and Malinowski the fat one, but it may be just the other way around); the slim one said: „I hear a machine".

Someone denied it, but very soon the bigamous corporal (the one who married a red-haired English farm girl, the blackguard) supported Ferenc. „I hear it too. She is flying low".

„Sergeant", I cried louder.

Talaga's ruddy face appeared in the window, and a strong hand pushed open the door.

„Are they coming? I asked?"

The mechanic shrugged.

„Perhaps it is them", he said haltingly. „But it's rather too early".

„Take me out of here".

Talaga looked worried.

„Do you mean to get up with this arm of yours, sir?"

„Nothing will happen to it", I said firmly.

Pryszczyk also jumped into the car. They carefully pushed the stretcher outside, and put it on the ground. They helped me to get up. I set my teeth; the pain raged in my arm as if it were being twisted by pincers.

„Where is this machine?" I asked.

„Over there", somebody said, pointing south.

The Wellington passed over the neighbouring cliff and showed over the bay.

„Genevieve! cried Pryszczyk.

I don't know how he recognized her, but it really was Genevieve. She flew in a flat glide, into a moderate wind, listing to her port side. She was returning unannounced by the radio, without signal lights, blind.

The roar of engines ceased suddenly on the edge of the airfield, but the closed flaps and the un-opened undercarriage of the machine did not check the momentum. She flew parallel to the surface of the runway, skidding more and more, flattened out in a horizontal flight, then headed up and pancaked slowly, inch by inch. Suddenly she fell down in a short slip. She brushed the concrete with her belly, sparkled, cracked with all her steel and with the torn plating, rebounded and crashed heavily on the ground, smashing both her engines.

I saw her like this for a second, with her tail standing up aslant. From behind Talaga and Pryszczyk I saw her crumbling on her broken wings. Then the ambulance with its back door ajar turned sharply to that side. Before it disappeared from my eyes there was a flash of fire.

Somebody shouted behind me: „Extinguishers"!

I could not run. I walked quickly and each step had its repercussion in a jerking pain in my shoulder.

Genevieve in flames gave me a hundred times greater pain, a pain which grows in you and seems to blow up your brain. Genevieve was burning and I looked on; I had to look on. It was like looking at a wife or a son being murdered before my eyes.

Genevieve. I felt physically connected with her, a part of her organism. I was burning with her. Everything which determined my existence was burning.

I stumbled on something and nearly fell. The heat rose against my face. Someone was shouting: „This way, sir".

I saw Zygmunt with his face covered with soot, his overall smoking, swaying between two mechanics. Koza and Buyak were hitting the burning side of the plane with crow bars, smashing a hole in it. The flames were reaching the controls and the rear turret.

Suddenly Pryszczyk appeared between the tongues of fire, black and terrible. He coughed, choked, and disappeared in clouds of smoke. Talaga jumped on the wing which broke, under him, shedding sparks. He stooped and pulled something sharply, then both he and Pryszczyk receded from this hell, dragging a limp body, wrapped in a blanket.

Just then amunition began to explode. Something whistled near me and fell on the grass. I backed instinctively, knelt and then lay down behind the ambulance. Pryszczyk who had thrown himself on the ground near the machine, was covering the wounded man in the blanket with his own body.

Luckily there was not much ammunition. As the last shell exploded, the hot ribs of the fuselage burst, and the tail, already in flames, crashed on the runway. Men ran from all sides, but it was impossible to get near the machine; the heat was terrible and the flames roared over the dead body of the aircraft.

Someone helped me to get up. I was put into the ambulance. Zygmunt on a stretcher, groaned. They brought in Goral, unconscious. Koza and Buyak sat near me in silence.

Only then did I think of Mercury. He was not here.

„Where is Mercury?" I asked.

They looked at me dazed. Only after a while did Buyak point with his head towards the burned-out machine.

„Over there", he said. „We came too late..."

Goral listened quickly. He bit his lips when I finished. We were silent for a long while.

„I did not know", he said in a hollow voice. „And Pryszczyk?" —

„He is all right".

He sighed with relief.

„It was he who dragged me out. Now I remember".

I looked at the wall in front of me. It was naked and empty. I felt tired, discouraged, indifferent. Everything that had finished with Genevieve was distant and had ceased to be painful now and that I had entombed it in words. What was to follow was too distant to think about

it now. Nothing remained but a misty present, off-white like the wall, a long row of grey and lazy days.

I shut my eyes on the yellow wall and the dusk. I did not want to hear soft slippers walking in the corridors or to smell iodoform and carbolic. I did not want to remember, to expect...

A knock at the door seemed to me an undignified intrusion.

„Come in" said Goral.

They crowded in all at once. Loud, talkative, vivacious, impossible Buyak at their head.

Zygmunt groaned, woke up and blinked with his lashless eyelids. Goral smiled as if this were our airfield . Somebody shook me by the good hand.

„We have a new machine", Buyak said gaily.

I lifted my head, to curse him. Only yesterday we had lost Genevieve. No one paid the slightest attention to me. Koza added: „She is marked with the letter L. L as for...."

„L as for Lord," said Zygmunt.

„L as for Lucy," said Goral.

For a moment they were silent, then laughed, a friendly laugh, warm, disarming. I looked at Goral and smiled too. He was as red as a lobster.

„Let it be Lucy", said Zygmunt.

CROSSING OF GAIANO

by MAREK ŚWIĘCICKI

The day is bright and the sun is burning pretty badly although it is not eight o'clock. We, a handful of war correspondents, photographers and onlookers, are standing on the roof of a half shuttered house somewhere near the Gaiano river waiting for the announced attack to start. The house is high, yet the Gaiano cannot be seen from here. The river is not so much covered by rows of trees, houses or bushes but is hidden in the terrain so hopelessly flat and deprived of all elevations and slopes as if here, in this part of Italy, the entirely lazy nature did not want to display even a bit of phantasy or scheme. Here man took the initiative. He put some variety in the monotonous plain and into the melancholy river by building draining canals, ditches and flood-preventing dykes. And this human collaboration with the nature constitutes at present our greatest grief and sorrow. It is just those canals, ditches and dykes that we are attacking since about twenty hours. It is in vain that the "Lynxes" started yesterday their attack on the right flank; it is in vain that the tanks of the "Scorpion" Regiment continue their assaults and the artillery is pounding the German positions during the whole of yesterday, half of the night and during this sunny morning. Shell after shell is torturing the enemy bunkers — fountains of earth fly up, here and there fire streaks are extending — „they" stay. They don't move their lines back, they won't give way, they simply won't leave. And why should they? Well built bunkers and skillfully fortified shelters afford an almost perfect security. To get out of them means annihilation and death. Of course it is better to stay in. Besides our opponents are German crack troops, the Paratroops.

"Five minutes more" somebody says pointing to the watch.

"In five minutes we will have to move too in order to get closer to the front" adds a weary voice.

The air trembles and waves under the pressure of the explosions. The roar is at its top. Now one does not hear the interrupted roar not the monotonous sound of the shells passing over our heads. All is mixing into a uniform monotonous totality as if an enormous steamroller were passing with a lightning velocity over a road strewn with stones, iron

plates and glass. There is knocking and roaring, rattling and crushing of something that is breaking, scattering and falling to pieces.

Five minutes of expectation have already elapsed and a new noise is joining the roar; it sounds like a snarl and ends with a heavy blow: German mortars. The six-barrel Nebelwerfers remind of their existence and lash around with madness and fury. Somewhere not very far away a conic explosion springs up from the ground. It's rocking from one side to another. Next to it several others. At same time the Spandaus begin their barking Our attack has started. We are coming down.

„I would advise you to drive first to the „Wild cats" battalion. I have an impression that they will be the first on the other side of the river" — Lt. Col. J., Commander of the Wilno Brigade, says.

„What about the centre? The Wolves??" — I am asking.

„The centre is facing the most difficult task and very likely the most stubborn resistance of the enemy is to be expected there" — replies the Brigade Commander.

The Colonel is right. Time passes and the attacking „Wolves" cannot break the German resistance. There are moments when the Infantry can't even stick out their heads from behind the river embankment. The Spandaus are spitting fire from the bunkers. Private Valerien Z. is adjusting his sliding helmet. The moment of raising the hand is sufficient for the Germans; with two bullets in his arm the Pte Z. tumbles down into the ditch. Few minutes afterwards he is back again.

„Oh, it does not matter, it's the left paw" he mutters, as if apologizing to the colleagues, — „Somebody picked up a Schmeisser left by a Guy — not much harm..."

But the others are faring worse. Here a man tumbles down to the bottom of the gorge and remains still. Another follows. Casualties in platoons are increasing. The Spandaus survived the crushing airbombs and the harassing artillery fire. It seems that in spite of the shell-shower not one of them was lost and that they laugh and jeer at all efforts to silence them,

Somewhere to the left of the battalion hidden on the embankment the tanks of the „Scorpions squadron mark their first succes. Slowly they slide down the river embankment and rocking and rattling force their way across the shallow river to the other side. The Spandaus are getting mad but in vain. Somewhere beyond the tanks the target missing shells of the Nebelwerfer are raging. The tank of the platoon commander No. 1 slowly climbs up the other bank of the river. Others follow. Now the whole platcon is assembling on a hopelessly flat terrain for an attack. The gunners

change the elevation angle. The platoon commander nervously passes his hand over sweat covered and unshaven face. He knows well what's at stake: a successful attack and the Infantry will be able to break through a perfect uninterrupted fire ring.

