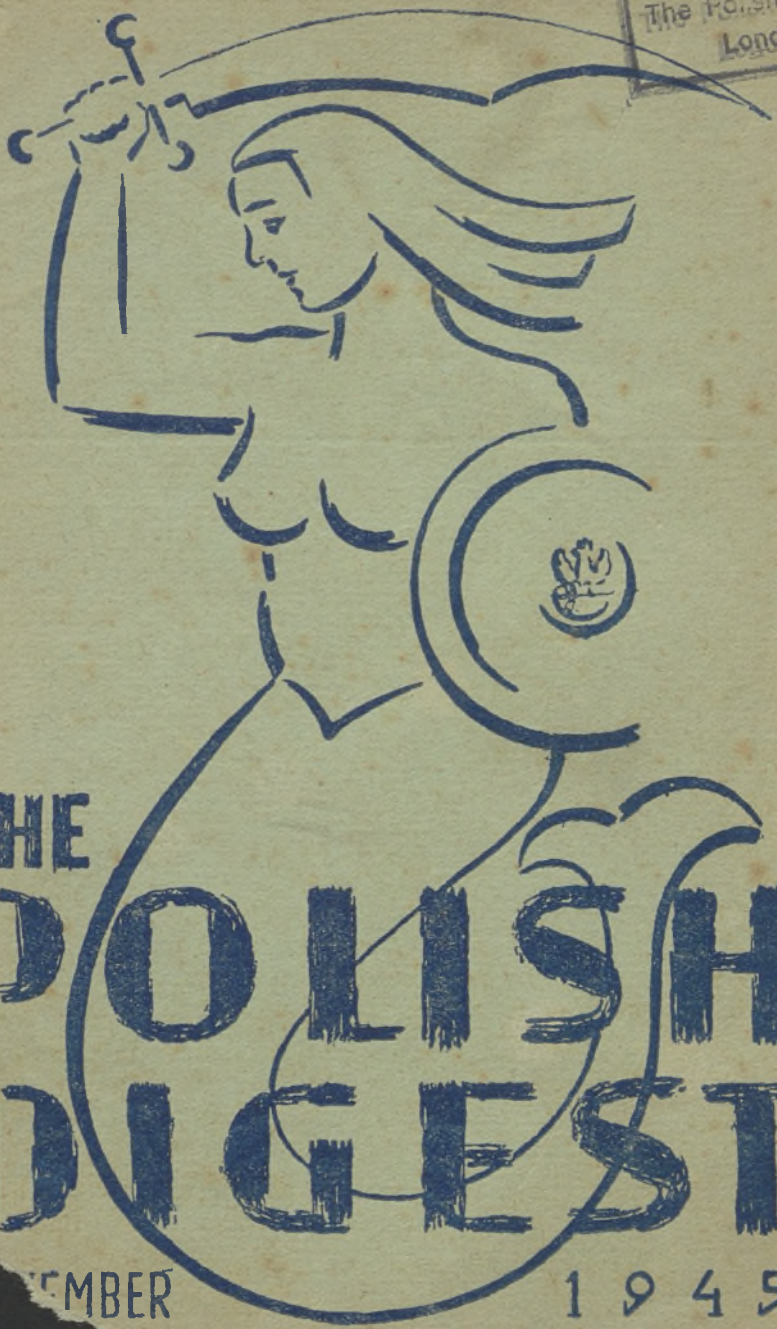


THE POLISH DIGEST

EMBER 1945

THE POLISH DIGEST

ROME * NOVEMBER 1945

Cover by S. Lipiński

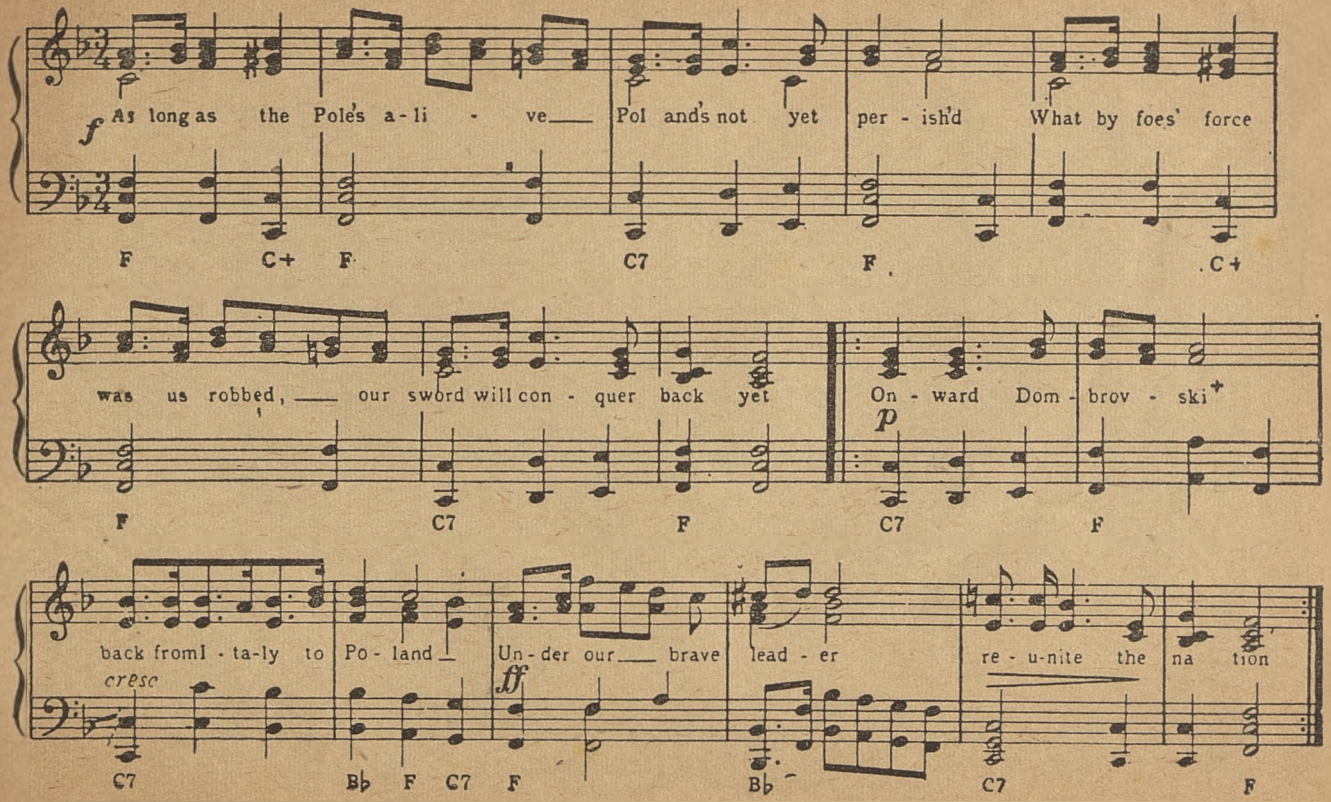
POLISH ARMY
PUBLIC RELATIONS BRANCH

Polish Military Printing Press

JESZCZE POLSKA NIE ZGINĘŁA

Polish National Anthem

Vivace



THE STORY OF THE POLISH NATIONAL ANTHEM

JESZCZE POLSKA NIE ZGINĘŁA

It was late autumn in the year 1797, General Napoleon Bonaparte was in the midst of his Italian campaign.

Poland was prostrate. But the spirit of the Polish people was as unconquerable then as it is to-day. In their thousands officers, soldiers, students, workmen and peasants thirsting for Liberty escaped from the clutches of their enemies. Just as in our days, they tramped across the whole continent, to rally under the standards of liberty hoisted by the Revolutionary armies of France.

Under General Henryk Dąbrowski, Polish Legions were formed during Napoleon's campaign in Italy. In a camp near Mantua the Polish Legionaries gathered round the camp-fires to talk of Poland, to express their longing for their tormented Mother country. Just as to-day Polish soldiers are longingly turning their eyes to their native land.

It was in that Italian camp that Józef Wybicki, the great patriot and statesman, wrote the words of that marching song, which was set to the music of a Polish Mazurka and which became the national anthem of Poland.

It begins with the vow of implacable determination to fight for the liberation of the Motherland:

"As long as we live, Poland shall not perish—
What foreign violence has taken away from us
we shall retake with our swords"

and the refrain invokes the Comander-in-Chief:

"March, March Dąbrowski, from the soil of Italy
to the soil of Poland
Under your leadership we shall liberate our people."

And the indomitable spirit of Poland prevailed and the nation regained its independence.

THE TEUTONIC KNIGHTS

by HENRYK SIENKIEWICZ

(excerpts from Chapter XXIV)

The following is a brief excerpt from the well-known Polish Historical Novel by Henryk Sienkiewicz (1846 - 1916), *who received the Nobel Peace Prize in* 1905. *This author's prolific pen takes the reader into the realms of Polish History in many works. "The Teutonic Knights" depicts the relentless struggle of the Polish Nation with the persistent German element from the West whose methods to-day have not changed.*

Before starting on the journey to Szczytno, the four brothers of the Order and de Fourcy went to bid the Prince and the Princess farewell. It was not a very friendly farewell, but the Prince did not wish to act contrary to the old Polish custom which did not permit guests to depart with empty hands, and made each brother a present of a beautiful marten fur and one mark of silver. They received the presents with joy, assuring the Prince that, being brothers of an Order, and having made a solemn vow to live in poverty, they would not retain the money for themselves, but would distribute it among the poor, whom they would recommend at the same time to pray for the Prince's health, fame, and future salvation. The Mazovians laughed under their mustaches at such an assurance, for they knew very well how greedy the Order was, and still better, what liars the knights of the Teutonic Order were. There was a popular saying in Mazovia: "As the skunk smells, so the Teutonic Knight lies." The Prince waved his hand only in reply to their thanks, and when they had gone he said that by the intervention of their prayers, one might go to heaven as swiftly as the crawfish is walking.

A while earlier, while taking leave of the Princess, as Siegfried von Löve was kissing her hand, Hugo von Danfeld had approached Danusia, placed his hand on her head, and, caressing her, said:

"Our commandment is to return good for evil, even to love our enemy. I will therefore send a sister of the Order here, and she will bring you the healing balm."

"How can I thank you for it, Sir?" answered Danusia.

"Be a friend of the Order and of the Brothers."

De Fourcy observed this conversation, and, at the same time he was struck with the beauty of the girl, so as they started towards Szczytno he asked:

"Who was that beautiful young lady of the court with whom you were talking as we took leave of the Princess?"

"Yurand's daughter" answered the Teutonic Knight.

De Fourcy was surprised.

"The same whom you propose to capture?"

"Yes. When we capture her, Yurand is ours."

"Evidently, not everything is bad that comes from Yurand. It would be worth while to guard such a prisoner."

"Do you think it would be easier to fight with her than with Yurand?"

"I mean that I think as you do. The father is a foe to the Order, and yet you spoke words as sweet as honey to the daughter moreover, you promised to send her some balm."

Hugo von Danfeld apparently felt the need of justification with a few words:

"I promised her the balm—he said—for that young knight who was injured by the bison, and to whom she is betrothed. If they make an outcry when the maid is captured, then we will tell them that we did not wish to harm her, and the best proof of this will be that we sent her some medicine out of Christian mercy."

"Right" said von Löve "Only we must send someone whom we can trust."

"I will send a pious woman entirely faithful to the Order. I will command her to look and to listen. When our people, apparently sent by Yurand, arrive, they will find everything ready prepared."

"It will be difficult to find such people."

"No," exclaimed Brother Rotger, "everything is planned so There are in our city, nay, even among the knechts of the garrison, men who left Mazovia to escape the law. True, they are thieves and robbers, but they fear no one, and are ready to do anything. To these men I will promise a large reward if they succeed, and a rope if they fail."

"But suppose they betray us?"

"They will not betray us, for in Mazovia everyone of them deserves to undergo the torture of the wheel and everyone deserves to be

hanged. Only we must give them decent clothes, so that they will be taken for true Yurand's servants, and we must get the main thing—a letter with Yurand's seal."

"We must foresee everything" said Brother Rotger. "Yurand will probably see the Prince, and justify himself on account of the last war, and make some complaints against us. If he is in Ciechanów he will go to see his daughter, to his hut in the woods. It may happen that our men, when they go to capture the daughter of Yurand, will encounter Yurand himself."

"The men whom I am going to choose are as cunning rascals as only can be. They will know that they will be hanged if they come in contact with Yurand. They must strain their wits not to encounter him."

"But it may happen that they may be captured."

"Then we will deny them and the letter. Who can prove that we sent them? And then if there be no outrage, there will be outcry, and if the Mazovians cut a couple of scoundrels in pieces it will not harm the Order."

"I do not understand your policy" said brother Gottfried, who was the youngest of the monks, "or your fear that it may become known that the maid was carried off by our command. For, if we have her in our possession we shall be obliged to send someone to Yurand saying: 'Your daughter is with us—if you wish her to be set at liberty deliver up von Bergow and yourself in exchange for her.' You cannot do otherwise, and then it will be known that we ordered the maid to be captured."

"That is true" said de Fourcy, who did not like the whole affair. "Why should we hide that which must come out?"

But Hugo von Danfeld began to laugh, and, turning to brother Gottfried, asked:

"How long have you worn the white mantle?"

"It will be six years in the first week after the feast of the Holy Trinity."

"When you have worn it six years longer you will understand the affairs of the Order better. Yurand knows us better than you do. We will tell him: 'Your daughter is watched by brother Schomberg, if you say a word remember what happened to Witold's children'."

"And then?"

"Then von Bergow will be free, and the Order also will be rid of Yurand."

"No." exclaimed Brother Rotger, "everything is plauned so wisely that God ought to bless our enterprise."

"God blesses all the deeds whose purpose is the benefit of the Order," said the gloomy Siegfried von Löve.

Then they rod silently, with their retinue before them at a distance of three shots of a cross-bow, to open the way, for the road was covered with a heavy snow which had fallen during the night. There was heavy snow on the branches of trees, the day was cloudy, but warm, and the horses were steaming. From the forest flocks of crows flew towards the villages, filling the air with their gloomy croaking.

Sir de Fourcy remained a little behind the Teutonic knights, and rode along in deep thoughts. He had been the guest of the Order for several years, he had taken part in the expedition against the Zmudz, and has distinguished himself by great bravery. Everywhere he had been received, as the Teutonic Knights knew to receive knights from distant lands. He became strongly attached to them and, being not rich, he resolved to join their ranks. Meanwhile he resided in Malborg and visited different komthurs, seeking adventures and for tune. Having just arrived at Lubawa with the rich von Bergow, and having heard of Yurand, he had desired very much to fight with the man who was regarded with such general fear. The arrival of Meineger, who was victorious in all battles, has precipitated the expedition. The komthur of Lubawa furnished the men for it, but meanwhile he told the three knights so much, not only about Yurand's cruelty, but also about his cunning and treachery, that when Yurand asked them to send away the soldiers they refused to do so, fearing that he would surround and exterminate them and throw them into the dungeons of Spychow. Yurand, thinking that they cared less for a knightly fight than for plunder, had attacked them straight away and defeated them terribly. De Fourcy saw von Bergow thrown with his horse, Meineger with a piece of spear in his body, and the men asking in vain for mercy. He himself had escaped with great difficulty, wandering for several days in the forests, where he would have died of hunger or been devoured by wild beasts if, by chance, he had not reached Ciechanow and found there Brothers Gottfried and Rotger. From that expedition he merged with a feeling of humiliation and shame, and with a desire for vengeance and a longing for von Bergow who was his close friend. He had therefore joined with his whole soul in the complaint of the Teutonic Knights when they asked for the punishment of the Polish knight and the liberation of his unhappy companion. When their complaint had no effect whatever he was ready at first to approve of any plan of vengeance against Yurand. But now some scruples were aroused in him. Listening to the conversation of the monks, and especially to what Hugo von Danfeld had said, he could not refrain from astonishment. It is true that

having become well acquainted during the past few years with the Teutonic Knights he knew that they were not what they were represented to be in Germany and in the West. In Malborg, however, he knew a few honest and severe knights, who often complained of the corruption of the Brothers, of their debauchery and lack of discipline. De Fourcy felt that they were right, but being himself dissolute and lacking in discipline he did not criticise them for those faults, especially as all knights of the Order redeemed them with bravery. He had seen them at Wilno fighting hand to hand with the Polish knights, at the taking of castles defended with superhuman stubbornness by the blows of axes and swords in general assaults or in single battles. They were merciless and cruel towards the Lithuanians, but they were nevertheless as brave as lions—and their glory had the brightness of sun. But now it seemed to de Fourcy that Hugo von Danfeld had councelled such an action as every knight's soul should abhor, and yet the other brothers not only were not angry with him but approved of his words. Or his astonishment, increased, at last he became deeply thoughtful, pondering whether it was decent that he should join in the performance of such deeds.

If it were only a question of carrying off the maid and then exchanging her for von Bergow he might perhaps consent to that, although his heart had been moved by Danusia's beauty.

But evidently the Knights of the Cross desired something else. Through her they wished to capture Yurand, and then murder him, and with him, they must assuredly murder the girl also, in order to hide their fraud and crime.

They had threatened her already with the same fate that Witold's children met in case Yurand should dare to complain.

"They do not intend to keep any promise but to cheat both and kill both" said de Fourcy to himself, "although they wear the Cross, and ought to guard their honour more rigorously than anyone else."

He grew more and more indignant at such effrontery, and, determining to verify his suspicions, he rode up to von Danfeld and asked:

"If Yurand gives himself up to you will you set the girl at liberty?"

"If we let her go free the whole world would immediately say that we had captured both of them," answered von Danfeld.

"Then, what do you propose to do with her?"

At this, von Danfeld bent towards the knight, laughed, and showed his rotten teeth from beneath his thick lips.

"Do you mean what will be done with her before or after?" he asked.

But de Fourcy, surmising already that which he wished to know, became silent. For a time he seemed to struggle with himself; then raising himself in his stirrups, he said, so loudly that he could be heard by all four of the monks:

"The pious Brother Ulrich von Jungingen, who is an example and an ornament of knighthood, once said to me: 'Among the old Knights in Marienburg one can still find worthy Knights of the Cross, but those who control the commandaries near the frontier only bring shame upon the Order.' "

"We are all sinful, but we serve the Saviour," answered Hugo.

"Where is your knightly honour? One cannot serve the Saviour by shameful deeds. You must know that I will not put my hand to anything like this, and that, moreover, I will prevent you."

"What will you prevent?"

"The artifice, the treachery, the shame!"

"How can you do so? In the fight with Yurand you lost your retinue and waggons. You are obliged to live on the generosity of the Order, and you still die of hunger if we do not throw you a piece of bread. And then, you are alone; we are four—how could you prevent us?"

"How can I prevent you?" repeated de Fourcy. "I can return to the Mansion and warn the Prince; I can divulge your plans to the whole world."

Here the brothers of the Order looked at one another and their faces changed in the twinkling of an eye. Hugo von Danfeld especially looked questioningly into Siegfried von Löve's eyes; then he turned to de Fourcy:

"Your ancestors," said he, "used to serve in the Order, and you also wished to join it; but we do not receive traitors."

"I do not wish to serve with traitors."

"Ah! you shall not fulfil your threat. The Order knows how to punish not only the monks,—"

De Fourcy, excited by these words, drew his sword; he seized the blade with his left hand, and, placing his right on the hilt, said:

"On this hilt, which is in the form of the Cross, by the head of St. Denis, my patron, and on my knightly honour, I swear that I will warn the Prince of Mazovia and the Grand Master!"

Hugo von Danfeld again looked inquiringly at Siegfried von Löve, who closed his eyelids, as if consenting to something.

Then von Danfeld said in a strangely muffled and changed voice:

"St. Denis could carry his head after he was beheaded, but when yours once falls,—"

"Do you threaten me?" interrupted de Fourcy.

"No, but I kill!" shouted von Danfeld. And he thrust his knife into de Fourcy's side with such force that the blade disappeared up to the hilt. De Fourcy screamed terribly, and tried to seize the sword which he held in his left hand with his right, but it fell from his grasp. At the same time the other three brothers pierced him mercilessly with their knives in the neck, in the back, and in the stomach, until he fell from his horse.

There was silence. De Fourcy, bleeding fearfully from his wounds, writhed on the snow. From beneath the leaden sky there came only the cawing of the crows, flying towards human habitations from the silence of the wilderness.

There was a hurried conversation between the murderers:

"Our servants did not see anything?" said von Danfeld, panting.

"No, they are in front. We cannot see them" answered von Löve.

"Listen! We shall have cause for a new complaint. We will publish the report that the Mazovian Knights fell upon us and killed our companion. We will shout aloud—they will hear us in Marienburg—that the Prince sent murderers even after his guests. Listen! We must say that Yanusz would not listen to our complaints against Yurand, but ordered the accuser to be murdered.

Meanwhile, de Fourcy turned on his back in the convulsions of death, and then remained motionless, with bloody froth on his lips and an expression of dread in his wide open eyes. Brother Rotger looked at him and said:

"See, pious Brothers, how God punishes even the thought of treachery!"

"What we have done was done for the good of the Order" answered Gottfried. "Glory to those—"

But he stopped; for at that moment, behind them, at the bend of the snowy road, there appeared a horseman, who came rushing on as fast as his horse could go.

Seeing him, Hugo von Danfeld quickly exclaimed:

"Whoever this man is, he must die!" and von Löve, who, although the oldest among the brothers, had very keen eyesight, said:

"I recognise him; it is the shield-bearer who killed the bison with an axe. Yes, it is he!"

"Hide your knives, so that he may not be frightened," said von Danfeld. "I will attack him first; you shall follow me."

Meanwhile the Czech approached, and reined in his horse at a distance of eight or ten paces. He saw the corpse lying in the pool of blood, and the riderless horse, and astonishment appeared on his face; but it lasted only for the twinkling of an eye. He turned to the brothers as if nothing had happened, and said:

"I bow before you, brave knights!"

"We recognise you," answered von Danfeld, approaching slowly. "Have you anything for us?"

"The Knight of Bogdaniec, whose spear-bearer I am, sent me, for being injured by the bison, he could not come himself."

"What does your master wish from us?"

"My master commands me to tell you that because you unrighteously accused Yurand of Spychów, to the detriment of his knightly honour, you have not acted as honest knights, but have howled like dogs; and if anyone feels insulted by these words, he challenges him to a combat, on horseback or on foot, to the last breath. He will be ready for the fight as soon as with God's help and mercy he is released from his present illness."

"Tell your master that the Teutonic Knights bear insults patiently for the Saviour's sake, and that they cannot fight without special permission from the Grand Master or the Grand Marshal, for which permission they will write to Marienburg."

The Czech again looked at de Fourcy's corpse, for he had been sent especially to that knight. Zbyszko knew that the monks could not fight in single combat, but, hearing that there was a lay knight with them, he desired to challenge him, thinking that by doing so he would win Yurand's favour. But that knight lay slaughtered like an ox by the four Teutonic Knights.

The Czech did not understand what had happened; but, being accustomed from childhood to all kinds of danger, he suspected treachery. He was surprised, moreover, to see that von Danfeld, while talking with him, approached closer and closer, while the others began to ride to his side as if to surround him. He was therefore, upon the alert, particularly, as he had no weapons, for, being in great haste, he had not brought any.

Meanwhile von Danfeld, who was near him, said:

"I promised your master some healing balm; he repays me scurvily for my good deed. But no wonder; that is the usual thing among the Poles. But as he is severely injured and may soon be called to God, tell him,—"

Here he placed his left hand on the Czech's shoulder.

"Tell him that I answer thus!"

As he spoke, his knife gleamed near the shield-bearer's throat; but before he could thrust, the Czech, who had been watching his movements closely, seizing von Danfeld's right hand in his iron grasp, bent and twisted it so that the bones cracked. Then hearing him roar terribly with the pain, he pricked his horse, and sped away like an arrow before the others could stop him.

Brothers Rotger and Gottfried pursued him, but they soon returned, frightened by a dreadful cry from von Danfeld. Von Löve supported him with his shoulders, while he moaned so loudly, that the retinue, although riding with the waggons a great distance in front stopped their horses.

"What is the matter with you?" asked the brothers.

The Clasp o' Friendship

SIENKIEWICZ (Syĕn-kyĕ'vich), Henryk (1846 - 1916),

Polish novelist, was born at Wola Okrzejska near Łuków, in Siedlce, Poland. He studied philosophy at Warsaw university. His first work, a humorous novel entitled "A Prophet in his own Country," appeared in 1872. In 1876 Sienkiewicz visited America, and contributed an account of his travels to the "Gazeta Polska." His best-known romance, "Quo Vadis," a study of Roman society under Nero, has been translated into more than 30 languages. Originally published in 1895, "Quo Vadis?" was first translated into English in 1896, and dramatical and film versions of it have been produced in many countries. Of great literary merit is the trilogy of novels describing 17th century society in Poland during the wars with the Cossacks, Turks and Swedes. This trilogy comprises "Ogniem i mieczem" ("With Fire and Sword," 1890, 1892 and 1895), "Potop" ("The Deluge," Boston, Mass., 1891) and "Pan Wołodyjowski" ("Pan Michael," 1893). Many other very successful novels translated into English are "Bez dogmatu" ("Without Dogma," 1893; Toronto, 1899), "Janko muzykant i nowele" ("Yanko the Musician and other stories," Boston, Mass., 1893), "Krzyżacy" ("The Knights of the Cross," numerous British and American versions), "Hania," ("Hania," 1897) and "Ta trzecia" ("The Third Woman," 1898).

Sienkiewicz lived much in Cracow and Warsaw, and for a time edited the Warsaw newspaper "Słowo"; he also travelled in England, France, Italy, Spain, Greece, Africa and the East, and published a description of his journeys in Africa. In 1905 he received the Nobel prize for literature. During the early years of World War I, he devoted his energies to the organization of relief for Polish victims. He died in Switzerland in 1916 while engaged on that task. His body was transferred to Cracow in 1924.

Encyclopaedia Britannica.

PEASANTS
(AUTUMN)

by L. ST. REYMONT

I.

Ah, how they danced.

Those Cracoviennes, with their frolicsome hop-skip-and-jump measures, and the quick lilt of their cleancut, tinkling, metallic tunes; and the terse ditties, full of fun and freedom, with which, like the spangled girdles of the peasantry who made them, they are so brightly studded—those tunes welling with joyous, dashing melody, redolent of the strong, abounding, audacious savour of youth in sportful pursuit of the thrilling emotions that tell of the heyday in the blood.

All those Mazurs, long-drawn-out as the paths which streak the endless plains, wind-clamorous and vast as the endless plains they streak: lowly, yet heaven-kissing; melancholy and bold, magnificent and sombre, stately and fierce; genial, warlike, full of discordances, like the peasants nature, set in battle array, united as a forest and rushing to dance with such joyful clamours and wonderful strength as could attack and overcome ten times their number, nay, conquer, sweep away, trample down the whole of a hostile world, nor reck though they themselves be doomed, and fall, but still carry on the dance after death, still stamping as in the Mazur—still crying out aloud: "Oy dana, dana."

And oh, those Obertases—short of rhythm, vertiginous, wild and frantic, warlike and amorous, full of excitement mingled with dreamy langour and notes of sorrow; throbbing with hot blood, brimming over with geniality and kindliness, in a sudden hailstorm; affectionate voices, dark-blue glances, springtime breezes, and fragrant wafts from blossoming orchards, like the song of fields in the young year; making tears and laughter to burst forth at the same time, and the heart to utter its lay of joy, and the longing soul to go beyond the vast

fields around her, beyond the far-off forests, and soar dreaming into the world of All-Things, and sing ecstatically the burden, "Oy dana, dana."