„We are out of ammunition, Sir" — he hears over the phone. Other reports follow. The first tank platoon which found itself on the enemy-held side of Gaiano river, runs out of ammunition. It stands still almost at enemy's mercy and nearly useless, save that it occupies a strip of land and may serve as a meagre protection, and a very meagre one, for the incoming waves of attack.

What is to be done? To supply the tanks is half an hour's job and under fire like this — utterly impossible. But there should be no delay. Quick comes the decision from our side of the river:

„Wait and let the 2nd platoon pass".

Now on the left flank the „Wild cats" are getting on quite nicely. In our press-jeep we reach them almost at the moment of their triumph. Standing a few hundred meters away we can watch as on the screen the film-like and rapid course of events.

The Infantry which half an hour ago was sheltered in the bushes and dug in the ground and few shallow terrain depressions, comes down the slopes towards the river like a flash. They cross it helping themselves with fascine, boards and planks ,which they throw into water. They are already on the other side. Rattling tanks follow them. Another few minutes pass. Another half an hour and then at 9.55 the „Wild cats" have their bridgehead established.

Almost simultaneously on the right flank a sensational thing is happening, unheard of on Italian front. Our soldiers get hold of a bridge. It is intact and in perfect condition. Why was it not blown by the Germans? This was the question which was puzzling us for twenty four hours, disturbing not so much the sleep as a quiet reasoning of all our commanders.

„Evidently the rascals lack ammunition" — ventured one.

„Perhaps they are preparing an assault" — feared the other.

„They might have placed time mines" — was the conjecture.

When shortly before ten o'clock our first tank stopped on the bridgehead in order to lash from a short distance the german bunkers, clouds of smoke burst from under its caterpillars. German mines. The tank was gone. Others, however,reached the lines without accidents. The systematic tank fire passes along enemy positions. There is even something more than a fire — some kind of passion, hysterics, fury. Far away the Nebelwerfers are dying out and the Spandaus giving up. The German—held

bank pulled itself together evidently decided to await lurking. The scheme is simple: ,,First you and then we". Just the change of roles, just a dance, almost a waltz, once to the left, than to the right. This time, however, there won't be any changing of roles and there won't be any dancing. With the last shells of our tanks the infuriated „Lynxes" fall upon the German stands. They surprize the Germans in the position which under the conditions seem comical. The Jerries are squatting with their hands over their necks as if they knew that they are going to be taken prisoner.

,,You dropped in as if fired from your guns", they admit frightened and amazed. The bridge has been taken.

At this moment the attack reminds one of the string of a bow. Both ends of the bow — ,,Lynxes" and „Wild cats" are moving up along the captured river bank. Centre is still. At last the centre, as if a hand until now holding it firmly opened suddenly, violently starts forward. In a few minutes the bow disappears and there is an extended and straight, one would like to say, straightened line, not a line of attack but one of pursuit. They are driving and chasing the Germans already far-away.

The war correspondents and the photographers are advancing. They pass on their way German road signs, abandoned masks, pieces of uniform and armaments. The onlcokers, as always, rejoice at the sight of any trifling booty, not only ,,Spandau" or „Schmeisser" but even a helmet causes their enthusiasm.

— ,,Oh, look — a German cemetery" — one of them is screaming.

A German cemetery is a sensation indeed, as not only the wounded but also the killed men were removed by the enemy anxious to keep secret his casualties. We stop at this cemetery. We walk along the graves and pause in front of the great gate.

,,We fulfilled our duty" — says the black melancholy German inscription.

From a house opposite the cemetery an Italian contadino runs out full of joy and exitement. He utters guttural tones and waves his hands madly. It is after a while that we are able to see that the joy and excitement of the Italian has nothing to do with our war and victory.

„I got a baby — a son!" he is screaming.

We follow the path of war — the war which is always pushing forwards leaving behind the past death of cemeteries and the new-born life.

Italian front, 20.IV.45.

THE HELL OF MONTE CASSINO

by JAN BIELATOWICZ

The men who came back from the positions at Montecassino — said someone whose duty it was to stay at the rear — for several days behaved as men who enter a room in which a dead body lies on a catafalque They themselves used to say that they „had returned from hell". The Germans had also called Cassino a hell. But the most apt title for the chapter written by those 18 days would be: „The Purgatory". The charming dale, the hills and gorges took on a phantomlike appearence. Pathos rapidly becomes an everyday thing in wartime. On the stage of Maiola amphitheatre man's tragedy was being performed to the accompaniment of bursting shells. Lives were lost ceaselessly, and after each explosion the choir unfalteringly answered: „Help! Orderly!" The chaplain was saying prayers over his dead. Suddenly he also fell and could say no more: iron tore out his jaw and tongue. In the Maiola amphitheatre the spectators were corpses left on the slopes — an excellent audience of fighting nations. The uppermost places the positions, were occupied by the living. Strangely bored by this spectacle of war were the dead spectators: all turned their backs to the stage and faced the Monastery. Only the dead animals lay scattered in disorderly fashion, all tangled with bridles, traps and the loads that did not reach their destinations. The men's postures testified to their last deeds. That Englishman was crawling back from an observation post, wounded; the American got a small wound in his head in mid-air while jumping; the German who had been intercepting our wire communication drew out his first aid dressing but had no strength left to apply it; the Pole was still clutching a hand grenade.

Very much at home were rats. Large, fat, lazy, and unscrupulous. They got accustomed to the sight of men. They did not want to eat meat, but delighted in fruit.

No „props" were needed at Maiola theatre. Grass and foliage blackened, flowers smelt of the grave, wisps of steelcoloured smoke lingered among the wounded trees. Poppies bloomed redder and redder. Larks' and nightingales' songs sounded like obsequies, cuckoos' calls rang like the bells of cemetery chapels, and each night the bird was calling from so-

mewhere with its frightful, ceaseless cry. Sometimes a strange silence fell as if to bring out to the men even better their immense weariness. At such moments, like a flash, thoughts flew to happiness, and souls wandered over this our wonderful world. There was once a second of such absolute silence over the battlefield. On the 12th of May at 20 minutes past nine in the morning... An avalanche of shells immediately took wild revenge. Before they burst, they whined and wailed like distant cries pitying over the human lot in their flight. Those were artillery shells. „I have a great respect — somebody said — for artillery and its ominous whistle, but the mortars are surreptitious flying bastards". The air suffered worst in the fight. Through it, a ceaseless procession of whistles was in progress like dense traffic in monster cities.

In the quiet moments a strip of sun-flooded flowering land would suddenly appear, or a great expanse of mirror-like water. Through the slits in pillboxes the soldiers would look across the smoke-stained valley, at the hills of echelon "A" covered with olive trees, and that momentary peace would seem to them as strange and as unattainable as their destroyed dreams. War themes are so old as the world itself. But each generation must put them to the test anew, like schoolchildren making physical experiments. That soldiers are on best terms with death. That battlefields create a brotherhood of all the living and the dead and become their common home. An each battleground has its own characteristics... Cassino had that cadaverous smell.

Especially torturing were the six-barrelled synchronized mortars of the Monastery, the „fog throwers", which not only killed and made a terrifying noise but pulled down the bestbuilt shelters. In the evening some mysterious „Spandau" would spit out short bursts from behind a cover as if only a few yards away. Brotherhood of the dead is always deeply pathetic. A path leads over the grave of Major Nagle and Pte Ryatt of the Royal Sussex who are buried with their heads touching each other.

At this Cassino Purgatory souls lived on prayers, thoughts talks and superstitions. Prayers embraced souls as the shelters embrace bodies or as silk worms wrap up their chrysales. They accompanied all explosions, whistles and bursts. Thoughts would try to cut tunnel between this world and the other. Conversations would insist that there is somewhere a life more beautiful than dreams. They were consoling, comforting, smoothing the taunted features of the soldiers' faces. Words of St. Thomas a Kempis would come to mind: "How often I would prefer to keep silence and be no more amongst men.

"But why are we always so ready to talk and to indulge in shallow conversation and so rarely — without harm to our consciences — return to silence?

"Here's why: in conversation we seek to console each other we want to relieve our hearts so much burdened by bitter thoughts.

"And very eagerly we like to speak, to think about everything that is dear and desirable, or that hurts and oppresses us".

So on and on would the yarns be spun about mothers, wives and sisters, far-off towns and homes, about various byeways of this war.

And superstitions! Strange phantoms, mysterious signs would appear, dreams reigned over reality; the dead spoke again, forebodings were feared and obeyed.

All those were purifying forces countering the tricks of hell. They tempered the souls as the hardest steel does.