And all these dances, beyond the power of words to describe, thus followed one after the other, so that our peasantry might make merry in season.

And thus did they take their pleasure at the wedding of Boryna and Jagna.

II.

The hours slipped away in clamour and din and uproar: in merry-making and dances fast and furious: they did not note that the dawn was spreading in the East, that the daybreak's streams were slowly pouring their pallor into the night's black gloom. The stars grew wan, the moon sank; a wind that sprang up beyond the woods passed by, chasing the dark that waxed thinner and thinner; the gnarled tufted trees looked in at the windows, bowing yet lower their slumbrous frost-crowned heads, but the folk within were still singing and dancing.

The doors had been thrown wide open; so had the windows; the house brimming and boiling over with lights and tumult, trembled, creaked and groaned, while the dance went on, now in utterly uncontrollable and rapturous excitement.

It seemed to those within—such was their state—that trees and people, earth and stars, and the hedges and the time-honoured cabin itself, were all wrestling and writhing together, united in one inextricably whirling cluster, blind, intoxicated, raving and in utter oblivion of all; reeling and rolling from room to room, from wall to wall, from passage to passage, and out into the road and the enormous world, caught in a round that filled the universe—fading away in the long unbroken chain of crimson light now glowing in the East.

And the music led them on—the tunes played and the songs. How they kept time in their growling the gruff bass-viols uttering their burden humming sounds, like huge bumble-bees. And how the flutes led the band, merrily whistling and twittering, as in mockery of the drum's joyful thuds and strokes, swelled by the jingling of its bells that shook with laughter, and floated lightly like a Jew's beard in the wind. And then how the fiddles took the lead and came to the front, like girls leading the ballet, and sang out loud and shrill at first as though to try their voices—then played with wide, sorrow-

ful, heartrending sweeps of the bow—the lamentations of orphans driven from their homes—and then again, with an instantaneous change, fell into a lilting tune—short, thrilling, sharp, like the tripping of a hundred dancers heels, at which a hundred full-throated lads shouted themselves out of breath, and quivered all over and sat once more to turn and sing and dance minutely laughing and rejoicing, heat rising anew to the head and desire to the heart. like strong vodka, when they fell again into the slow long notes of sorrow and weeping—like dew upon the plains—uttering the notes of our own beloved tune, most near to the heart, instinct with mighty yearning tenderness and inducing all to dance deliriously to the strains of our Mazovian air.

The candles were growing dim, so near was the day; a dingy ashen twilight pervaded the room where they danced. But they still took their enjoyment as heartily as ever. If any found the liquour was flowing too scantily he sent to the tavern for more vodka, sought out companions, and drank with them to his liking.

Some had withdrawn, some were tired and resting awhile; some, overtaken by drink, were sleeping off its fumes in the passage or by the door; others, still more intoxicated, were stretched under the hedges. All the rest danced on and on.

At last, some of the more sober made up a group by the porch and, beating the floor in measure, sang thus:

O wedding-guest, come home.
Already sings the lark,
The wood is deep and dark,
And ye have far to roam;
Come home.

O wedding-guest, come home,
There's danger in delay,
Athwart our weary way
The loud floods roll and foam:
Come home.

But no one cared to listen to them and their song.

REYMONT Ladislas Stanislas (1867 — 1925), *Polish novelist, was born at Kobiele Wielkie in the county or Piotrków on May 7, 1867. He spent his youth in various occupations and his first novels were written when he was superintendent of a small railway sector. "The Comédienne"* (1896, *Eng. translation* 1921), *"Ferments"* (2 *vol.*, 1894) *and "Lily"* (1899) *were objective novels describing the every day life of a troupe of provincial actors. In* 1899 *appeared "The Promised Land"* (2 *vol , Eng. translation* 1928) *modelled on Zola and describing industrialism in Łódź. Reymont's last known work "The Peasants," appeared in four volumes* 1904-1908 (*Eng. trans.* 1925-1926). *He describes the four seasons' labour of a peasant and brings to light his primitive instincts, inward dignity and almost religious attachment to the land. This great peasant epic brought Reymont the Nobel Prize for literature in* 1924. *While "The Peasants" was being prepared, a number of novels and short stories appeared, the most important of which are "Before Dawn"* (1902), *"Kamurasati"* (1903), *"From a Diary"* (1903) *and "The Storm"* (1907). *As a historical novelist Reymont, primarily an observer of the direct processes of life, was less successful: the trilogy "1794" ("The Last Diet,"* 1913, *"Nil Desperandum,"* 1916, *and the "Insurrection,"* 1918), *though not lacking in literary merit, revealed a lack of historical exactness. He died on Dec.* 5, 1925.

Encyclopaedia Britannica.

KAROL SZYMANOWSKI

by F. ŁABUŃSKI

Karol Szymanowski was born on September 21st, 1883, at Tymoszówka, his parents' estate, near Elizavetgrad. The landowners of this part of the Ukraine were for the most part of Polish blood, some families having owned their land there since the time of the Polish possession of the Ukraine. In spite of the wars and changing political régimes, they succeeded in preserving the Polish language and culture and appertained to the upper class of this country. To this wealthy Polish country gentry belonged Karol's father, Stanisław Szymanowski. He married Baroness Taube, whose family was of Swedish origin though established in Poland for centuries. Their home, Tymoszówka, was known in the vicinity as a centre of culture and arts, and was an open house to all artists. Both Stanisław Szymanowski and his wife loved music and cultivated it seriously.

From his childhood Karol heard at home the masterpieces of classic and romantic music, performed sometimes by the best professional artists. All the children (Karol had three sisters and one brother) inherited a love of music, but Karol showed an unusual musicality from his early days. His brother Felix developed into a very good pianist, his sister Stanisława into a first-class singer.

The happy, carefree days of Karol's childhood in this home, surrounded by the broad vistas and sunny fragrant fields of the fertile Ukraine, were interrupted by an accident which affected his growth and influenced his entire life. Falling, he injured one of his legs so severely that a protracted illness followed. The boy was immobilized for several years and could not take part in active games and sports. Forced to a sedentary life, he devoted himself at an unusually early age to books and music.

Later, because of his injured leg, he was unable to attend the high school in Elizavetgrad, where his brother studied and received all his education at home. Though by maturity he had made a recovery, still he was obliged to use a cane during the greater part of his life. This withdrawal from the activities of friends of his own

age, in spite of the happy atmosphere at home (both parents, brother and sisters adored him), without doubt made him a lonely youth. Only later was he to find an "escape" in his creative work. He was not what is called a "child prodigy" and he developed rather slowly. Although he played the piano and improvized earlier, he composed his first piece of music when he was twelve, without being familiar with the rudiments of harmony. His preferred composer at this time was Chopin, the passion for whom he was to retain throughout his life.

A few years later he began his study of theory with Gustaw Neuhaus, an outstanding pedagogue in Elisavetgrad and a relative of the family. In 1900 Szymanowski composed his nine Preludes for Piano, Opus 1, which were published five years later in Vienna. These preludes revealed his subtle and sensitive nature, and the influence of Chopin (on the substance) and Scriabin (on the form).

The next year he wrote a cycle of six songs to the words of Tetmajer. These manifest the pronounced lyrical talent of the young Szymanowski. This progress in musical studies soon became so rapid that his parents decided to send him to study with Zygmunt Noskowski, then considered the most outstanding Polish composer and pedagogue. Noskowski was first a pupil of Moniuszko, but later went to Berlin to study with Kiehl. He did not have a great creative talent, but knew well his craft and played an important role in the musical life of Warsaw.

Szymanowski left Tymoszówka for Warsaw in 1903 and remained there two years, taking private lessons from Noskowski. The works he composed during these years (opus 3 to opus 10) indicate that Noskowski was unable to influence the talent of his pupil, but gave him a solid knowledge of counterpoint, fugue and classical forms.

In 1905 Szymanowski went to Berlin to acquaint himself with the musical life of that city and its new trends. This was the period of the hegemony of German music in Europe, and all the eyes of young composers were turned towards Berlin. It was primarily the technical virtuosity of modern German composers that attracted and fascinated Szymanowski in Berlin.

He felt that in spite of his sound knowledge of counterpoint and fugue his science was too abstract and academic, and he sought to achieve the freedom of poliphonic writing and the mastery of orchestration of a Richard Strauss. But his creative personality was not yet strong enough to resist the influence of this composer. This is manifest in Szymanowski's Concert Ouverture, Opus 12, and in his First Symphony, Opus 15. On the other hand, his technical progress was obvious and his works began to attract attention.

In Berlin Szymanowski met three other young Polish composers: Grzegorz Fitelberg, Ludomir Różycki and Apolinary Szeluto, who were similarly in reaction against academic restriction and hoped to find salvation in modern German music. Together they formed a society under the title of "Young Poland in Music." Prince Władysław Lubomirski was interested in this movement and became their patron. He sponsored a concert of their symphonic works, performed by the Berlin Philharmonic under Fitelberg. The concert was no more than a „succès d'estime"; the works of the young composers were too much influenced by German music to be admired in Berlin.

This failure did not discourage Szymanowski, but enabled him to analyse his own problems and enlarge his knowledge. His music of this period (Opus 11 to Opus 23), reflecting the "Sturm and Drang" of a maturing man, shows the signs of the post-romantic epoch: it is subjective, dramatic, trembled.

The rhythm is feverish, the harmony ultra-chromatic, the melody has lost the fluidity of the composer's early works. The general mood is tragic, often pessimistic. The composer seems to go through a bitter inner struggle without finding a solution.

In 1908 Szymanowski left Berlin. The succeeding years were spent partly in Tymoszówka, partly in trips abroad. His music, his personal charm and his wide and refined culture won him many admirers and friends, among whom were the violinist Paul Kochański and the pianist Artur Rubinstein, Polish virtuosi who were to become ardent and faithful protagonists of his music. His colleague Grzegorz Fitelberg conducted Szymanowski's two symphonies in Warsaw, and his sister Stanisława gave concert perfomances of his songs, many of which were written specifically for her light soprano.

Szymanowski's interest in oriental philosophy and mysticism led to the composing of the "Love Songs of Hafiz" (Opus 24) and of his first opera "Hagith" (Opus 25) to the libretto of Félix Dormann "Hagith."

But this "orientalism" was unable to release him from the still dominant influence of German music.

The style and texture of this one-act opera are too closely related to Strauss's "Salome" to be interesting, and Szymanowski's creative personality is not strongly evident in this work.

The World War found Szymanowski in Tymoszówka, 31 years old, still single and living with his mother, his father having died earlier. Once asked, if he would ever marry, Szymanowski answered "probably never, because my mother is my first and last love." These words proved true: except his mother and sisters, no woman seems to have played an important role in his life. This life at home, far from the

battlefields, continued its normal flow. The war prevented Szymanowski from making his annual trips abroad; instead, it gave him the opportunity to become more familiar with Russia. He went to Moscow and Petrograd and found there a strong reaction against German culture and German music, and also discovered the positive national character of Russian music.

He became acquainted with Debussy's orchestral music and immediately was fascinated. Debussy became after Chopin, his most admired composer. He found in the music of the French Impressionists a release from the German influence. His style changed: it became less subjective, more descriptive; it gained in colour and health; its mood became less nocturnal. His melody was henceforth more free, less complicated; the harmony more colourful, the rhythm more balanced.

Szymanowski's personality having grown stronger, he was able to resist the spell of impressionism, borrowing from it only what was adequate to his intentions and transforming it for his own purpose. He went even further in his own impressionism than the French composers, introducing atonality and polytonality when necessary to his purposes and finding new possibilities of colour and expression. His "Mythes," Opus 30, and his "Masques," Opus 34, are striking examples of his new style. In these works Szymanowski never sacrifices design for colour. Theirs is more dramatic than that of the French music. His style could be called "Romantic Impressionism."

With Kochański, a frequent guest at Tymoszówka, Szymanowski was initiated into all the secrets of violin technique. There resulted several violin works which soon contributed to the rising fame of the composer: "Notturno e Tarantella," "Mythes," and the First Violin Concerto. In the war years, Szymanowski also completed his Third Symphony (with chorus), the choral cantates "Demeter" and "Agawa," the Third Piano Sonata, "Mélopes" for piano, the First String Quartet and several cycles of songs.

The Russian Revolution ended the carefree days of Tymoszówka. After the upheaval in 1917 the estate was plundered and ruined; the Szymanowskis lost nearly all their belongings and sought refuge among relatives in Elizavetgrad. Though hampered by the insecure and even dangerous life in this small town, Szymanowski composed there his "Caprices of Paganini," for violin and piano, four songs to the words of Rabindranath Tagore, and the "Songs of a Foolish Muezzin," to the words of Iwaszkiewicz. At the end of 1919 he succeeded after great difficulties in leaving Russia and arrived in January, 1920, in Warsaw, without funds, but full of hope and enthusiasm for his liberated country. He established himself in the capital, where soon all

the surviving members of his family were reunited. Soon he made trips to Paris, London and the United States, visiting New York in 1921, as a guest of the Kochańskis and taking an active part in concerts given by modern music groups.

With each year Szymanowski's music, which had been known before in his country only by an advanced few, won greater understanding and appreciation, provoking at the same time discussions and polemics. The composer was supported by the younger generation of Poles who saw in him not only their outstanding modern composer, but their spiritual leader. But they remained a minority; his music was not yet understood by the older generation and the general public.

Szymanowski's fresh contact with his ancestral country influenced advantageously his creative activity. He began immediately to work on his opera "King Roger," the conception of which came to him while on a visit to Sicily and North Africa in 1914. The libretto of this three-act liryc drama, written by the composer and his friend, the poet Iwaszkiewicz, depicts a conflict between the old Greek pantheism and Christianity. The action takes place during the Twelfth Century in Sicily. The contrast between the Christian and the pagan worlds is masterfully treated in Szymanowski's music. The characters are clearly presented, the music is vigorous and full of dramatic feeling. Such fragments as the chorus in the church of Act I, Roxane's aria of Act II, the Dionysiac dances of the same act, the part of the Shepherd in Act III, and the final scene of the opera are among the best examples of Szymanowski's music

In 1922 Szymanowski composed "Słopiewnie," five songs to the words of Tuwim, a contemporary poet, which are in an imaginary archaic Polish language. This work makes another turning point in the composer's development. For the first time since his early Variations, Opus 10, Szymanowski turns to the root of Polish music. Instead of borrowing a folk melody and harmonizing it, he creates everything out of his imagination, while composing music of genuine Polish character. After the ultra rich harmonic frame and highly coloured melodic lines of his previous two cycles of songs (Opus 41 and Opus 42) the texture of "Słopiewnie" strikes one as an example of great simplicity, a new trait in the composer's music.

The next cycle of songs "Children's Rhymes" continues the same line of evolution. These 20 songs, undoubtedly among the best of their kind, are a fine example of simplicity, direct expression and economy of means. And, for the first time in many years, Szymanowski's work bears the signs of a genuine and healthy sense of

humour. It is obvious that the composer found in his country spiritual harmony and, with it a favourable atmosphere in which to work.

On going to Zakopane, a resort in the Polish Tatras, which he had visited once before as a child, he was overwhelmed by the solemn beauty of the mountains and fascinated by the music and dances of the mountaineers, who belong to a very old and independent race. Of it he wrote: "This music is enlivening by its proximity to Nature, by its force and directness of feeling, by its undisturbed racial purity"; and later, that this music "can be understood and felt by an occult race instinct, and then one is bound to love it, to yearn for its emotional life, which is concealed in a rugged form, rectangular as though cut out of stone."

In 1925 his first "Mazurek" for piano appears, the first work inspired by the Tatra mountaineers' music. This composition created a great impression in Warsaw, and was followed by other mazurkas. Again the composer approached folk material from a new and personal angle, inventing his own themes and giving them a modern harmonic texture. In spite of this transformation his mazurkas possess a true mountain character.

It is interesting to quote in this place Szymanowski's views concerning folk music in general: "The inner evolution of folk music is such a slow process that in an actual historical moment it can be considered almost non-existent. Therefore its manifestations are presented to us as a permanent unchangeable quantity, as a direct expression of the nature of the race."

In spite of strong opposition in conservative circles, Szymanowski was appointed in 1926 Director of the Warsaw State Conservatory. He accepted the post with great satisfaction and immediately began to introduce new methods in teaching and to combat the academic routine of the institution. It was not an easy task, but Szymanowski gave his energy and his time wholeheartedly to this cause. He seemed to enjoy the battle, which was not confined to the walls of the Conservatory, but reached the public through the press. Szymanowski defended his credo in newspapers and music magazines and in doing so showed a remarkable gift for writing.

This activity did not prevent him from composing; on the contrary, the years 1926-1928 seem to be very productive, when we consider that he completed his "Stabat Mater," "Harnasie," his Second String Quartet, "Veni Creator" and his "Songs of Kurpie."

In the "Stabat Mater," for soli, chorus and orchestra, the composer approaches for the first time the domain of religious music. This approach is quite personal: without trying to fill the liturgical

forms with a new substance, he creates his own form and produces a work of deep, religious feeling and of authentic Polish character. Before this work was presented in Warsaw, he wrote: "For many years I have thought of Polish religious music. I tried to achieve first of all the direct emotional effect, in other words, the general intelligibility of the text and the fusion of the emotional substance of the word with its musical equivalent. I wanted the music to be as far as possible from the official liturgical music, from its elevated and, for me, musty academism."

The premiere of "Stabat Mater" in 1928 was Szymanowski's first great triumph in the Polish capital.

In this year others of his works also met with public success. From this time on, his music and prestige were well established in his country. He was no longer a lonely composer, isolated in an "ivory tower"; his views had changed a great deal since the pre-war years; he had come to achieve firmly in the importance of music in social life, and he fought for a better place for music and musicians in Poland. He wrote: "Each man must go back to the earth from which he derives. Today I have developed into a national composer, not only subconsciously, but with a thorough conviction, using the melodic treasures of the Polish folk."

In the same year as "Stabat Mater" Szymanowski composed another masterpiece, "Harnasie," a ballet describing the life of the Tatra Mountaineers. This extraordinary music, for which no replica could be found in all musical literature, is a stirring tribute to the sturdy race of mountain folk, whose music and art reinspired the composer and gave new life to his musical creation. Never before had Szymanowski contrived such a sumptuous orgy of rhythm and colour as in "Harnasie," a broad and vigorous fresco of the wild and dramatic life of legendary mountain brigands. Many Polish composers have employed the music of these mountaineers but none discerned so truly its character, or transformed it into works of such high artistic excellence.

In 1927 Szymanowski's interest shifted to the folk music of the Kurpie, a Northern province of Poland. This music, so different from the music of the Tatra region and yet beautiful and not thoroughly explored, inspired a cycle of twelve songs, Opus 58, for soprano and piano, and, later, six songs for mixed chorus a cappella.

The heavy drain of the composer's energy and creative power during these last years weakened his health. After a breakdown in 1929, physicians found symptoms of tuberculosis and advised that he go for the winter to a sanatorium in Davos. The regime there was beneficial and he returned to Warsaw in the spring, greatly im-

proved. Nevertheless, for the sake of his health, he had to resign the directorship in the Conservatory. From then on, he spent the greater part of the year in Zakopane. He composed his Second Violin Concerto, which Kochański performed for the first time in Warsaw (1933), a few months before the violinist's premature death. This loss greatly affected Szymanowski, who regarded Kochański as his dearest friend and protagonist.

In the Concerto, which is close in substance to "Harnasie," and the mazurkas Szymanowski probably achieved the ultimate of his ambition: it is difficult to find in his music a work of equal purity of style, economy of means and perfection of form.

In 1931 the composer decided to write a work which he himself could perform with orchestra. In 1932 his Symphonic Concertante was completed and in 1933 he played it with the Warsaw Philharmonic. This music disclosed a new evolutionary stage in the composer's work. The form is strictly, although the substance is romantic. The character of the whole is distinctly Polish, but it is more abstract, more general in feeling than his previous works. And as it is most typically Szymanowski, this music is another proof of the strength of the composer's personality, which in these last years radiates from every work he produces.

The first performance of his Symphonic Concertante was another triumph for the composer. The Warsaw success was repeated in Paris, London and Brussels, where Szymanowski performed the piano part. But his health lapsed seriously and he had to make long intervals between his concert appearances. Throat trouble developed and his voice became very weak. In the fall of 1935 the doctors advised him to go to France. His Paris physician sent him to Grasse, where for a while he felt better. In April 1936, the composer returned to Paris to attend the first performance of his ballet "Harnasie" at the Opera. He was so weak that to enable him to withstand the ordeal of the performance and the receptions which followed, the doctors kept him in bed during the day time.

The success of his ballet was very stimulating to his morale, but the relief was only mental. It is difficult to say if Szymanowski might have been saved if the physicians instead of minimizing his illness and sending him to a hôtel in Grasse, had insisted on a severe regime in a high-altitude sanatorium. It was obvious to the friends who saw him, then in Paris that tuberculosis had him again in its strong grip. The winter in Grasse did not help him. On the contrary, he grew weaker each month. Finally, in an effort to save him, he was taken to a sanatorium in Lausanne. But it was too late. Szymanowski himself was not aware of the approaching end until his last

days. He even insisted that quantities of music paper should be taken with his belongings to Lausanne. On Easter Sunday (March 28th, 1937) he passed away in the presence of his sister Stanisława, and his devoted secretary.

Szymanowski's artistic credo cannot be described better than by his own spirited words which he pronounced speaking of the meaning of Chopin, whom he admired above all other composers, for his compatriots: "For us, Polish musicians, Chopin is an everlasting reality, an active power, which exercises direct and spontaneous influence on the evolution of Polish music. It is evident that in all our musical past it is the work of Chopin which has the incontestable Polish style in the deepest and noblest meaning of the word. Under this aspect, Chopin represents for us not only the symbol of the genuine greatness of Polish music but, even more than that, he remains our Master, who by his wonderful art, solved the essential problem of every great art—how to attain in one's own work the perfect expression of a profoundly and universally human dignity, without sacrificing one's innate traits and national originality."

This problem, Szymanowski solved in his own work, as the music of his last fifteen years undoubtedly possesses this universal dignity, without losing personal style and Polish character. Starting under the influence of German post-romantic composers, Szymanowski liberated himself through contact with French impressionism, and finally succeeded in creating his own style, drawn from the roots of Polish folk music.

The International Cyclopedia of Music and Musicians

The late Jan I. Poderewski was once driving down the 5th Avenue with the Archbishop of New York, when the car was suddenly stopped by a traffic policeman because the Cardinal's driver allegedly exceeded the speed limit. A jovial Irish policeman approached the car in order to start his usual "friendly" talk with the driver.

"What's wrong, Officer?" asked the Cardinal leaning forward.

"Oh, nothing is wrong, Your Eminence"—said the policeman recognizing the Cardinal. "I only wanted to remind Your driver, that the traffic cop on the next corner is a Protestant.

THE FIGHTING POLES

by PETER WILSON

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

Very nearly a year ago I heard Field-Marshal Alexander address that remark to a picked body of officers and men of the Polish Corps. His speech was part of the ceremony in which he decorated General Anders with the Order of the Bath.

Certain it is that no troops have done a finer or harder job of fighting than the Poles in this theatre. Time and again they have proved themselves to be the scourge of the Germans.

That decoration of General Anders occurred shortly after one of the most spectacular triumphs achieved by the Poles—the forcing of Monastery Hill and the flying of the Polish flag and the Union Jack over the shattered ruins of the ancient abbey.

The last step before the capture of Cassino itself was the bloody fight for Hill 593. The day after the Poles had finally wrested this from the Germans I accompanied some Polish officers to the summit where the Germans had made their final stand.

Dead of many nationalities lay around. The Poles were carrying their fallen comrades down the steep slopes—their losses had not been light—but the hill had changed hands many times, and previously no one had any time to bury the dead.

The Germans had fallen back to the reverse slope and had fought ferociously with grenades and flame-throwers until the Poles had wiped them out, finally turning their own flame-throwers on them.

The Poles had been through a lot to win that crest. Supplies had only been able to come up on pack-mules and the men on the lower slopes had hewed caverns out of the hill-side to try and get a little warmth and protection.

They looked desperately gaunt and weary, but the last I saw of them that day was a long, winding patrol vanishing into the murky hills, their weapons slung over their shoulders and their bodies bent against the slope.

They had done their job of capturing the Monastery, but as long as there are Germans in arms anywhere in Italy the Poles will be at their throats and the patrol I saw, disappearing into the misty evening, was symbolic of the way they seek the enemy out.

It was, of course, long before Cassino that the Poles first went into action against the Germans in Italy. The first clashes took place when Polish Commandos took up positions in the snowy mountains of Maiella ridge late in 1943.

Then, at the beginning of February 1944, one of their Divisions took over a sector in the Abruzzi. It was more battle inoculation for mountain warfare than a proper campaign, for the snow-bound passes and peaks of the Abruzzi did not lend themselves to many large scale military operations.

It was the middle of April when the Polish Corps took over the Monte Cassino sector and when, after a final assault lasting a week, the Poles took the Monastery on May 18 the road was open for them to capture the stronghold of Piedimonte which they seized a few days later.

Finally they stormed the ridge of Passo Corno and the peak of Monte Cairo, the grim mountain which had glowered over that sector of the front for so long.

These were the last bastions of the famous Adolf Hitler defences and it was after these battles that the German propagandists announced that the Polish losses were so enormous that the Corps had almost ceased to exist. They have had time—and cause—to repent those words.

The Corps then went for a short, but very much deserved, rest before moving to the Adriatic coast, where it started military operations about the middle of June.

During their first action in this sector the Poles advanced about 150 miles and fought eight major battles—the fiercest of which took place on the outskirts of Ancona itself.

General Leese, then G.O.C. 8th Army, commenting on this battle, said:

"The battle for Ancona was one of the most spectacular military operations in the history of 8th Army's battles."

But it was between the rivers Cesano and Metauro that the Polish Corps fought its hardest battle since Monte Cassino.

The enemy had concentrated considerable forces which were supported by anti-tank guns, Panthers and the famous self-propelled Hornet guns.

The Poles shattered the enemy strongpoints and captured a mass of equipment and stores.

In their next engagement the Corps threw the enemy back over the river Foglia and forced the Germans to fall back on the fortified Gothic Line.

Captured documents proved that the Germans hoped to hold their position for three weeks at least, but the advance of the 8th Army crushed the Gothic Line in three days and a rapid move from the West enabled Polish troops to reach the coast near Cattolica. Their final effort in this sector was the capture of Cattolica.

The Poles' Adriatic campaign cost the Germans 4,000 prisoners and huge quantities of war equipment.

The Sappers were well to the fore, building 54 Bailey bridges, 63 other bridges and making 151 diversions as well as neutralising nearly 4,000 mines in rear areas alone.

The next phase of the war, for the Poles, began in the middle of October, 1944, when they assaulted along the highway to Santa Sofia and, advancing through difficult mountain country, they captured Predappio, which has the doubtful distinction of being Mussolini's birthplace.

Gradually they worked their way up to the Senio River after heavy, mountain fighting all the way, and now, in the big breakthrough of the spring offensive in North Italy, they have smashed the Germans defences on the Senio and the other river barriers on the road to Bologna, have poured through Bologna and up to the river barrier of the Po.

The Poles have come a long way in Italy in the past eighteen months. Many of them travelled many thousands of miles to join their Corps and fight their way back towards their country.

As General Anders once told Allied war correspondents, the Polish Corps is a hundred per cent self-sufficient and forms one big family. "It is," he said, "like a piece of Poland."

Union Jack, Rome.

A SALUTE TO THE POLES

This is a tribute to the gallant Poles of the Eighth Army, who once again have proved themselves on this most difficult of the world's battlefronts.

Their splendid spirit and aggressiveness earned them the capture of Imola, vital road junction town on the way to Bologna.