A strange analogy. The Gemans named the September 1939 campaign -- arrogantly and lyingly — "Feldzug der 18 Tage". Our fight against them for Cassino up to the day of capturing the Monastery lasted also 18 days. Once more the Polish soldier stood before a great and excellent German Army like an inexorable avenger. The name of Poland splashed at German faces with blood and iron and again they suddenly remembered in their leaflets that Poland lies in Europe and is a member of the European comunity.

When it became obvious to the Germans that 2300 hrs on May the 11th was the "Zero Hour" of the Allied offensive and that Poles were given the most difficult sector, the Polish positions were literally flooded with leaflets.

The catchword "Go home" would explode together with despair from German shells. In striking contrast to the hell let loose, to the blood poured out in torrents and to the cruelty of the enemies, in contrast to the last bit strength spent in order to toss a grenade into the murderer's pit — all that about "tilling the soil of one's fathers", „helping at home"; the photos of five cowards, the film about the Polish life under the occupation entitled "The Road without Hope", and the sweet "Go home" on a safe-conduct granted by Adolf Hitler — all that stung the face as the worst insults do. Then a skeleton fell among our soldiers. A skeleton nicely done on paper covered with blood and wearing a British tin-hat on its skull, pointing with bony hand towards the Monastery from which machine gun bullets mow down a bunch of soldiers. And the caption: "Poles, you are going to Cassino". On another leaflet — and there were many kinds of them — an Indian and a Moroccan lie in a pool of blood

and the Pole with "Union Jack" instead of eyes follows them blindly. "The English — reads the caption — had thrown against the Monastery walls Americans, Canadians, French, Moroccans and Indians. Now your turn has come. You are treated worse than colonial troops and you, soldiers of Poland, you are to give your lives like the Foreign Legion". The words assumed a hellish note but the hell itself yielded before the determination of the Poles.

Words came over the Moscow wavelength: "General Sosnkowski and the Polish Corps in Italy under General Anders are a nest of fascists who refused to fight the Germans and who ordered the poor to be murdered and minorities oppressed. Poland will be great only when she has joined the U.S.S.R."

"Wanda" assured us (German Radio station broadcasting to the Polish troops in Italy — Translator's note —) that "Your country is waiting for you", flattered us, glorified the fortitude of the Polish Corps and sang the songs dear to the soldier's heart, the songs of Polish Legions of the last war alternating with the melancholy words of he Great Emigration song (G.E.: after 1830 — Translator's note): "The Pole will perish on the foreign soil..."

Some American newspaper left lying on the field naively called the Poles "Utopians and romantics..."

Polish soldier's tormented souls would listen, listen... And there was no doubt already that the hell had been let loose not only around Montecassino, but all over Poland too. And one must strive against that Hell — to the end.

"I can tell you this in full honesty and truth—there are no troops I would rather have under my command than your Polish soldiers."

From Marshal Alexander's address at General Anders' decoration ceremony.

GEN. MARK W. CLARK TO GEN. SZYSZKO-BOHUSZ:

Dear General,

A year ago this month you of the 2. Polish Corps were engaged in a great offensive. In these operations of May 1944 your capture of the Monastery at Cassino brought world-wide honour and attention to your arms. Please convey to all ranks, for me, the fact that we recall with admiration your brilliant part in the smashing of the Gustav and Hitler Lines. We have never hesitated to call upon you for the execution of the most difficult assignments and your response always has been of the highest order.

We have come far since then and now we have won a great victory in which the 2. Polish Corps played a distinguished part. At the start of the spring offensive of the 15 Army Group you held an important sector of the 8th Army front, south of the Senio river and astride the main Faenza-Bologna highway.

The enemy appreciated the importance of this highway and defended it thoroughly. Your Corps moved forward and despite desperate resistance, you crossed both the Senio and the Santerno rivers and took Imola and Mordano.

By April 16th the successfull attacks on the strongpoints of Castel Guelfo and Castel S. Pietro were launched and to elements of your gallant command came the fitting honour of being the first 8th Army Troops to enter Bologna. Good luck to you and your splendid fighting organization.

Sincerely

MARK W. CLARK

General U.S.A. Commanding

* * *

BREDA CAPTURED BY THE POLISH TROOPS:

Just to keep the record straight it was Polish Troops who were responsible for the recent capture of Breda quite apart from press and radio stories to the contrary.

During recent weeks the Poles have been fighting under extremely difficult conditions and have established an outstanding reputation by their accomplishments. As stated last week by General Crerar:

"Every demand ever made on those troops has been met. Every task has been completed no matter how bitter the enemy's defence or how unfavourable the natural conditions. With such officers and men military success and final victory can never be in doubt.

In all the fighting of the First Canadian Army during the past three months the Polish Troops have set the finest of military standards."

("Maple Leaf"—newspaper of the 1st Canadian Army now serving in Holland—1.XI.1944).

"If Joseph Conrad were alive to-day and could walk round this Exhibition I am sure he would feel that his life's work was justified. Conrad had to join the British Mercantile Marine to satisfy the intense love of the sea that was in him and which he knew so well how to describe. If he were a young man to-day Joseph Conrad could serve at sea under the flag of his own country, as so many of his fellow countrymen are doing with distinction and success. In Conrad's day the Polish flag might be looked in vain in all the seven seas. How different it is to-day. Whenever in the course of naval operations in the present world conflict at sea a great concourse of ships is gathered together, there is almost always to be seen one or more Polish ensigns, worn either by Polish warships or by vessels of the Polish Mercantile Marine or by both.

When Poland was wantonly attacked by Germany she had a small but highly efficient modern navy. Three Polish destroyers and two submarines joined up with the British Navy. The story of the escape of the submarines from the Baltic has been described by a British writer as 'one of the greatest epic adventures in the whole story of submarining.' It will assuredly take its rightful place in the proud annals of the Polish Navy.

A Polish destroyer sank a German destroyer and several small German ships at the outbreak of war. The defence of the Peninsula and Port of Hel was entrusted to the then Commander of the Polish Fleet. Hel was the last strip of Polish territory to hold out, although it was the first to be attacked. It was defended for over a month and the Polish flag was kept flying until October 1st, 1939. The means of defence were inadequate and the fact that the siege lasted so long, attacked from land, sea and air, testified to the almost superhuman endurance and courage of its defenders.

The above-mentioned ships formed the nucleus upon which the present Polish Navy was built up. To day it consists of 1 cruiser, 6 destroyers and torpedo boats, 2 submarines and 3 motor gun-boats. The strength of the personnel is nearly 3000 officers and men.

The Polish Navy has suffered the loss of 3 destroyers, 2 submarines and one auxiliary vessel. For such a small navy, these losses are severe, but they have only served to intensify the Polish fighting spirit. Survivors immediately asked how soon could they be given another ship in which to continue the fight: they are all determined to get at the enemy as quickly as possible.

In view of its small size, the number of operations in which the Polish Navy has taken part is almost incredible, especially bearing in mind that some of them are continuous. Amongst these operations are Narvik, Dunkirk, Lofoten Islands, Tobruk, Dieppe, attacks on shipping in the Channel, Sicily, Italy, Oran and patrols, notably in the Mediterranean, and convoy escorting. The recent work of the Polish ships in the Mediterranean has been specially brilliant. Since May 1943, one Polish submarine sank no less than 18 enemy vessels of a total of nearly 49,000 tons. Other Polish submarines have accomplished equally meritorious work in Norvegian waters

and elsewhere, including the sinking of a large German transport ship packed with troops.

Two Polish warships were visited by the Polish Commander-in-Chief during his recent visit to the Middle East. Both these ships, British-built Hunt Class destroyers, have done excellent service in the English Channel and Mediterranean.

The Poles are justifiably proud of the part played by their Navy in the sinking of the Bismarck. A Polish destroyer was the first ship to sight the Bismarck (May 26, 1941). The British Captain of the destroyer flotilla (which included the Polish destroyer) signalled congratulations to the Polish Commander for dauntlessly attacking the Bismarck in spite of the great disparity of the two ships in size and armament.

The foregoing are but a few stories of Polish naval achievements. It is not surprising that up to date Polish naval personnel have received the following British decorations:

11 D.S.O.'s 12 D.S.C.'s 16 D.S.M.'s 1 M.B.E. and 5 Mentions in dispatches

Polish overseas trade had steadily been developed since the last war and the Port of Gdynia had been developed to an extent undreamed of, say, in 1920. Poland naturally tried to construct as large a fleet of merchant ships as possible, in order that her exports and imports should, as far as possible, be transported in Polish bottoms and her economic structure thereby strengthened. Her merchant fleet was small but modern and included the magnificent motor liner Pilsudski (15,000 tons). This ship was sunk in 1939. To-day the Polish Merchant Navy comprises nearly 40 ships which are assisting in the transport of the men and supplies of the United Nations.

Polish Merchant Seamen are playing their part with the gallantry which one would expect, as is shown by the fact that, up to date, the following British decorations have been awarded to them:

1 Bar to D.S.C.
2 D.S.C.'s
3 M.B.E.'s and 3 Mentions in dispatches.
11 O.B.E.'s

You may well feel satisfaction at the progress made, and the deeds performed by Polish sailors during the last four years. This Exhibition affords ample proof of it for all to come and see.