Three fiercely-contested outposts guarding the route to this key city of the Po Plainland have also fallen under the pressure of Polish assault.

In some of the bloodiest battling yet the Poles forced the Hun out of Castel Guelfo, Poggio and Castel San Pietro.

This 2nd Polish Corps has every right to be proud of combat achievement, for many of its men have, during the past five years, been through some of the toughest fighting of this war. One of its limbs, the 2nd Carpathian Brigade, largely formed of veterans of the African and Italian campaigns, took part in the battles for Tobruk and Monte Cassino.

And the Poles have not been handling second-rate fighting men either. When Tocsin sounded on the Eighth Army front, the Germans before them included the 26th Panzer Grenadiers and the hand-picked 98th Infantry Division. Then the 4th Paratroop Division, which fought so fanatically at Anzio, came into battle on the left flank of the Poles' bridgeheads across the Senio and Santerno rivers.

General Wladislaw Anders visited his troops recently and said modestly: "I am fully satisfied." Soldiers of the 2nd Polish Corps, we, too, are fully satisfied—and mighty proud of you.

THE EDITOR

Crusader, Rome, 22-IV-1945.

BEAR WITH APPETITE FOR VINO

Mis is member of the Polish 2nd Corps. If he's not the strangest pet in the Allied Armies, he's at least the world's most travelled bear.

Mis first opened his eyes in the mountains near Teheran. He was picked up by a Polish officer who entrusted him to the care of a transport company. He's stayed with them ever since.

His first trip was to Iraq, thence to Palestine. Here he found it a bit warm, so he was cooled down with liberal buckets of water.

Mis quickly learned to recognise and deal with the water-cart. Soon he could turn on the tap and give himself a shower.

Eventually, he was persuaded to discontinue this practice owing to a shortage of water.

After passing through Egypt, Mis arrived in Italy with his company. Special permission was obtained for him to travel in the ship. He repaid this trouble by taking a personal interest in the well-being of all ranks and was a frequent visitor to every deck.

He was in constant demand at sports meetings aboard. As a wrestler (no holds barred), he won every fight. He enjoyed the trip so much that at the end he refused to enter the cage which had been specially built for him. Twenty men pushed—to no avail.

Approached more politely, Mis agreed to walk down the gangway on the end of a chain.

Nowadays, Mis travels the Italian battlefront on the top of a breakdown vehicle. He lives on army rations, but appreciates something extra in the way of sweets and jam.

His appetite for beer and vino is a disappointment to some. When he gets drunk he goes fast asleep. Another little vice which Mis can't be broken of is cigarettes. Naturally, a bear wouldn't smoke them, he says . . . but they're awfully nice to eat.

Because he thinks it would be unmanly to eat an unlit cigarette, Mis spits it out unless someone has got it going nicely for him.

It is said that Mis is sometimes naughty and breaks his chains and strays. "It's only the spirit of adventure," he says. "*Of course*, I wouldn't hurt anyone."

Because Mis is as good as his word in this respect, every vehicle in his company bears the sign of a bear holding a shell.

Union Jack, Rome, 21-IV-1945.

POLISH CORPS CONGRATULATED

Below is a special message from Lieut.-Gen. Sir Richard Mc Creery, 8th Army Commander, on April 23, to all officers, non-commissioned officers and men of the Polish Corps.

"The first phase of our 8th Army offensive is now over; the enemy has been driven back to the River Po.

You have played a decisive part in this great victory.

In your advance up the historic Via Emilia, from Faenza to Bologna, you have been opposed throughout by the enemy's best troops.

You have inflicted very heavy losses in men and equipment on the enemy's three best divisions — 26th Panzer Divisions and 1st and 4th Parachute Divisions.

The fighting has been fierce and bitter. These tough enemy parachutists were fighting hard right up to the final blow you gave them east of the river Idice, which shattered the enemy and directly led to the capture of historic Bologna.

You have shown splendid fighting spirit, endurance and skill in this great battle.

I send my warmest congratulations and admiration to all ranks, and I wish you all the best of luck as you continue the march with the 8th Army, until the enemy's final collapse in Italy is achieved."

(Signed) R. Mc Creery, Lieut.- Gen., G.O.C., 8th Army.

STRANGE SIGNS

A soldier in transit through forward areas finds that his life is dominated and directed by signs. In Corps territory these signs are handsome affairs with a yellow background, a blue border and red lettering. There are hundreds upon hundreds of them.

Some island sites on road junctions have sprouted such a crop of Corps, Div., Brigade and Unit signs of all sizes and shapes that there literally is not enough room left to plant a match-stick in the soil.

Now, who paints these signs? Who cuts and shapes the wood? Who maintains and repairs them?

Seeking the answer to these questions, I made my way to a workshop in a forward town were L/Cpl. E. Bloxam, of Leicester, was engaged in adorning a piece of wood with the following thrilling legend:

POSTÓJ KOLUMN TYLKO W REJONIE WYZNACZONYM.)*

"The words are hard enough," sighed L/Cpl. Bloxam, putting aside his paint brush, "But the real trouble starts with all the ticks and accents I have to put in. And then that Indian writing it's more tricky than Arabic."

L/Cpl Bloxam, who was a painter, sign-writer and decorator before the war, has been painting military road signs all the way from Souk el Arba to Ravenna.

He is in the 101 Provost Company.

There is a waggish note in many of the signs erected by the 101 Provost Company.

For example, in order to speed supplies they painted a sign with a flight of stairs and the slogan "GET UP THEM STORES!"

Then again they invented the series of signs spaced at intervals along the road. One set reads like this:

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*) Parking in areas assigned only

First sign: *IF YOU STOP ALONG THIS ROAD...*
Second sign: *TRAFFIC STOPS...*
Third sign: *SUPPLIES STOP...*
Fourth sign: *THE WAR STOPS...*
Fifth sign: *AND YOU STOP IN THE ARMY UNTIL* 1950.
Sixth sign: *ROLL ON!*

RSM Nattress showed me a selection, ranging from the route signs and place names to the ones which said: *"NO DUST," "UNDER OBSERVATION," "THIS ROAD IS REGULARLY SHELLED," and finally "TURN BACK," which is getting very near the sharp end indeed.*

"In Africa," said RSM Nattress—who, by the way, also served in the Royal Horse Guards—"we put out our first humorous sign which read "FAMOUS LAST WORDS—IT'S ONLY A SPIT!"

One of our latest was inspired by the snowy roads of Italy. It reads 'THIS IS THE ROAD HOME—DON'T WEAR IT OUT. NO CHAINS.'

Before I left the 101 *Provost Company I looked again at the "Paint-shop."*

L/Cpl Bloxam was working on a sign which said simply and splendidly:

*"NIEBEZPIECZEŃSTWO***)."*

"It is Polish," he explained; "Polish for 'DANGER'."

*"Well," I said, "Keep up the good work and NIE ZATRZYMUJ SIĘ***)."*

*"Thank you," he replied, "and POWOLI, OSTRY ZJAZD**** to you."*

Crusader, Rome, Nr 142.

**) Danger
***) Don't stop
****) Slowly, steep slope.

POLAND'S CONTRIBUTION TO VICTORY

by Cpt. Alan GRAHAM M. P.

Two hundred and fifty-nine years ago, in 1688 Christian Europe was on its knees in gratitude to the Polish people and to a Polish King. John Sobieski, the last of the Crusaders and a military genius, had saved Christendom by his complete defeat of the Turkish armies encamped around Vienna. Chivalry and the sense of unity in Christ caused his people and himself to throw themselves in the path of the invading barbarians. From this day on the Turkish tide steadily ebbed back towards Asia. Poland took the shock and saved Europe.

Such is her history and such, apparently, her destiny. Geography has placed her at the robbers' cross-road, come they from the North, the East or the West. As two hundred and fifty years ago, so in 1939, a barbarian cloud was about to burst on Europe. Poland knew she must stand up to it and resist for her own sake as well as Europe's, even if she were temporarily submerged. Hence came her acceptance in April, 1939, of Mr. Chamberlain's offer of British guarantee.

The brutal German rape of Czechoslovakia, which inevitably flowed from the Munich Agreement, had finally shown Mr. Chamberlain that Europe's problem was not one of frontier-rectification, but of German aggression throughout Europe, and that a "halt" must be called to it, even if England, as Mr. Chamberlain knew, was still unprepared. Britain could not hope herself that any other nation would stand up against Germany unless really assured of British support sooner or (as unfortunately it had to be) later. Also, if Britain was to be able to mobilize on her side against Germany free opinion in her own Empire and throughout the world, there must be an utterly watertight case of deliberate aggression by Germany on a peaceful neighbour. No British Government could without cause plainly visible to all sections of the British democracy and to the world at large plunge the nation into a purely preventive war against Germany until Germany had committed the aggression which she was clearly planning.

It seems, too, that Mr. Chamberlain now also probably realized that the visibly meditated German attack on Poland was to be the springboard for Germany's mad lunge for world-domination, as we have since learnt from the statements of Hitler and Goebbels was actually the case. This treaty of guarantee to Poland would therefore, even if it should not serve to restrain German aggression, unmistakably declare to the world where in fact lay the responsibility for such aggression.

The need then of such a treaty from the point of view of the British Government was at once appreciated by the Poles, although, knowing better than anyone else, through the bitterest experience, what German aims really were, they were determined for the sake of their nation's life to resist Germany to the end, with or without a British guarantee. They knew, too, that Britain was in no condition then to give them any material aid and that the time for which they could stand up alone against Germany was limited. But so great was their faith even in the ill-armed Britain of those days that they believed that by linking their fate with Britain their ultimate future was assured. Poland, therefore, in the spirit of Arnold von Winkelried gathering for his companions' sakes in his own bosom the forest of enemy lances, stood up to the first awful shock of the German onrush, and thus gave more time to Europe to prepare its own resistance.

But it was imperative that no one could truly say that Poland had provoked this German assault. Consequently, knowing full well that they were the weaker power, the Polish Army at the time of the German attack was not even mobilized. We all of us know now from events both in Europe and the Pacific how colossal is the advantage to the aggressor of surprise, particularly at the revolutionary pace at which is conducted the modern Blitzkrieg.

Yet, in order to meet the expressed desire of the British and French ambassadors to Warsaw, the Poles on behalf of the common cause made this further costly sacrifice.

Throughout the campaign there was example after example of Polish heroism and devotion against overwhelming odds, but numbers and superior equipment defeated, though they could not destroy, the united spirit of complete self-sacrifice throughout the whole Polish nation. The Poles in this campaign succeeded in killing 91,000 and wounding 150,000 German soldiers. They shot down, with their own far smaller air force and few A.A. batteries, between 700 and 800 German planes and damaged about the same number in action, while they destroyed or severely damaged about one-third of the whole German

force of tanks and armoured cars. These German losses in tanks and in the air caused no less than eight months' delay before Hitler could replace his losses and launch an attack in the West, thus affording the Western anti-Axis Powers valuable time, even if we failed to take proper advantage of it.

It certainly was not Poland's fault that her former great ally, France, frittered away the precious time thus gained by Poland's sacrifice. Here was the time for the Maginot Line to be completed to the sea, and here was the time in which to pull the whole nation together, if only the Third Republic had cared, but the spirit had long since gone from her. If only she had used this time, even to a small extent, her downfall and her dishonour would have been less complete.

Here, too, was the opportunity for the smaller neutrals to take active measures to save themselves, if only they had not been inhibited by their pathetic belief in salvation through legal neutrality, though how any sane mind could connect respect for international law with Prussia-Germany under Bismarck or Hitler must rouse tears of regret or shrieks of laughter, according to whether the Christian's or the devil's view of humanity is taken. We ourselves were also guilty of presuming that "time" was "on our side" instead of making certain by hastening to "take time by the forelock". But none of the less the opportunity was afforded us by Poland's sacrifice and some advantage of it, though far too little, was taken by us. If Poland had surrendered without a fight, Hitler's armies could have been instantly switched to the West and France would probably have been subdued even by the end of October, 1939. But by their manful resistance the Poles gave Britain at least eight months in which to build up her munition factories and to develop her air force and war machine generally.

The Polish losses in this campaign numbered 1000.000 soldiers killed and over 100.000 civilians killed during military operations, of whom 40.000 civilians were killed in Warsaw alone. Polish bravery led three Corps Commanders and five Divisional Commanders to find death on the field of battle, while several cavalry regiments lost every officer on the strength, striving heroically to stem the steely onset of the enemy tanks by a holocaust of horse and man Even after their military defeat in Poland no thought of surrender ever occured to the Poles, who knew that they were the first victims resisting in a world-struggle of liberty against tyranny.

The Polish Navy and Mercantile Marine, often after wonderful adventures like those of the submarines *Wilk* and *Orzel*, after fighting

till half-way through October in the Baltic, joined the British Navy, having shown that though small in numbers their spirit and efficiency and sea-experience are well-up to the standard of our own.

The Polish Army was at once re-organized in France under the experienced and masterly leadership of General Sikorski. When Hitler attacked in the West he found once again confronting him no less than 100.000 Poles, just as many as he had killed of their army in Poland and mostly veterans of that campaign who had come via Rumania or other devious routes to the West again to offer their lives on the battlefield for liberty and the common cause.

Two Polish divisions and one armoured brigade fought most gallantly in France and earned the highest praise from the French and even from their bitter German foes. The French actually entrusted many of their airfields to Polish units for defence and the Poles provided anti-tank companies for no less than nine French divisions. The Polish brigade which found itself in Syria fought its way through Vichy opposition and joined the British forces in Palestine, bringing much equipment with it. These men have recently formed part of the glorious Tobruk garrison, and have materially assisted, as was mentioned by the Commander-in-Chief, in the defeat of General Rommel in Cyrenaica.

Had it not been for the quick decision of General Sikorski and Mr. Churchill and the ready and ubiquitous aid of the British Navy the Polish troops might well have been completely engulfed in the French disaster. But, once again, the Polish will to live and to go on fighting brought them through, this time to England, not only in big batches where the Royal Navy could pick them up, but in driblets through Switzerland, Spain and Portugal. Volunteers poured in also from North and South America, and from every remote corner of the globe where Poles had settled, and by every sort of route they came. Many Polish prisoners from Soviet Russia have found their way to these shores, bringing specially valuable aid, as they are all seasoned combatants and for the most part specialists, airmen, mechanics and sailors. Thus there has been gathered together in Britain the Polish Corps, a magnificent body of trained fighting men possessed of splendid spirit, training and equipment, and straining at the leash to be allowed to inflict just retribution on the sadistic German violators of their hearths and homes.

This satisfaction has been already partially afforded to the splendid Polish Air Force in Britain, composed of many fighter and bomber squadrons. It played a very prominent role in the Battle of Britain, our air-Trafalgar, destroying no less than 14 per cent of all the Ger-

man planes shot down in this battle. This was the more remarkable a feat because the Polish Air Force engaged in the battle was very much less than 14 per cent of the British planes engaged, and in such a battle *à outrance*, where the very last reserve machine capable of taking the air has to be thrown in, it may well be argued that it was just the addition of these few Polish squadrons that finally turned the day and gave Britain and civilization their toll of Hun Messerschmitts in the sweeps over Northern France, while Polish bombers take their full share in the heavy night raids on Germany.

At sea the young Polish Navy is carrying out its role with heartiness and efficiency and good comradeship with its British allies, and it was the heroic red-and-white ensign of a Polish destroyer that happened to escort the writer of this article returning home last year across the Atlantic Ocean.

Not only in Britain, however, but also in Russia and the Americas the Polish eagles were gathering to war. When the Soviet Power invaded Poland to divide it with Hitler, in order, as we know, to be the better able to fend off his inevitable attack upon Russia herself, many Polish officers and men fell into Russian hands. Since General Sikorski's far-sighted treaty with the Soviet in July, 1941, there has therefore been available this extra reservoir of trained fighting men of the best quality now being formed into a fresh Polish Army of six divisions, in whose equipment Britain is playing the chief part.

One also must not underestimate the importance of Americans of Polish origin, of whom there are no less than four milion, all loyal United States citizens but ineradicably Polish in their sentiment. All are unanimously the enemies of Germany, as they were in 1914, and have been throughout the firm supporters of President Roosevelt, who actually obtained his majority in certain States at the last election through Polish votes.

It is also no more symbolic coincidence that the first American soldier to be killed in Japan's treacherous opening attack on Hawaii was Norbert Niedźwiedzki, a Pole. Oddly enough, the first American soldier killed in France during the last war was Czajka, also a Pole.

This spirit was duly recognized by President Roosevelt in his telegram of July 5, 1941, to the President of Poland, when he said: "The American people are proud to have the friendship of the people of Poland. During the last two years the heroic and determined manner in which the Polish people have struggled and sacrificed in the face of tremendous hardships and deprivation has been an inspiration not only to the people of the United States but to liberty-loving people everywhere!"

It is however, especially in martyred Poland itself, that heroic self-sacrifice was exhibited in the resistance which was, wherever possible, maintained against the Germans. The value of this to the Allied cause is at once seen when it is realized that the Germans are compelled to keep a minimum of no less than twelve divisions of German troops permanently in Poland to keep down the starved and tortured population.

All through 1940 big guerilla detachments kept up the struggle against the invaders. Sabotage also has been successfully carried out, as when the Posen-Warsaw express full of Germans was derailed. No less than 82.000 Polish civilians have been executed by German Courts-Martial, according to the official figures, while tens of thousands have been murdered, massacred in batches and tortured to death without cause in concentration camps; their number may well exceed 200.000 souls.

The German "new order" is thus seen to be merely Bismarck's avowed policy for the Poles—*ausrotten*, i. e., exterminate. In addition, starvation, typhus, and other diseases due to the German occupation, frost and cold, will have added another million to the death-roll for which Germany must one day be made to pay. In addition, 1.200.000 Poles have been dragged from their homes as slaves, on forced labour in Germany, where, according to reliable sources, Polish workers were sold as slaves at 10 s. each to German farmers in regular slave-markets. The resistance of the Poles has cost them not merely their lives and liberties, but also all the treasures of their national culture, art, churches and monuments, as well as their private property in Western Poland, which was simply confiscated by the Germans.

But, beaten, tortured and starving, they continued to resist their bestial foes in every way open to them, even publishing over 100 secret newspapers, under the noses of their oppressors. These newspapers played a great part in leeping up their morale and their spiritual resistance to the Germans, and, as they often contained humorous cartoons and jokes, in spite of the ghastly Golgotha in which they barely existed, were the most heroic example to-day of Mr. Churchill's famous motto "grim and gay."

Yet all this superb self-sacrifice might count for little were it not wisely harnessed and skillfully directed by a real national leader of first-class dimensions. "Where the leaders have no vision, the people perish." All the mighty British war-effort itself might be wasted and misdirected but for Mr. Churchill's supreme gifts of imagination and courage, the two essential marks of a leader. Prévoir, c'est gouverner!

Luckily for Poland in this hour of trial and travail, she too possessed such a leader in the person of General Sikorski. Before the present cataclysm he had proved himself great, both as soldier and statesman.

In the Russo-Polish campaign of 1920, during the confusion of retreat after Pilsudski's ill-advised advance on Kiev, Sikorski withdrew his Polesian Corps in perfect order and, on being given command of the fifth army, played a decisive part in the Polish victory in the battle of Warsaw.

When he was Prime Minister of Poland in 1923 he proposed a military alliance to Czechoslovakia, overlooking in truly statesman-like fashion the Czechs' seizure of Teschen in 1919 against the wishes of the Council of Ambassadors and when the Polish armies were occupied in dealing with the German-created Ukrainian troubles of that year.

Though he knew he was the only competitor to Pilsudski as ruler of Poland, he preferred for the sake of national unity, so vital to the young Polish Republic and so much exposed to German disruptive efforts, to go into voluntary retirement. This period he devoted to writing books and articles on military strategy in a future war, recognizing with astonishing foresight not merely its totalitarian nature but the decisive role of an air force in conjunction with armoured formations. He thus actually takes precedence of General de Gaulle as the prophet of modern tank warfare.

When France was deserting us and it looked as though the full weight of Nazi Germany must fall on a half-armed and solitary Britain, he reached out his hand to Mr. Churchill and with a firm long clasp pledged us in that dark hour that Poland would fight on by our side.

Sikorski is therefore personally responsible up to his death for all the fine achievements of the Polish forces outside Poland and for mobilizing to our cause Poles from all over the world. To this end he undertook his visit to the U. S. A. in March, 1941, and addressed crowds of some 70,000 Poles in Chicago, explaining to them the need for further sacrifice. To a fine presence he added the gift of natural oratory, not flowery in style, but with military directness, to the point, and, like Mr. Churchill, he imparted the inspiration that comes from the heart's true vision.

The latest and the greatest sign of General Sikorski's far-sightedness and breadth of vision was his signature of the Russo-Polish treaty of July, 1941. At that date both the immediate present and at least one hundred and seventy years of the past could reasonably be argued against the signing of such a treaty.

The Germans were in the full tide of their advance into Russia, and the Soviet power indeed seemed as likely to collapse as to be able to resist. Russia had stabbed Poland in the back while Hitler was invading her in the West, and before withdrawing had been guilty of much brutal treatment and killing of Poles. Further, the history of the two peoples' relations from 1772, the time of the First Partition, to the present day had done nothing to diminish the natural hereditary Polish distrust of the Russian, even more natural and deeper than that felt since Cromwell's time by the bitter Southern Irish for the English.

General Sikorski has, in fact, amongst all the leaders of the Allied States under German occupation, proved himself the outstanding figure, in that he combined in such a high degree the qualities both of a far-sighted statesman and of a supremely talented military strategist, the ideal combination for total war. Poland has as much reason to be proud of him as Britain has of Mr. Churchill, and well might Mr. Churchill say on May 3, 1941: "I met here your General Sikorski; he is a great man . . ."

. . . Let us all—never forgetting Poland's contribution to that victory whose wings we can just descry—endorse what Mr. Churchill himself has said, on August 24, 1941: "Poles, the heroism of your people standing up to cruel oppressors, the courage of your soldiers, sailors and airmen, shall not be forgotten. Your country shall live again and resume its rightful part in the new organization of Europe."

From "*Does Poland matter to Britain?*"

OUR LOYAL ALLY POLAND

by J. H. TIERNEY

It is perhaps fitting that this little book should have been written, printed, and published in Scotland. It was to Scotland that our Polish comrades came after the fall of France in the dark days of 1940. At that critical time when the enemy invasion of the British Isles appeared to be almost a certainty, the Poles willingly undertook the defence of an essential part of the Scottish coast when there were insufficient British troops for that vital necessity.

Never in the lengthy annals of history has it been recorded that Britain has had such a loyal, and staunch Ally as Poland.

In no war in which Britain has been engaged has the cause been more noble, nor has she had an Ally like Poland who has never wavered or faltered for an instant in the grim and bitter struggle, even in the darkest hour of dire peril when the evil forces of might were triumphant, and sweeping all before them, and right appeared to be doomed to certain extinction.

Britain and the original Allies embarked upon the present war to preserve liberty and independence, and rid the world of tyranny, and serfdom.

Poland has been consistently faithful to the cause which she has regarded as a sacred crusade of liberation, at a terrible, and ghastly cost of human life, and suffering. The horrible suffering endured by the Poles is of such brutal nature, that it would require to be experienced to be fully realised.

Poland was the first nation with the courage to bring to an abrupt termination the German campaign of conquest by tyranny without bloodshed.

When the Nazi invaders crossed the Polish frontier with brutal violence on that Friday morning of 1st Septembre 1939, Poland honoured her solemn pledge to Britain to resist aggression, and fought to the bitter end alone against the ruthless barbarians equipped with

a gigantic modern war machine that had been consistently, and methodically constructed over a period of years. Poland fell, but not the indomitable spirit of the courageous, and honourable people.

Since that momentous September morning of 1939 chapter has closely followed upon chapter to record individual acts of gallantry almost without parallel, and brilliant achievements, and epic victories accomplished by the Polish armed forces, on the land, in the air, and on, and beneath the sea. There has been no single campaign, or engagement of importance during the whole period of the war in which the Polish armed forces have not shared to the utmost limit within their power.

The home front of Poland has been no less heroic.

Within space of five years the people of Warsaw have fought two epic, and pulsating battles for liberty, justice, and freedom.

In proportion to her power as compared with the other Allied nations no country has rendered greater service, and at far greater cost, to the common cause, than Poland. That gallant nation has contributed to the utmost possible human limit, without discrimination.

The price that Poland has had to pay for her invaluable contribution to the joint Allied war effort has been terrible.

Altogether the Polish nation has sacrificed five million souls embracing various theatres of war operations, and by diabolical forms of torture, and fiendish methods of extermination that an utterly merciless foe has been capable of devising, and executing with the utmost brutality, and callousness.

In return Poland does not seek any reward, but merely faithful respect by Britain of the solemn guarantee entered into between both nations which led the Polish resistance to German aggression on 1st September 1939, and Britain's declaration of war against Germany two days later.

If that pledge was a sacred trust in 1939 it is even a more sacred one now, otherwise all those millions of brave Polish souls would have tragically died in vain.

From "Our Loyal Allied Poland"

. . . If anybody ever guaranteed the British Isles of the British State it would be taken to guarantee its boundaries at the time of the guarantee.

Mr. Pickthorn in the House of Commons

POLAND'S PROGRESS 1919 — 1939

by Sir ERNEST BARKER

"I saw many 'Cavalier' things in Poland a dozen years ago—monuments of Sobieski; trophies of the Turkish wars; the gallantries and splendours of Polish kings and Polish nobles. Being an old teacher of history, I confess that I was fascinated by these things. But the abiding memory which I brought away was something different. It was a memory of the Polish people—a sober and hard-working people—soberly setting their house in order. It was a memory of industrial, educational and medical effort, directed to laying the foundations of a healthy life, both of body and mind, for the whole of the people of Poland—agricultural workers, artisans, and the whole mass of the population. I saw some country houses; and I saw some relics of aristocracy and of an old system of great estates. But I saw far more of busy peasants, living under conditions which did not shock me (I, too, was brought up on a simple farm); and I saw far more of busy workers and students in Warsaw, and of busy labourers in the port of Gdynia.

In Warsaw, there was a students' home, or university hostel, which housed—in comfort and at a price which the poorest could afford—nearly 2000 university students. This was a thing which moved my deep admiration. I also saw a fine technical school, and I wished that we had the like; and I saw an institute of public health with an admirable equipment, which seemed to me to be doing first-rate work, particularly for the peasantry of the country.

The effort of reconstruction which I saw was made by the people for the people—by the whole of the people for the whole of the people. So far as I saw, no class was favoured, and no class was directing affairs to its own particular benefit. Poland was a republic and a democracy—a social democracy."

From "*Poland's Progress 1919-1939*" ed. by John Murray Ltd.

LABOUR CONDITIONS IN POLAND

. . . Poland was one of the outstanding champions of reform in the International Labour Office of the League of Nations, and ratified twenty of the Conventions to reduce the hours of labour in heavy industries and to improve conditions. Miners in certain conditions were employed on a legal six hours day or 36 hours a week; the maximum for all persons underground was seven and a half hours per day or 45 hours a week. All manual workers had fifteen days annual holiday with pay after three years' service. The minimum vacation was eight days after one year's work which, as I stated a week ago, compares more than favourably with the regulations for holidays in Great Britain and other countries that could be named.

The Polish Trade Unions had 950,000 members; 14,000 Co-operatives reckoned on a total membership of 3,000,000. There were over 1,500,000 Socialist voters in the last free election before the war, in which 65 Socialists were returned to Parliament. There were Socialist town councils and mayors in Lodz and several of the smaller towns . . .