The Polish Navy, so ably sustained and directed by its Admiral, whom we have come to know so well, as well as the ships of your Merchant Navy have earned the gratitude of the United Nations and I wish them continued success. I believe that they, with us in this country, realise how critical a year this year of 1944 is, but are living for the moment when that monster of tyranny and oppression in Europe is destroyed once and for all and we can then proceed to make the whole world free."

(The address of the Rt. Hon. A. V. Alexander, First Lord of the Admiralty, at the Opening of Poland's Sea Exhibition in London, 10th February, 1944).

"Of all the Navies of the United Nations, none has fought better under circumstances of extreme operational difficulty than the Navy of Poland. Poland had to construct the modern port of Gdynia out of a sandy waste. Nevertheless, the Navy which sprang from that tiny coastal strip of the Baltic was the first one of all the Navies of the United Nations to meet the German attack—September 1st, 1939. Not only did it acquit itself with the greatest gallantry, but managed to break out with sufficient units to reconstitute itself as an operational force in Britain.

"Here, from its new bases, the Polish Navy has gone out to fight on all the broad oceans of the world, despite the fact that during the first nineteen years of its brief existence it was organised and trained solely for service in the Baltic."

(B. TUNSTALL)

"The Royal Navy is full of the greatest admiration for the work done by the Polish Navy."

(The First Lord of the Admiralty)

Decorations awarded to Polish Naval personnel up to January 1st, 1944:

British	*Polish*	*French*
1 K.C.B.	32 Virtuti Militari	2 Legion d'honneur
2 C.B.E.	868 Cross for Valour	3 Médaille milit.
2 O.B.E.	31 Cross of Merit with Swords	
11 D.S.O.		
11 D.S.C.	(32 % of the awards to all Allied Navies).	
11 D.S.M.		
1 M.B.E.		
5 M.I.D.		

JOSEPH CONRAD - KORZENIOWSKI

By HOLBROOK JACKSON

Joseph Conrad is the most remarkable phenomenon in English literature. Pole by birth and descent, son of the patriot and scholar who translated Shakespeare into Polish, Teodor Józef Konrad Korzeniowski, performed the miracle of becoming an Englishman and a front-rank English novelist without sacrificing his Polish patriotism. His father had inspired him with a love of freedom and literature. As the Poles were then under foreign dominance freedom was something which happened abroad, and as English literature and British ideals were common currency in the Conrad household, it was natural that Britain and freedom should become identical terms. But Joseph Conrad, child of a land without a seaport, added to his inherited love of English literature and British freedom a passionate love of ships and the sea. It was probably this passion which launched him into our seagirt consciousness. Like thousands of British boys, he wanted to go to sea, and he was able to gratify his desire in his eighteenth year by joining an English ship at Marseilles as an ordinary seaman.

He spoke little or no English. Twenty years later Captain Conrad walked into a London publishing house with the manuscript of "Almayer's Folly" under his arm. He must have looked like Captain Kettle, but the resemblance ended there. Conrad had adventured on the high seas, but although he was a Master Mariner in the Merchant Service, he was primarily an adventurer in the realm of the imagination. Whilst at sea he trained simultaneously for his Master's "ticket" and the mastery of English. He taught himself to master a ship on the Eastern trade routes, where he stored his mind with impressions of the sea and seamen which were to fill the stockpot of his later career. He taught himself English in the spare time of his service on a coaster between the Tyne Thames.

Conrad's genius was recognised at once by his peers and the critics, but he had to wait for another twenty years before he became popular. That need not cause surprise. It is only necessary to recall his appreciative accounts of stiff-necked skippers to realise that skipper Conrad

would prove to be a more than usually stiff-necked man of letters. He no more yielded to the popular clamour than he would have yielded to the clamour of the lower deck.

Thus gradually and grandly he came into port leading a flotilla of masterpieces: The Nigger of the Narcissus, Typhoon, Lord Jim, Nostromo, Heart of Darkness, The Secret Agent, The Mirror of the Sea, and many more now filing 23 volumes in the collected edition of his work. These books have entranced alike the cultured and the common reader, and may be expected to do so long as the mounting tyrannies of mechanisation and mental decay permit us to read what is worth reading.

But the strange story of Poland's gift to Britain does not end there. Conrad is not only a teller of tales, and there are no greater tales in English that his, nor is he only the admiral of a fleet of masterpieces. This Polish-Englishman is the Homer of the Seven Seas. Joseph Conrad, of landlubbers, has written the epic of the sea for the first of the maritime peoples. No native writer of sea stories can equal him, either for knowledge of ships or for insight into the character of the officers and men of the merchant service. And it is good to remember at this tragic moment that his genius was acclaimed by his adopted countrymen whilst he was still at the height of his powers, and that during the Great War he was granted by the Admiralty an opportunity of observing and recording incidents in the movements of the Royal Navy.

FRYDERYK CHOPIN

THE BARD OF FREEDOM

by EDOUARD GANCHE

In Chopin's time, and indeed right up to the beginning of the twentieth century, the Polish outlook, the educational influences and the ethnical elements were but barely acknowlegded as factors in the formation of his work. There was, of course, the undeniable evidence of titles such as „Mazurkas" and „Polonaises" and the fact of Chopin's heredity; but there the Polish element in his music ended, and his work was represented for the most part in connection with poetic moods and universal feelings expressed in the composer's own manner. But this form of artistic creed, which is still accepted by a few insufficiently informed people. is wrong.

Chopin's mind was as powerful as his body was weak.

Everything of life reached that ardent mind, where music ranged as the winds range over the space — music now fiery, now serene, now mournful, now tempestuous; terrifying and destructiwe, or sweet, voluptuous and soothing.

He was, par exellence, the bard of love and of freedom; it was from the people, in the social conditions and in the heart of his fellow countrymen, that he found his burning inspirations.

He could stir the soul or calm it, or transport it on the sounding waves of his music, magnificent in its construction phrased in terms of the sublime and the eternal. There was nothing weak or mediocre in his mind, which soared high above mere men when he turned in isolation to his own inner world.

His music makes a deep impression upon those who can understand it, because it expressed the nobility of the soul in all its fullness. If the music is lofty and enthralling, it is because it springs from a great universal spirit, of which he was the vital personification.

It stands for the life of a nation, of Poland, in its general features for universal life, in its intimate particulars for the life of Poland. Chopin thought with Poland, and for Poland: his feelings originated in the supremely keen sensitivness of the Pole, and he has written nothing which is not a pure and genuine expression of the Polish spirit.

Thus, leading all men to know and love the people whom he loved, defended and exalted, he reached the hearts of all peoples. Of this race, to which he belonged, he is the great hero; and of all men of genius in the world's story he is one of the most wonderful.

He has raised music to a level upon which it embraces an accurate sense of both psychological and social life. He has united it, beyond mere feelings and impressions, with the very thoughts and general life of a nation. In order to understand well and to appreciate increasingly the beauties of Chopin's music it is necessary to study all the principles which went to form it. Nothing in Art is greater or more inspiring.

from „The Oxford original Edition of Frideric Chopin".

* * *

ZWYRTAŁA THE FIDDLER

by KAZIMIERZ PRZERWA TETMAJER

Kazimierz PRZERWA-TETMAJER *was born in 1865. Already at the age of 16 he had published his third book of poems which was greeted with wide acclaim and introduced a new era in Polish poetry. In 1928 he was decorated by the city of Warsaw for his great contribution to Polish literature. He was the author of eight published volumes of poetry and many collections of Polish folk-lore. He was widely travelled but spent most of his life in the mountainous region in which he was born and which is the scene of the stories contained in "Tales of the Tatras."*

And one bitter afternoon in December 1940 on a main street amid the ruins of Warsaw, in the rubble and the wreckage left by Nazi bombs, was found the dead, emaciated body of this greatest and most idolized poet and story teller of Young Poland.

Old Zwyrtała died and his soul set out to heaven, moustached and with a fiddle under his arms.

He got to the gate and looked: it was shut.

He thought to himself: "Better not bang at the gate; they're asleep."

He sat down on a stump near by . . . . . sat and sat but pretty soon he wearied of it, took out the fiddle, tightened its pegs with his teeth, strummed on its strings, leant it under his left arm and drew the bow across.

He played softly at first, fearing to wake them, but, warming to his playing, he pressed harder on the bow. Playing there, he called to mind his old woman, who'd stayed behind on the earth and, at the thought, immediately began to sing:

May the bachelor's abode ever blessed be!
Everywhere I look around, there my wife I see.

As he sang—and he sang loud—he heard a voice from behind the gate saying:

"Who's that there?"

"Saint Peter!" thought Zwyrtała to himself, but he answered boldly, for in Empress Tessa's time he'd been pressed and had served in the cuirassiers for twelve years over there.

„It's I".

„And who's I?"

„What're you yelling for?"

„I'm not yelling at all, only singing".

„To the dev —" (the voice broke off) „with such singing. Why ever did you come so late?"

„Right enough, I'm a bit late, but I only died towards evening".

„Towards evening? Then you should be but half way here."

„Well, Saint Peter, I'm brisk — I'm a highland-man".