Sir Patrick J. Dollan D. L., LL. D. Ex-Lord Provost of Glasgow in "*Forward.*"

WORKERS' PROTECTIVE LEGSILATION IN POLAND

In the XIX Century when the idea of international protection of labour grew, developed and, to a certain degree, materialised, Poland had no separate existence as a State and hence she could not take part in Conferences convened for the purpose of solving the problem of international legislation on labour questions. The aims, however, of the pioneers of such legislation, such as the great social reformer and socialist Robert Owen, as well as Ashley, St. Simon, Blanqui, Daniel Legrand—to name only a few—found a ready echo in Poland, where the working classes felt themselves closely bound up with the international workers' movement.

This movement—says S. A. Johnston—"originated in a strictly historical sense in 1864 when the International Working Men's Association was formed in London for the purpose of unifying the workers of Europe and America." At its first meeting at Geneva in 1866 a number of resolutions were adopted which formulated such principles as were subsequently incorporated in international conventions and in national systems of legislation. These were—limitation of the duration of the standard working day and prohibition of the employment of children and of night work for women and others. Finally, the Association demanded that the Governments should take steps to bring about international labour protection. Later, the so-called Second International in the year 1889 in Paris adopted a programme including prohibition of the employment of children under 14 and in general of night work, the establishment of an eight-hour day, one day of rest in seven, and of an international minimum wage and health standard as well as the creation of a system of State supported national factory inspection.

Afterwards, at the beginning of 1919, Polish representatives participated in the International Socialist Conference held at Berne, which devoted itself to the drafting of the detailed programme for a Labour Charter. This included an eight-hour day, a weekly rest period of thirty-six consecutive hours, the prohibition of female night labour, a six-hour day for children between 16 and 18 years of age, a system of social insurance, freedom of association, a system of employment bureaux and the creation of a permanent Commission for the application of international labour legislation. The Charter—according

to Johnston—undoubtedly exercised a direct influence on the General Principles laid down in Article 427 of the Peace Treaty at the closing of Part XIII of that Treaty which has come to be popularly known as the Labour Charter.

Poland was among 9 nations to whom a seat was allotted on the Commission for International Labour Legislation established by the Peace Conference in January 1919. This Commission, under the chairmanship of Samuel Gompers, drafted a Convention, on a basis submitted by the British delegate, Mr. G. N. Barnes, creating a permanent organisation for the international regulation of labour questions. The aims and guiding principles of this Organisation were laid down in the Preamble which in the first paragraph affirms the ideal of social justice and then points out that the sentiments of justice and humanity were the motives for the creation of the Organisation. This was in perfect accordance with the principles that always guided the Polish workers' movement, which was aware of the significance of the protection of labour on a world-wide scale and by means capable of ensuring its fulfilment. Influenced by such opinions, Mr. Patek, the Polish member of the Commission, pointed out at the meeting of March 15th, 1919, that although an eight-hour day and other social reforms had already been introduced in Poland, he hoped that the principal points constituting the Labour Charter would be inserted in the Peace Treaty, in a clear and binding form. At a later date sentiments which animated Poland were expressed by the Polish delegate to the Conference and Member of the Governing Body, Mr. Sokal, at the XI Session of the I. L. O. in Geneva in 1928, who said that without social justice there could be no peace . . . therefore it was social justice which was desired, that peace might be finally established throughout the world.

Poland has not only ratified twenty Conventions and accepted a number of Recommendations, but has also taken an active part in all work of the I. L. O. Polish delegates have participated in all Conferences, presided over various Commissions and Committees set up by the Conferences and moved a number of resolutions. Mr. Sokal proposed the sending of a mission, composed of representatives of Governments, workers and employers, to Russia for the purpose of reporting on industrial conditions there. Another Polish delegate at the XIX Session stressed the problem of unemployment by saying that "the centre of gravity must be the problem of unemployment, together with the economic and financial questions which are closely bound up with it."

As will be seen from the following the scope of Polish Social Legislation was very wide.

EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PERSONS

1. The Convention fixing the minimum age for the admission of children to industrial employment (*provides that children under 14 shall not be employed*).

2. The Convention fixing the minimum age for the admission of children to employment at sea (*provides that the Convention prohibiting the employment of children under 14 shall apply to seamen*).

3. The Convention concerning the age for the admission of children to employment in agriculture (*provides that children under 14 may not be employed in agriculture*).

4. The Convention concerning the night work of young persons employed in industry (*provides that young persons under 18 shall not be communicated to the I. L. office at intervals not exceeding*

5. The Convention fixing the minimum age for the admission of young persons to employment as trimmers or stokers (*prohibits the employment of young persons under 18 on vessels as trimmers or stokers*).

6. The Convention concerning the compulsory medical examination of children and young persons employed at sea.

WEEKLY REST

7. The Convention concerning the application of the weekly rest in industrial undertakings (*in each seven days at least twenty-four consecutive hours*).

UNEMPLOYMENT

8. The Convention concerning unemployment (*provides*: (a) *that reports on measures taken or contemplated to combat unemployment be communicated to the I. L. office at intervals of not exceeding 3 months;* (b) *that a system of free public employment agencies under the control of a central authority be established;* (c) *that arrangements be made whereby foreign workers shall be admitted to the same benefits of insurance against unemployment as those which apply to nationals*).

9. The Convention concerning unemployment indemnity in case of loss or foundering of the ship.

10. The Convention establishing facilities for finding employment for seamen (*provides that the business of finding employment for seamen by any commercial enterprise for pecuniary gain, or of charging directly or indirectly by any person or company, should be abolished*).

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

All paid intellectual workers in Poland over the age of 16—directors, controllers, clerks, medical staff, technicians, chemists, and some shop assistants. etc., irrespective of their rate of remuneration, were insured under the Insurance for Intellectual Workers' Scheme.

The insurance for Manual Workers' Scheme covered all over 16 working in undertakings employing five or more people, with the exception of agricultural workers and domestic servants.

THE RIGHT OF ASSOCIATION

11. The Convention concerning the right of association and combination as industrial workers.

COMPENSATION FOR ACCIDENTS AND OCCUPATIONAL DISEASES

12. The Convention concerning workmen's compensation for accidents (*contributions were born solely by the employer*).

13. The Convention concerning workmen's compensation for occupational diseases.

14. The Convention concerning equality of treatment for national and foreign workers as regards compensation for accidents.

15. Convention concerning workmen's compensation in agriculture.

INDUSTRIAL HYGIENE AND SAFETY

16. The Convention concerning the use of white lead in painting.

SEAMEN

17. The Convention concerning seamen's articles of agreement.

18. The Convention concerning the repatriation of seamen.

TRANSPORT

19. The Convention concerning the marking of the weight on heavy packages transported by vessels.

PENSIONS

20. The Convention concerning the establishment of an international scheme for the maintenance of rights under invalidity, old-age and widows' and orphans' insurance (*provides that workers transferring their residence from one country to another shall retain their pension rights*).

HOURS OF WORK

The eight-hour standard was applicable in Poland to all workers with the exception of agricultural workers.

EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN

Working hours for women. The night rest period for women must amount to not less that 11 consecutive hours.

Work forbidden for women.

Maternity Protection. A woman could not be re-employed earlier than six weeks after confinement. Expectant mothers, especially after six months of pregnancy, were taken off certain kinds of work and six weeks before confinement they could leave their work.

Supervision and Enforcement. To safeguard the interests of women and young workers, special Labour Inspection was created.

FACTORY INSPECTION

A Decree concerning the uniform organisation of Factory Inspection throughout the whole territory of Poland provided for a Chief Inspector to assist the Minister of Labour, Divisional Inspectors, District Inspectors and Special Inspectors for certain industrial centres.

CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT

Two Decrees regulated the conclusion of an agreement between a worker and an employer, its validity and scope, the rights and duties of the parties, the payment of salaries and wages, the terms of notice, wrongful dismissal, termination of employment, etc.

HOLIDAYS WITH PAY

In Poland a law had come into operation by 1922 which provided for holidays with pay for manual and non-manual workers on a very extensive and generous scale.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING, ARBITRATION, AND LABOUR COURTS

Collective agreements could be concluded only by registered Trade Unions or Federations on the one hand and employers or their organisations on the other. It was forbidden to depart from the collective

provisions by means of an individual contract of employment and it is stipulated that the clauses of a collective agreement automatically replace those of individual contracts of employment less favourable to workers.

HEALTH INSURANCE

In Poland a system of compulsory Sickness and Maternity Insurance was introduced by the Act of May 19th, 1920.

INVALIDITY, OLD AGE, WIDOWS' AND ORPHANS' INSURANCE

The Schemes existing in Poland, covered manual and non-manual workers for invalidity and old age and provided benefits to their survivors.

POLES AND THEIR CRITICS

by Sir PATRIC J. DOLLAN D. L, LLD.
ex Lord Provost of Glasgow

The refusal of the Soviet Government to accept the Polish Government proposal to negotiate a settlement of territorial and population differences was excused by the Russian propagandists on the plea that Poland did not want to be on "good neighbourly relations" with the Soviet. The additional excuse was made that the Soviet could not enter into negotiations with the Polish Government with which diplomatic relations had been broken.

Prime Minister Stalin's fuglemen forget that Poland in 1932 was the first European nation of any consequence to make a non-aggression pact with Russia and continued to honour that pact in defiance of tempting offers by Germany to betray Russia.

While Poland was abiding by its agreement of honour in 1939 Russia was negotiating the secret treaty with Germany which enabled the two countries latterly to invade Poland from the west and the east and to partition the unhappy country between the German and Russian empires.

Poland led all other countries in being friendly towards Russia, and there is no evidence, diplomatic or otherwise, to show that Poland plotted or conspired against the Soviet Union as has been alleged too often by unscrupulous and prevaricating agents.

NOT POLAND'S FAULT

It was not Poland's fault that good neighbourly relations did not exist. The so-called statesmen of Russia are more aware of this than anybody else.

The official Soviet communiqué on the refusal to negotiate ignored the fact that diplomatic relations were broken off by Russia simply because Poland followed the customary procedure in suggesting that the International Red Cross should report on the alleged disappearance of 8,300 Polish officers who were among the prisoners taken by

Russia. The Germans alleged that they were killed by the Russians, while the latter, after a considerable silence, asserted they were murdered by the Germans near Smolensk in 1941.

It has never been explained why Russia, if it knew that the officers had been killed by the Germans, should have kept quiet over the atrocities until 1943.

Poland has acted with dignity in offering to resume diplomatic relations and, if Russia persisted in its truculent refusal, then Democrats in all other countries will understand who wants to be the Big Dictator in settling the territorial problems in Eastern Poland.

Russia must be taught to renounce aggression as contrary to the principles of Democracy and Socialism, and should be made to realise that Soviet Dictation in Europe is not desirable for the countries concerned nor for the Soviet Union.

After the German-Russian invasion of Poland, the British Government stated that the Russian attack on an ally could not be justified by the arguments put forward by the Soviet Government. The cynical attack was described by Britain as a tragedy of the grimmest character.

MOLOTOV AND BRITAIN

A month later (in October, 1939) M. Molotov was denouncing Britain as the aggressor and Germany as the striver for peace! He declared in the same speech there could be no question of restoring the old Poland, thus indicating that the Soviet Government, at that time, had considered the annexation of territory at the expense of Poland.

The quotations from the book "Russia and Her Western Neighbours" cited by Mr. H. D. Milligan, only require to be examined to prove that the authors of the book are biased and inaccurate. One quotation alleges that the Russians were welcomed as "liberators" in Eastern Poland. If the rest of the book is in the same vein, it can be dismissed as a fantasy.

If the Russians were welcomed as liberators, it is strange that they should have deported over 1,000,000 women, children and men to the interior of Russia, where they were kept in internment camps and suffered grievous hardships for many months. Some were forced to go to Siberia where they had to work under conditions worse than any that we know in this country There are still many Polish prisoners in Russia, whose Government refuses to grant their release despite the many appeals that have been made on their behalf.

POLES AND JEWS

Mr. Milligan quotes a statement by the same authors that the Poles oppressed national minorities and persecuted the Jews. There were nearly three and a half million Jews in Poland, equal to ten per cent. of the population, which does not suggest they were persecuted. Many of those Jews were expelled from Russia in the days when that country was notorious for its pogroms against those of Jewish race and faith. Poland had more Jews in proportion to its population than any other country, and granted them equal political, economic and religious rights with other nations.

It is not for the apologists of Russia, which executed the two Jewish Socialists, Henryk Erlich and Victor Alter (whose atrocious deaths were the subject of protests by Socialists and Democrats in all parts of the world, except Russia, Germany and Italy), to accuse other nations of persecuting the Jews.

Is there any case of modern Poland having executed a Jew because he was a Socialist?

JEWISH VIEW

A Polish Jew, M. Warszawski, told me before I started to write this article that the Jews would never forget how they had been befriended by the Poles in the last four years and in the testing months before the war.

M. Warszawski, who has been active in the underground opposition in Poland, stated that all parties, including the Socialists and Trade Unionists, were united in supporting the Polish Government in London which was for the Polish civilians the only symbol and authority of national unity. He stated that the Poles in Poland were carrying out the policy of the Government and were in more active contact with it than some of the rank and file in Russia were with the Soviet Gabinet. He declared, moreover, that the Polish Socialists were loyal to the Government and hostile to any Polish territory or population as at 1939 being annexed by Russia without negotiations and agreement.

In concluding, I may add that Professor Bruce A. Boswell, of Liverpool University, states that many of the Ukrainians and White Russians do not speak the same language as Russia, and are members of the Western Catholic or the Greek Catholic Church. These do not seem to be the kind of people who would be shouting enthusiastically to be taken under the protection of Comrade Stalin.

It's possible there are minorities, including some Communists, in the area who, led by Wanda Wasilewska (President of the Union of Polish Patriots), want to be under Russian protection. Wanda is the wife of Korneichuk, a deputy Commissar for Foreign Affairs and a Russian Government official who wants to wipe out Poland. She is a member of the rank of Colonel in the Red Army. Such are some of the "patriots" who wish Russia to become the overlord and master of all the Poles.

HAVE WE FORGOTTEN?