„Then where d'you hail from?"

„From the mountains".

„From Nowy Targ?"

„Yes".

„And from what village?"

„Oh, if I tell you you'll be none the wiser. You don't know the country over there, do you?"

„I know everything; Where d'you come from?"

„From Mur".

„What's your name?"

„Maciek Galica".

„And your nickname?"

„Zwyrtała".

„And you place?"

„Sentzek".

„Well then, sit there, Sentzek, till daybreak... and don't make a noise".

„All right, I won't. Good night to you, sir".

„There, there! Quiet!"

Maciek Zwyrtała sat there quietly for a while, but it got a bit cold towards morning, though 'twas midsummer and again he strummed on the strings.

Lo and behold, a little head — one, two, three little heads showed over the gate!

They were little angels' heads.

„Ow! Ow!" said one of them. „How nicely he plays!"

When Maciek Zwyrtała heard that he brought his bow down hard on the strings — on all four at once — and out came a march:

Oh, the Magyar drinks. the Magyar pays!

„Oh, how beautiful, how lovely!" cried the little angels. „What sort of a tune is that?"

„That's a bit of robber music".

„A bit robber music — a bit of robber music", the little angels began to repeat, and they clapped their hands. „Oh, how lovely!".

Suddenly the key grated in the lock and the gate opened wide; the gatekeeper of heaven, Saint Peter, appeared in it.

„Zwyrtała"!

„Here I am".

„Come along in".

„No need to ask twice into heaven".

But in a flash the news was all over heaven that a highlandman who played the fiddle had come, and it came to the Lord God's own ears as, having risen early, He sat before His porch, smoking a pipe. He was doing no work, for it was a Sunday.

Zwyrtała hadn't yet been given quarters when an angel came up, but not a little one this time in a little, white shirt and white wings, but a big one, in silwer armor with a flaming sword at his side and rainbow wings, and he said:

„Zwyrtała!"

„Here!"

„Is it true that you can play?"

„It's true".

„The robbers' dance?"

„Aye".

„Would you play it?"

„Why not? To whom?"

„To the Lord God Himself"!

Zwyrtała scratched the back of his ear: but only once. He was a Galica and Galicas were all bold fellows.

„I'll play it".

„Then come along!" said the angel, speaking with a highland accent.

„Would you kindly tell me, sir, if you were ever in the mountains?"

„I was", said the angel.

„But when? Excuse me, sir, for my boldness in asking you".

„When the Poles fought the Tartars in the Koscieliska Valley and I was there to help them".

„Zwyrtała looked incredulously at the angel. He was young — not more than twenty.

The angel laughed, for he understood Zwyrtała thinking that way.

We don't get old here, in heaven," said he.

Zwyrtała got ashamed and answered: „Don't wonder, Sir. Could one take in everything in heaven at once? On earth we don't understand everything and how could I here."

„Well, come on", said the angel, and went in front.

He went along a street — a wide one (Ludzimirska Street in Nowy Targ was nothing to it, why, nothing at all!). There were silver houses on

both sides of it, where the saints dwelt. Then they came to a golden one, and before it, sitting in the porch, was the Lord God Himself! He was smoking a pipe.

Zwyrtała made his best bow and the Lord God nodded to him.

Round about were angels — small ones, big ones, archangels in golden armor, men and women saints and those others that are in heaven, men and women — heaps of women! They'd run from all sides to hear the music! 'Twas a wonder how they hustled to get in front, those souls!

„Now then!" said the Lord God, „Zwyrtała, play."

And Zwyrtała bowed himself again before the Lord God and said:

„I most humbly bow to Your Grace, mighty, all-powerful Lord! Does anyone happen to know if there are any young men from Podhale here in heaven?

„What for?"

„Because one plays better when they dance".

The Lord God laughed and made a sign to the angels. Two of them flew off but came back with nothing.

„There are a few from Podhale, but they're old" reported one.

„That's no use", said Zwyrtała. „How could an old man dance! And where are the young ones? For sometimes young men, too, die!"

Then Saint George said: „You'd have to seek them in purgatory".

„True enough! You say well, young sir.!" said Zwyrtała. „That's where they'd be — lots of them!" I know them! Jasiek Mardula, that Brzenk of Lysintsa killed because of Bronka Horani, or Frank Macey — they hanged him in Mikulas. Just finely he robbed and set fire to four inns in Luptov; but maybe he's in hell? Or there was Mayertsik, Peter Mayertsik's son who was killed by a cart with ore in it in the Skupniow clearing — he was terribly fond of fighting — oh, if he came here, There wasn't such a dancer in a hundred villages round."

But the Lord God made a sign with his hand.

"Play!" He said.

"What tune?"

"The robbers' dance."

"Here goes then the robbers' dance."

Zwyrtała tightened the pegs with his teeth, tuned up, drew his bow across the strings and played it right through, beginning with:

Oh, Janitzek, heart of mine,
Where's the feather that was thine —
Given by me?

Dearest, when to war I rode,
Fell it where the river flowed
Full and free.

continuing through:

Oh, chief of ours, chief of ours,
Good robber-boys hast thou, by all the power!

and so on down to:

For here the robbers dance so gay.

He played everything down to Amen.

The Lord God nodded His head. He liked it. Then the saints and the angels followed suit the saved too; nay, even, I may say, they couldn't praise Zwyrtała's playing enough! And he was most awfully glad and his moustache bristled,

Well, but listen what happened afterwards. The Lord God went into His dwelling and then the men and women saints and the angels kept saying to Zwyrtała: "Play! Play!"

And Zwyrtała made no reply, but started the Mientushanski tune at once:

When among the meadows I do gaily sing
'Tis as if the organ in the church did ring.

And they all cried our: „Oh, how lovely, oh, how beautiful."

Thus did Zwyrtała play and sing and what to you think happened!

Saint Joseph, the foster-father of the Lord Jesus, was crossing heaven when he heard a soul singing (some girl's soul it was):

When I was a little one, only twelve months old,
To me came there singing all the boys so bold.

Saint Joseph listened, and he hadn't heard it out when, from another side there came a voice that sounded like a man's:

Maiden if thou wert not of our clan and race
I'd have killed the fellow that looked upon thy face.

And Saint Joseph hadn't heard that well through, when lo and behold from yet another side came an angel's tenor, so loud and strong that it thundered through heaven:

Strike, oh Lord, that shepherd dallying with a maid,
While his flock, uncared for, through the peaks have strayed.

Saint Joseph caught his head in both hands!

"My hundred forefathers, whatever's that?" he said.

He ran towards Saint Peter and there, in the very place where saved souls are supposed to be learning angelic hymns, there wasn't archangel Gabriel standing with his golden baton and his trumpet, but Zwyrtała, sitting on a chair and fiddling and round about him men and women souls and angels sang, already fairly correctly in chorus:

Homeward lies our way now — dark night's here,
May it not be for us — void of cheer.
'Mid Hungarian nobles — wealth untold,
For our hands since we are — strong and bold.

"Lord Jesus Christ!" cried Saint Joseph and hastened on, faster still, to Saint Peter: "Whatever's up here?"

Just that very moment the archangel Gabriel came up to him and said that nobody in heaven wanted to sing any way except to a highland tune; not even Saint Cecilia!

"Zwyrtała's teaching them," he said. "It's something extraordinary. They were to have learned new hymns — tomorrow's Our Lady's festival — and none of them knows anything."

Night came and found them still listening. From every side highland tunes sounded. All heaven reechoed with them.

In the morning Saint Peter said to archangel Gabriel: "This can't go on. Couldn't you call up this Zwyrtala, Sir?"

„All right, then!"

Zwyrtała came with his fiddle under his arm.

He bowed.

"Zwyrtała!" said Saint Peter "Would you go away somewhere?"

"Out of this?"

"Yes."

"Away from heaven?"

"Just so."

"But where?"

"Where?" repeated Saint Peter. "Where? That's just what I don't know."

"And he fell a-thinking."

"And why should I?" asked Zwyrtała. "Why, they sent me here when I died."

"That's just it."

"I didn't steal or kill or fight."

"I know, I know!"

"Well, then, what?"

"But everyone in heaven's been singing highland songs since you've come."

"Oh, that's it, is it?"

"Zwyrtała, said Saint Peter" (then he paused).

"Where can he go from heaven?"

But Zwyrtała kept silent a moment, scratched the back of his ear and ten said: „Oh, please Your Grace, don't make headache over that! I agree on the spot. I'm off."

"Where to?"

"To where I came from."

"To the earth?"

"Just that."

"And I thought of putting you on some star....."

"I don't want it. You needn't look for any star. I'm off down here."

„Out of heaven?"

„Oh, I'll find heaven there too! I'll go through the woods and the valleys, playing. I'll see to it that the old tunes aren't forgotten. When a boy sits by the sheep with his fiddle I'll play to him softly from behind a crag. When a girl sings by her cows in a mountain meadow, I'll help her. When the old highlandmen go to cut wood in the forest, I'll make sound in their ears the songs their fathers knew."

„And, if none be there, there'll be water in the torrents, and frozen lakes, when the wind whistles over the ice. There'll be the forest — I shan't weary there or cry for heaven..... While I yet lived I often asked the Lord God to let me, after death, stay forever in the mountains. I want no other heaven, I woulnd't change the mountains for seven heavens".

Well, then Zwyrtała, go! for you'd make us all highlandmen here in heaven... And you won't feel wronged?"

But Zwyrtała raised his fiddle quite up to his head in salute.

„Where my heart is, is heaven", said he.

And he made his best bow and went out at heaven's gate, down the high road towards the earth — it was night. He went down the Milky Way, his fiddle under his arm, and when he felt himself once more in freedom he cried aloud, „Hu! Ha" and lifted his bow high and struck up:

Come I from the mountains where the torrents leap —
Where the rain has bathed me, wind has rocket to sleep.
Krzywan, Krzywan, Krzywan, why art dreaming so?
Has the white snow clothed thee, doth thy wild wind blow?
Wild goats of the mountains, whither lies your way?
In the Feather Valley, there the wild goats stay.

Janitzek, Janitzek, thunder bears thy name.
Through a hundred valleys echoes loud thy fame.
'Tis no shame, a robber in a mountain race
A robber sits in heaven, in the foremost place.

And Zwyrtała went forward, down the Milky way, singing as he went, till he reached the rocky paths in the peaks and on further, into the dephts of the Tatra.

„UNREASONABLE POLES"

A. P. HERBERT, M. P.

Unreasonable Poles, why do you falter?
Be sensible — be realistic, pray.
Yours are the only frontiers that must alter:
You are the one crusader in the way.

Unreasonable Poles, you will be fatter:
Things of the spirit are not your concern.
Oxford and Cambridge do not greatly matter:
And you shall have Loch Swilly in return.

Unreasonable Poles, preserve traditions.
In just two centuries, you must allow,
You've thrice enjoyed benevolent partitions.
For Heaven's sake, why start to argue now?

„Sunday Graphic"

SECRET PROTOCOL

by STANISŁAW STROŃSKI

The secret protocol to the Agreement between the Government of the United Kingdom and the Polish Government, regarding the mutual assistance from 25th August 1939 became open. Mr. Petherick, M. P., in the House of Commons on the 20th February 1945 literally quoted Art. 3 of the Protocol and Mr. Eden in the meantime, avoiding clarification, declared in answer to many questions that this protocol would be published. On the 5th of April 1945 the British Government published a so called White Paper consisting of both the Agreement and the Protocol.

What kind of obligations and the manner in which they should be carried out — are contained in this Agreement and this secret Protocol?

According to Art 1 of the Agreement any attack by any one of the European states on Poland or on Great Britain calls for all the support and assistance without any further discussion. Art. 1 (a) of the secret Protocol adds that „by the expression 'a European Power' employed in the Agreement it is to be understood Germany." Consequently when Germany invaded Poland on the 1 st September 1939, Great Britain without hesitation declared war on Germany on the 3rd September 1939, giving at once such help as was possible at the time.

Two weeks later the 17th of September 1939 Russia invaded Poland and occupied her eastern part and together with the Germans in the Ribbentrop-Molotow agreement of 28th September 1939 carried out the partitioning of Poland. Such a case was foreseen in Art. 1 (b) of the secret Protocol which states that „in the event of action by a European Power other than Germany, the Contracting Parties — Poland and Great Britain — will consult together on the measures to be taken in common." Undoubtedly such consultations took place October 1939, when the Polish Government was in Paris, but apparently the result was that nothing could be done against Russia in those circumstances. Only however when the circumstances changed after the German attack on Russia on the 22nd of June 1941, the British Government contributed to the Polish-Soviet Agreement of the 30th July 1941, in which Russia declared her agreements with Germany of the year 1939 as non valid as far as Polish territories were concerned. On this same day H. M. Government issued a note, declaring that

they do not recognise any territorial changes carried out in Poland after August 1939. Again then the obligations of the Agreement and Protocol were fulfilled.

But the Agreement made it clear also in Art. 6 that neither Gr. Britain nor Poland would make any agreement with any the Allied states which would limit their mutual obligations. Also Art. 3 of the secret protocol (mentioned by Mr. Petherick in the H. C. recently) adds that any new agreements with another party: „would of necessity be so framed that their execution should at no time prejudice either the sovereignty or territorial inviolability of the other contracting party."

Great Britain when signing her agreement of mutual assistance with Russia for 20 years on 26th May 1942, gave the assurance, that in Art. 5 of British-Russian agreement it has been stated, that both parties:

„will act in accordance with the principles of not seeking territorial aggrandisement for themselves and noninterference in the internal affairs of other States."

It was clear again that Gr. Britain fulfilled her obligations arising from Art. 3 of the secret Protocol of the agreement with Poland, as Art. 2 and 3 the Atlantic Charter.

It was from 1939 to 1942 a nice and honest addition to the history of the fulfilling of agreements and keeping of one's word by Great Britain.

Suddenly on 12th February 1945 in the Yalta agreement, published in Crimean statement by Mr. Churchill, Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Stalin, the representative of Great Britain and the representative of U. S. A. agreed to:

1. the recognition of seizure by Russia of Eastern Poland according to Ribbentrop-Molotov agreement of 1939, which was rejected emphatically by H. M. Government in a note of Mr. Eden's to General Sikorski of 30th July 1941;

2. ignoring the rightful Polish Government with its 5 1/2 years of collaboration with the United Nations and quite agreeing to the unlawful formation in Moscow of a forced government for Poland.

Both these decisions violate Art. 3 of the Polish-British Protocol of 25th August 1939 and Art. 2 and 3 of the Atlantic Charter, as well as Art. 5 of the British-Russian Agreement of the 26th May 1942.

It's true that it has been published (*Times*, 6th of April 1945) a significant explanation that the Art. 3 of the secret Protocol has not been touched in Yalta because there was only advice and not an agreement.

* * *

Some of the papers commented on the secret Protocol. Here is a quotation from *Western Morning News* in *Plymouth* worth while to be remembered:

"It can hardly be questioned that this makes it illegal for Great Britain to agree with the Soviet Union that one-half of the territory of Poland should go to Russia. If that were done at Teheran or Yalta it was beyond all questions illegal and a violation of the Protocol. For producing this clarification Major Petherick deserves the thanks of all who are interested in the problem."

ONCE A POLE ALWAYS A POLE

During the banquet given in Moscow by the Soviet Authorities in honour of General de Gaulle Mr. Stalin turning to Mr. Gaston Palewski, personal advisor of General de Gaulle, proposed a toast for the representative of Poland. Advised that Mr. G. Palewski is French-born full-fledged French citizen Mr. Stalin, undisturbed, remarked: Once a Pole, always a Pole.

Mr. Stalin is right. But since Lvov and Wilno are admittedly Polish—therefore . . . .

"Let me however, make this clear, in case these should be any mistake about it in any quarter. We mean to hold our own. I have not become the King's First Minister in order to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire. For the task, if ever it were prescribed, some one else would have to be found and, under democracy, I suppose the Nation would have to be consulted."

(British Prime Minister's Speech at the Lord Mayor's Banquet in the Guild Hall on 10th November 1942).

"I want to see Poland wholly independent and free from all influences because Poland is neither German nor Russian but she is one of the spiritual heirs of the latin culture."

(LENIN, 1907, as quoted by Huysmans)

"A Poland whose future government must be 'friendly' to Russia entirely, according to Russia's definition of what friendliness is; a Poland which must remain hostile to Germany whatever type of Germany emerges and for all eternity: and a Poland which must permit passage to Russian Troops whenever Russia desires it, is not strong but helpless, and not independent but servile."

(DOROTHY THOMPSON in "New York Post")

". . . . Who is going to settle the Western Frontiers of Russia? Who is going to decide how much of Finland Russia will take; how much of Poland, how much of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, how much of Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Rumania? At any rate let us distinguish between those countries; let us remember those which fought with us and those which fought against us; I have every sympathy with those Polish statesmen who would not sign that agreement . . . ."

(Lieut. Colonel Sir WALTER SMILES BLACKBURN—Hansard, Vol. 406, N. 11).

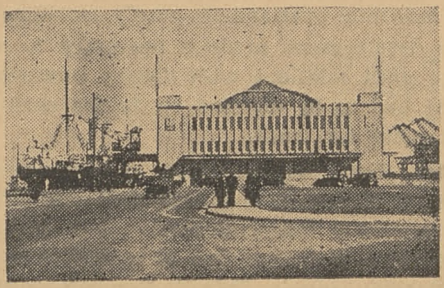
". . . . Poland which defied—and quite justly—Hitler's demand for a plebiscite in 8 per cent of its territory would then emerge as a 'victorious power' with the loss of 50 per cent of its area to a cobelligerent who already controls one-sixth of the earth. It would teach small nations a lesson not to resist aggression."

(From *Atlantic Charter on Trial* by FRANCIS STUART CAMPBELL in the "Sign" March 1944).

". . . . The wicked thing to my mind was that we tried to compel the Czech Government to accept a solution which we knew was immoral, and that is the danger I see in this present situation, i. e. of Poland, that His Majesty's Government try to urge upon the Polish Government something which they know to be wrong."

(MR. IVOR THOMAS—Hansard, Vol. 406, Nr. 11)

GDYNIA - THE PRIDE OF POLAND



Among the Polish achievements after the Great War, the establishment of Gdynia occupies one of the first places. Having gained, together with her independence free access to the Baltic sea, but without a seaport (since the port of Danzig was created a free city), Poland's enormous effort built a huge, up-to-date port and a new city of over 100.000 inhabitants, where a few years previously there was only a fishing village. The spontaneous development of Gdynia and the bare figures of her statistics are a best proof of how vital for Poland was the question of free access to the sea and of a port on the Baltic shore. Poland had no capital and could not afford to build an "artificial" port. The port of Gdynia and the town of Gdynia have developed in a natural way and at a speed that amazed the whole world and even the Poles themselves.

Gdynia's overseas trade amounted in 1939 to 9.500.000 tons. This is the result of steady and unbroken trade development which has placed Gdynia since 1933 at the head of the Baltic ports and has brought her, with regard to goods turnover, up to the fourth place among the ports of the Continent of Europe, immediately after the great ports of Rotterdam, Hamburg and Antwerp.

The reasons for the rapid development of Gdynia, primarily as a Polish port are to be found in the vital importance to Poland of Baltic trade and policy and in Poland's favourable geographical position between the Baltic and the Black Sea.

Gdynia's rapid development has been due also in large measure to her natural hinterland extending far beyond the frontiers of the Polish State, embracing many of the States of Southern and Eastern Europe.

In analysing the present importance of Gdynia as a seaport two factors must be taken into consideration, first its economic importance to Poland as a channel of foreign trade and the large part it plays in Polish maritime trade as centre of maritime overland or purely maritime transit trade.

Swift economic development, made it necessary to seek new markets and establish direct trade relations with distant countries. Poland's commercial development had to be directed on to the maritime route — the only perfectly free route for trade.

Poland, therefore, found herself faced by the necessity of creating, what did not as yet exist, her own, independent maritime trade, in order to achieve general economic independence.

Of particular moment is the problem of transit from the Scandinavian and Baltic States through Gdynia, Poland, Rumania to the Near and Far East. This is also the shortest and quickest route for goods traffic with the Near East for the northern and western continental ports and for England, and can already compete successfully with the maritime route around Europe hitherto in use. Apart from this, the shortest and most convenient route from North America to Rumania, the Baltic States, South-West Russia and the Near East leads also through Gdynia.

The overland part of this trade follows in the main two routes, the first: via Zebrzydowice through Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, to European Turkey and then across the Bosphorous to Asiatic Turkey, Syria and Palestine, the second: via Sniatyn-Załucze through Rumania to the port of Constanza and thence by the Polish regular shipping line to the Near East ports of Jaffa and Haifa.

„The Clasp of Friendship" N. 11

RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE IN POLAND

"I am not king of your consciences"
SIGISMUND AUGUST
King of Poland (1548—1572)

"I would give half of my life if those who have abandoned the Roman Catholic Church should voluntarily return to its pale; but I would prefer giving all my life than to suffer anybody to be constrained to do it, for I would rather die than witness such an oppression."

(JAN ZAMOYSKI, Chancellor of the Crown—"16th Century")

As early as 1264 King Bolesław the Pious conferred on the Jews in the communities of Poznań and Kalisz the privilege known as the Statute of Kalisz. In 1334, by the Statute of Wiślica King Kazimierz the Great confirmed the application of the above-mentioned privileges to all the countries subject to the then King of Poland. Since then it is known as the Jewish Statute, and it became part of the Volumina Legum, the official collection of laws binding on Poland. The statute was confirmed again in 1507; the last King of Poland, Stanisław-August Poniatowski, confirmed it again in 1765.

"These privileges established the fundamental right of the Jews in Poland down to the end of the existence of the Polish state in 1795. They gave the Jews freedom to hold religious services in public, and assured them such security that the murder of a Jew was punished by confiscation of property, whereas the murder of a noble was punished only by a fine. Further, the privileges granted them the right to conduct business as usurers. Finally, the privileges placed the Jews under the jurisdiction of the wojewodas — the administrative provincial governors of the State."

"The General Privilege left considerable autonomy to the Jewish communities in Hebrew called Cahals. The sphere of activity of these communities included primarily religious matters, then jurisdiction in disputes between Jews, matters of social and benevolent assistance, organizational questions, Jewish taxation, and finally the budget of the communities themselves. The broad sphere of autonomy which the Jewish communities enjoyed led to the creation of supervisory organizations for fiscal, and

religious purposes, these organizations being known as ziemstwos, of the vincial councils. At the moment of their emergence, in the sixteenth century, there were four of these ziemstwos... by the beginning of the eighteenth century there were over a dozen... The need arose to create a central apparatus which, acting for all the Jewish communities, would undertake the collection of Jewish taxes in the Republic. In addition, a tribunal which would act as court of appeal from the ziemstwo court, and as a higher court for the first hearing of more important cases. In consequence, in 1591 there arose a representative body of Polish Jews, known as the Congress of the Four Lands, or the Jewish Sejm in the Crown. This representative body, which existed down to 1764, possessed two central institutions, the Sejm and the Tribunal."

* * *

"In 1573, after the death of Sigismund Augustus, the socalled Confederation of Warsaw (Pax inter dissidentes de religione) reaffirmed in a solemn pledge the principle of equality of rights without any regard to religious confession. By this document the Polish Protestants of all shades were granted religious freedom. It is a proof of unusual tolerance, unknown then in Western Europe, that this Confederation was voted unanimously, the bench of bishops alone abstaining from voting. Of the ninety eight deputies to the Diet who signed the Act of Confederation, forty-one belonged to the Catholic party. The Senate gave an even more eloquent expression of tolerance, because, of the twenty-eight Senators who signed this historical act, only three were Protestants.

In the same year, at the election of the new king, Henri de Valois of France, who in his own country was reputed to be an active opponent of the Huguenots, the Protestants succeeded in forcing him to take an oath that he would abjure any attempt which might lead to the persecution of the dissidents.

* * *

"The Eastern Orthodox church which existed in Lithuania and Ruthenia used to be autonomous. After the union of Florence the orthodox church in Poland received from King Władysław Warneńczyk in 1443 a privilege which assured it rights equal to those of the Catholic Church.

Armenians also belonged to the Eastern Orthodox Church. In 1439 the Armenian or Gregorian Church joined the Roman Church. But this union was not a durable one either — it was renewed in the seventeenth century. Since 1666 Lwów has been the residence of three metropolitans — Latin, Greek, and Armenian."

W. Lednicki
„Life and Culture of Poland"

ONE OF US MUST BE A FOOL

Petrarca the celebrated Italian poet of the 14th Century met a fool in the street who was watching a detachment of soldiers leaving the town.

"Where are these soldiers going"? Asked the fool.
"To war. Don't you know that war broke out".
"And what is the war for"?
"To obtain just peace".
The fool looked at the poet with astonishment.
"Then the war is waged that peace may prevail"? He asked.
"Of course".
"And what would there be if there were no war"?
"Peace of course".
"Excuse me Sir" said the dunce "but one of us must be a fool".

Swierkozubr.

YALTA AND THE ARITHMETICS

Hon. A. E. O'Konski U. S. Congressman proved conclusively in his recent speech delivered in the U. S. House of Representatives that 1 is more than 2.

Polish Daily Zgoda.

DECLARATION OF THE POLISH GOVERNMENT IN LONDON

The Polish Covernment published the following declaration on June 25th:

"1. After several years of policy of appeasement towards Hitlerite Germany on the part of the large and the smaller European countries which policy must inevitably have led to the war and only gave Germany time to prepare herself for it, Poland, rejecting German proposal for a joint action against Russia was first to oppose plans and pretensions of Germany by taking up arms in defence of her integrity and independence.

2. When the war broke out Poland held British and French assurances of alliance. These assurances provided for immediate assistance of Great Britain and France in event of German aggression. Furthermore on strength of the article 3 of the protocol to the agreement on mutual assistance between the United Kingdom and Poland signed on August 25th 1939 the British guarantee provided that: "Undertakings mentioned in the article 6 of the agreement, should they be entered into by one of the contracting parties with a third state, would of necessity be so framed that their execution should at no time prejudice either sovereignity or territorial inviolability of other contracting party".

3. The Polish nation took up arms in the defence of its own freedom and of the freedom of other nations. In September 1939 the Polish soldier saved the freedom of Europe, nay, perhaps even of world. Had Poland capitulated in 1939 without taking up cudgels, or — what would have been worse — if she had become a German satellite, the freedom of the people of Europe would have been a thing of the past, probably for many long years. Poland surrendered in an unequal battle against Germany's overwhelming odds supported by Soviet Russia while the Western Powers were unable to fulfill their obligations for an immediate attack on Germany.

4. The Polish Government declared that Poland was faithful to all obligations she took upon herself. She did not capitulate and did not

attempt to make a separate truce or peace with Germany but continued to wage relentless war against her, inside the country as well as on the other fronts thus making an effective contribution to the victory of the United Nations.

5. Despite the stubborn attitude of the whole nation, despite Poland's enormous sacrifices and her great contribution to the war effort, the three great powers at the conference at Yalta took decisions pertaining to the territorial integrity of the Polish State and depriving the Polish Nation of the free will to decide its own fate, its own form of government, and its relations with foreign states. By the declaration of February 13th 1945 the Polish Government protested emphatically against these decisions stating that it could not bind the Polish Nation when deprived of the possibility of expressing its will freely.

6. Despite the protest made by the Polish Government and contrary to all principles of the international law, contrary to the declaration solemnly signed by the United Nations, the Committee composed of the Foreign Minister of the country that has annexed nearly half of the whole territory of Poland and the Ambassadors of Great Britain and United States, has been authorised to sanction the pseudo-government imposed on the Polish nation which is at present under occupation of an alien army and an alien political police. Created by the agents of the socalled "Provisional Government of Poland" with the factual support of the Communist Party to which but insignificant number of the Polish people adhere, it is to be sanctioned by the United Nations and be given the right to represent the Polish Nation.

7. To preserve the semblance of free speech of the Polish Nation there have been taken to Moscow in addition to representatives of Communist administration imposed on Poland some Poles who have no right to speak on behalf of the Polish people. Simultaneously with consultations on the formation of the alleged independent „Government of National Unity" there took place in Moscow in violation of the elementary principles of the justice and righteousness an illegal trial of treacherously arrested leaders of the Polish Underground Movement. As the leaders of the struggle of the Polish Nation against Germany and as representatives of the democratic parties, these men together with the legal Polish government in London are representatives of the Polish Nation until such time as genuinely free election are held. Such elections, with the participation of all parties represented in the Underground Movement and of these Polish citizens who find themselves outside the confines of Poland as a result of war conditions, can only take place after the Soviet army and the Soviet political police have left the territory of Poland.

8. The Polish Government as the sole authorized and independent Government legally appointed by the President of the Republic and universally recognized — declares that the so-called "Polish Provisional Government of National Unity" is illegal and cannot be voluntarily recognized by the Polish Nation. It has been created on the basis of an unprecedented procedure while the whole of the Polish territory is occupied by the Soviet army and at a time when Poles are deprived of elementary rights of man and citizen.

9. The Polish Government declares that it will hand over its authority solely to a government which has been formed on free Polish soil, and one which reflects the will of the people as expressed in the free elections".

POLISH GOVERNMENT'S APPEAL TO THE POLISH NATION

On June 26th the Polish Government in London issued the following appeal to the Polish Nation.

"Poles — Against all expections it was not principles of justice or pledges resulting from international treaties that won the day in settling the Polish problem, but the accomplished facts imposed from outside. A self appointed political body composed of communists and foreign agents is to become "the Government". A few Poles have been found who have considered it as possible for them to take a hand in this. They have done so at the moment when all political and military leaders of five years heroic Polish struggle against Germany have been charged before Moscow tribunal and been tried in accordance with the well known Soviet pattern.

Allied Governments of Great Britain and United States are to recognize this "Provisional Government" which calls itself as if to add insult to injury "Government of National Unity" and are to withdraw their recognition from the lawful government of the Polish Republic, their faithful ally during the five years of war for freedom of Nations. In this moment it is our duty to review once more the path which we have followed so far and the road which we must follow in the future.

During the whole of the present war the Polish Nation has fought exceptionally actively and has not shrunk from any sacrifice. Its attitude was consciously and voluntarily chosen because it had one purpose in view. This purpose was to restore full independence to Poland in her pre-war frontiers. For Poles the life in freedom is the highest goal on earth. We have consistently worked to smash the tyranny which threatened us, and the whole world.

For the decisions which it had reached of its own free will, the Polish Nation has paid the highest possible price. No other member of the United Nation has borne such heavy sacrifices or contributed so much to the common cause, in relation to its resources and possibilities.

It is one of principles of our civilization that the government is the expression, and the servant of nations will. It ceases to be a government when it finds off National life. Thus every Polish government must be at variance with its own people if it fails to defend Poland's independence, territory which forms an ultimate guarantee of that independence and moral and civilizing principles which have formed the Nation and maintained its spirit alive. There is in this respect a certain minimum which no Polish government can afford to ignore or repudiate. We were often told that ever greater concessions were needed; we were charged with the lack of political acumen and uninteligent stubborness. No one could expect however that the Polish Nation should commit suicide in the name of alleged reasonableness and on the top of that should besmear its good nam. The present Polish government was constituted on 29 November 1944 at the moment when the Polish policy had reached limit of its concessions and when every further step in that direction threatened to throw our country into abyss. Leading Cabinet offices in that Government were assumed by prominent leaders of the Polish Underground Movement who were the best spokesmen of the will and the aims of people fighting in our home country. This government also enjoyed confidence and support of the Polish Armed Forces which have written with their blood such fine page in the history of the present war. This government knows that it can speak on their behalf no less than on behalf of many Poles now scattered throughout the world.

The present Polish Government has been often called in sarcasm — government of stubborn resistance. This appelation is accepted by it with pride. Indeed it is a government of resistance; of resistance against all attempts to destroy the independence of Poland.

The Polish government could not agree to annexation of half of the territory of the Polish Nation including the towns so dear to the whole of the Polish Nation, such as Lwów and Wilno.

The Polish Government could not agree to the imposition on Poland of social regime alien to her fundamental concepts of freedom, lawful order and moral traditions.

The Polish Government could not agree to grant any rights to the self-appointed commitee, composed of members of numerically weak communist party, and subordinated to foreign power.

The Polish government could not agree to the destruction of legal order on which the existence of the Polish State was based.

The Polish Government could not agree to the severing of thousand year old links between Poland and the world of western culture and civilization.

These decisions were taken by the Polish Government fully conscious of responsibility it bore. It could not have acted differently, if it had known at time when it took these decisions, the present course of events. The Polish Government was not appointed by the President of the Polish Republic to take hand in the liquidation of the independence of Poland.

Poland was first to fight with the arms in hand the German bid for the world domination. She always desired friendly coexistence with Russia and rejected all German suggestions of a joint attack upon the Soviet Union. She fought at a time when other powers were still practising with Hitler. She never had any misgivings in her faithfulness to her Allies and in the crucial days of 1940 she stood by the side of Great Britain in her lonely fight. In great air Battle of Britain which decided the issue of the war the Polish airmen contributed their bit to the Allied Victory. The Poles have not abused the friendly hospitality and friendship which was shown to them by the people of Britain. During the long and arduous years of war the Polish Nation endured, fought and believed.

To-day over the charred remains of the Polish Republic an entirely new body is to be constituted, without frontiers which are due to Poland, without legal and constitutional continuity, deprived of traditions in which Poland lived and thrived for a thousand years.

Lawful authorities of the Polish Republic cannot recognize such imposed solution. The President and the Government of the Polish Republic are mandatories of the national will up to the moment when free and honest elections are held in Poland. It seems that the leading statesmen of the West are basing their hope on the Yalta promise in Poland of "free and unfettered elections". It is clear, however, that no such elections are possible as long as Soviet forces and Soviet political police remain in Poland, as long as there is no freedom of political life, of press, of meeting and association and as long as the iron screen separating Poland from the world is not lifted.

Even when recognition will be withdrawn from it, the Polish Government will not cease to be the lawful government of Poland. It is the lawful government not because it is recognized by other powers but because it expressed the will of the Polish people and because it has been constituted in accordance with the laws of the Polish Republic.

While announcing this, we cannot promise you much for the nearest future. We should like to recall the words of Churchill uttered in the days when his country was in deadly peril. We cannot promise you anything to-day and to-morrow, except "toil, sweat and tears". Our efforts however will not be in vain. Moral values of our civilization now trodden upon, will undergo a rebirth, and finally win. With all our strength we must

work for this rebirth and speed it up. In this period every Pole will have to face a particular task. It will be their first duty to keep the dignity of our people by their discipline and self-control, by their solidarity and by their unblemished record in their public and private lives. At every post and in every field they must give example of relentless toil and of creative effort.

We are fully aware that our words are reaching men and women who have suffered heavily and are greatly exhausted. The future fate of the Poles will not be alike everywhere. While most will suffer in Poland cruel realities of Police regime, others will remain in the free world to be spokesmen of those who must remain mute.

Our future path is a hard one but at the journey's end we schall see Poland for which we are all striving from the bottom of our hearts: a Poland free and independent, a Poland of liberty and justice, a Poland in which the love of God and man shall prevail".

Asked by one of his friends, what he would have done had Poland lost the war in 1920, the late Marshal Pilsudski replied: "I would have taken a rest for a few months as at that time I was extremely tired and utterly exhausted, and then I would have started the fight for independence all over again."

"Parada"

"The Poles are a gallant people. Nature did not design them to become the satellites of any other nation."

(W. Lamont, chairman of J. P. Morgan's Co. and Representative of the U. S. Treasury on the American Commission to negotiate peace 1919 - *New York Times*).