... Have we forgotten the Labour Party's stand on September 2nd, 1939 when Mr. Arthur Greenwood, as leader of the Party, demanded bold and uncompromising action against Germany, the aggressor, in defence of Poland?

All that I have suggested in the "*Forward*" articles, which have aroused the ire of the friends of Communism, is that territorial differences should remain in abeyance until the end of the war, and then settled by international conciliation and arbitration.

One of the semi-official apologists for the aggression of Soviet Russia, writing in your last issue in censure of me, stated that Soviet Russia, has no desire to dismember Poland, but will object to the annexation of Western Ukrainian and Western Byelo-Russian territory by Poland!

The elastic-minded historian who made that statement forgot conveniently that the territory referred to was included in the Poland which we were pledged to defend against aggression in the Treaty of 1939. Soviet Russia had agreed the same areas should be incorporated in the Polish State in the Treaty of Riga signed on March 18th, 1921. Mr. Joffe, President of the Russian-Ukrainian delegation, who took part in the negotiations preceding the Riga Treaty, stated:

"We have concluded a peace treaty giving full satisfaction to the vital, legitimate and necessary interests of the Polish nation."

WHAT ABOUT THE UKRAINIANS?

The Ukrainians in this area do not speak Russian and have no sympathy with Russian culture or religion. They may not wish to remain in the Polish State, but they certainly do not want to be transferred holus-bolus to the Russian camp.

The Ukrainians who have read the Polish articles and criticism in FORWARD have sent me documents which maintain that the Soviet administration set up in Eastern Poland after its invasion met

with widespread opposition from the Ukrainian and Byelo-Russian peasants, half a million of whom were deported to Siberia and Central Asia. They also alleged that most of the deported peasants and workers were obliged to practice forced-labour in the most distant regions of the Soviet Union.

They described the so-called plebiscite in which the Soviet claimed that 93 per cent. of the votes were cast in favour of fusion with Russia as a mockery of what a free vote should be. There was no secret ballot or individual vote. Decisions were taken at mass conferences in Lwów and Białystok. These conferences were called by the Soviet Government, whose military representatives were in attendance to see that the decisions wanted by the invading power were sanctioned.

It would seem, therefore, that the principles of Democracy were not recognised in the case of the Ukrainians and the Byelo-Russians any more than for the Poles. There are a few million Poles in this disputed territory and of these a large number were also exiled to Russia.

Mr. F. S. Milligan should please remember that, when Russia invaded Poland by agreement with Germany, the excuse then given was that the Soviet wanted to protect the Polish peasants against the Nazi aggressors! The excuse, having served its purpose, is now discarded and replaced by a demand for wholesale annexation without consulting the Poles or any of the other governments in the United Nations who will be responsible for the settlement of Europe in the hope that security and peace may follow...

ECONOMIC MOTIVES

... The Russians, like the Germans, made great play about the so-called suppressed minorities in Eastern Poland. They don't speak about the forests, the orchards, the arable lands, the tobacco plantations, the fruit growing areas, the hydropower, the oil and natural gas resources in the territories claimed by Russia without consideration for anybody else. It was the natural riches of Eastern Poland that Soviet Russia wished to annex. Soviet Imperialists were guided by economic motives rather than by reasons of humanity or philanthropy.

Only one per cent. of the people in Eastern Poland speak the Russian language as their native tongue. The overwhelming majority of people in this territory belong to a culture, religion and language different from that of Russia. If the latter are so confident that all the people east of the so-called Curzon Line are enthusiastic to join

up under the banner of Moscow, then why so anxious to have the matter settled now when there are no opportunities for consulting the people or allowing them to vote on the question of self-determination?

Russia wants to "dictate" the settlement because it knows that, if the people are consulted as well as Great Britain, U. S. and Poland, the result will not be so favourable to the economic ambitions of Soviet Russia. That explains the hurry and the bullying attitude of those who claimed they wanted to live in peace with all friendly nations.

From "*Socialists and Poland*" in "Forward."

SOVIET POLICY TOWARDS POLAND

FROM JULY '41 TO PRESENT

by WILLSON WOODSIDE

It is not fashionable to criticize Soviet Russia these days, for the double reason that her heroic and sacrificial stand against Germany enabled us to finish the war years earlier than would otherwise have been possible, and that she is called the great "progressive" power.

To defend the rights of an earlier and smaller ally, Poland, against Soviet claims automatically calls down on one the abuse of the pro-Soviet world propaganda machine as a "Hitlerite" and "fomenter of World War III."

What is the justification of this claim that Soviet Russia is "progressive" and "democratic" whilst Poland is "reactionary"? Before the war Poland permitted numerous political parties, and the leaders of the opposition were still alive to take over the reins when the Beck Government fell. Throughout the war numerous parties have been active, both in the Polish Government-in-exile, and in the underground parliament which has been maintained in Poland.

Poland was not a perfect democracy before the war. How many of these are there in the world?

How reasonable is it to expect that Poland, resurrected from a century and a half of partition, and trying to weld together a nation from three parts raised in different environments, while sandwiched between two giant and unfriendly neighbors both in explosive revolution, could set up at once a pure democracy?

Nevertheless, there were opposition parties and papers in Poland. Soviet Russia has only one party and one press, and one place for anyone who disagrees.

Another propaganda claim is that Poland brutally repressed her peasantry. It is true, the peasants of Eastern Poland did not have an easy or a happy time. They never had. They had been left in a state of overwhelming poverty, neglect and ignorance throughout 150 years of Russian rule, and the young Polish State did not succeed in lifting them out of this during its 20 years of existence.

Were they not, just the same, relatively free compared to the millions of peasants which Soviet Russia "liquidated" or sent to prison camps? The fact needs to be told that, before the war, 81.5 per cent of the land in Poland was in small farms up to 125 acres. 15 per cent was in larger holdings, thes having already been reduced by one-third by land reform measures carried out since 1919.

Mikolajczyk is a small peasant holder, owning a few acres. Stalin dominates the entire property, as well as the lives and freedom, of a nation.

It has become the fashion of the Soviet press during the past year (we will note later the significance of the date) to denounce the present leaders of the Polish nation as "fascists" and "accomplices of Hitler". But these leaders, and indeed their less admired predecessors of 1939, resisted Hitler and carried out an uncompromising war against him, while the Soviet Government dealt with him and sent supplies to his war machine.

No Polish Quisling has even been found; nor have the Poles maintained any "League of German Officers" leaving open the door to negotiation with this enemy. Even after five years of frightful repression, and after the uprising in Warsaw, carried out under the leadership of their government in London, the Poles continued total resistance to Hitler and Germany.

SOVIETS CONCILIATORY IN 1941

The Soviets did not always take their present attitude towards the Poles. In the hour of their greatest need, in July 1941, they were glad to renew relations with them, annul the Molotov-Ribbentrop Partition Agreement, free all deportees from prison camps, and allow the Poles to recruit an army from among these and the 190,000 prisoners which the Red Army had taken in Eastern Poland in 1939.

When General Sikorski was in Moscow, in the first week of December 1941, while the Germans were pounding almost at the suburbs, he negotiated an agreement with the Kremlin for a Polish Army of 96,000 men, to be under Soviet operational control. No sooner had he left, however, when the tide of battle turned. Japan launched her war against Britain and the United States in the Pacific, freeing the Soviet eastern flank, the Germans halted their attack on Moscow, and withdrew under Red Army pressure to winter positions.

Shortly thereafter the Soviets reduced the rations available to the Polish Army to 44,00 men; and they never provided the Poles with more than skeleton training armament. It was apparent that they had changed their mind about having a strong Polish force organized

on Russian soil. So the Polish Government arranged with the British to move out the men for whom no rations were available, to the Middle East. This movement began in the spring of 1942; the remainder of the Polish Army was transferred later on Soviet request. The three-divisional Polish force which accompanied the Red Army into Poland this year was formed later by the Soviets, by conscription from the million Polish citizens still left in Russia.

"Polish citizens"—no, they were no longer Polish citizens. During 1942 the Soviets had gradually closed down the relief work which Polish representatives were carrying on among their people in Russia. Then they declared, first, that all of these deportees of 1939-41 who were not of Polish racial origin were Soviet citizens; and finally, in January 1943, that the Poles, too, amongst them were Soviet citizens, "by virtue of a Soviet decree of November 1939," thus harking back to the deal with Germany which had given the whole of Eastern Poland to the Soviet Union.

The basis for relations between the Kremlin and the Polish Government was being rapidly undermined. The actual break came in April, 1943, over the terrible tragedy of the Polish officers.

Eight thousand, three hundred of these had been interned by Soviets in 1939, in camps near Smolensk. Now, suddenly in April 1943, the Germans announced the discovery of their mass graves, with "proof" that they had been shot by the Soviets. This burst on the world like a bomb-shell. To the great majority of people it was an obvious German maneuver to split the Allies. We knew how capable they were of killing the Polish officers themselves and dressing up the whole affair; and the Polish Government was blamed for "falling" for this game when it asked for a Red Cross investigation.

But there was a long story behind it; and the anguish of Poland was such that perhaps the government could not have done otherwise and retained the confidence of its people, with whom it has always maintained close liaison through couriers, radio and the underground press.

A TRAGIC MYSTERY

Letters arrived in Poland from these officers quite regularly until the spring of 1940. When they stopped for weeks and months, anxiety grew and it was finally decided to send scouts to try to find out what had happened. Out of seven men, only three returned, and all they had learned were vague stories from the local peasants that the officers had been taken away, some said to Novaya Zemlya, but no one knew just where.

So the matter stood until the Poles, their position suddenly changed from victim to ally, started to mobilize their army in Russia in late 1941. Men trooped in to their camp in the Urals by the tens of thousands, but only a handful of officers. Their ambassador enquired every month at the Foreign Office, and of Stalin himself, where were the officers? One month he was told, everyone had been freed, they would turn up all right. The next month, that they must have been sent to the White Sea camps, and be delayed for lack of transport. And the next, by Stalin himself, that they had been sent to Siberia, and had probably crossed the border into Manchuria.

But they could never get anything definite out of the Soviets, and it was only after the German "discovery" of the graves that the Comintern paper *War and the Working Classes* stated that the Polish officers had been used in labor gangs, been captured by the Germans in the swift advance of 1941, and obviously executed by them. Here was a perfect plausible explanation. Why could it not have been given earlier? What did the evasions mean?

SOVIETS RETURN TO '39

Instead of providing the facts which could have laid the German accusation and recemented Allied unity, the Soviet broke off relations with the Polish Government. They had already, in February 1943 renewed their claim to Eastern Poland through an article by Korneitchuk, then Vice-Commissar of Foreign Affairs.

Now they set up Korneitchuk's wife, Wanda Wassilevska, a Soviet citizen, as head of a "Free Polish Committee" in Moscow, the framework for the Lublin Committee.

At Teheran, later that year, according to the very interesting revelations of Raymond Daniell in the *New York Times* and *Globe and Mail* of December 18, 1944, Stalin bluntly demanded British acquiescence in the Curzon Line and a Soviet sphere of influence in Roumania, and British support for Tito in Yugoslavia, before he would promise to coordinate his 1944 offensive with our invasion of Western Europe. The alternative stood, without need of pointing at it, in his "Free German Committee" and his "League of German Officers."

According to Daniell, attributing his information to "diplomatic sources," Molotov had sought to have a Curzon Line pledge written into the Anglo-Soviet Treaty of alliance in May 1942, but been dissuaded by Winant, who warned that this would have a disastrous effect on American opinion. When, just after the Teheran "deal,"

Wendell Willkie gave this same warning, that harsh Soviet demands on Poland might disillusion the American people and turn them away again from participation in the European settlement, the Soviet press counter-attacked furiously.

At this same time, too, the Soviet Government rebuffed Cordell Hull's offer to mediate a Polish settlement. Next comes one of the celebrated incidents of the war, the *Prawda* report of last January 17 that British agents had been negotiating a separate peace with Ribbentrop. Daniell is mystified by this. But I know that British official circles interpreted it as intended "jolt."

Churchill had let seven weeks pass since Teheran (having been down with pneumonia) without coming out in support of the Curzon Line; and early in January there was a little incident in Roumania which the Soviets apparently interpreted as an infringement on their sphere-of-influence rights there. The implication was clear enough, and was painted out in these columns at the time: *we* can negotiate with Ribbentrop and let *you* try to finish off Germany by yourself, if you can. Churchill made his Curzon Line speech on February 22.

Why is it, that, with Britain's support for her demands, and her own Polish Committee set up in Lublin functioning as a provisional government, the Soviets have nevertheless persisted all this year in negotiations with the Polish Government in London? It is because in spite of their methods, they want a "legal" settlement of the boundary question, and the broader base of pubblic support inside Poland which would be assured by the adhesion, as a minimum, of Mikolajczyk's Peasant Party to the Lublin "Government."

The Soviets appreciate keenly the value of having the signature of the legitimate Polish authority on the boundary settlement, as a check to Polish unrest in the future and to wash this deal down with the British and American peoples.

MIKOLAJCZYK'S LAST TRY

It was fairly obviously to bring the Polish Government to terms that the Soviets refused for six weeks last summer to drop supplies to the former's supporters in the Warsaw uprising, or allow us to use our shuttle bases in Russia for this purpose (the Red Army seems to have run into a quite genuine check on the outskirts of Warsaw in August).

This, then, is the background for the final attempt which Mikolajczyk made to work out a settlement with Stalin and Churchill in Moscow, in October. He sought to retain at least the ancient Polish cities of Vilno and Lwow, as the best that could be hoped for;

and it seems that his government would have conceded a good half of the Soviet demands, and signed a quarter of their territory away.

But the Soviets demanded the full pound of flesh, everything, Vilno, Lwow, and the Polish oil district of Drohobycz. They callously offered the Poles Stettin and Breslau ("are they not as big and valuable cities as Vilno and Lwow?"—except that they don't happen to be Polish), and a wide tract of Eastern Germany.

On this offer the Polish Cabinet divided. The majority argued that they had no mandate from the people to make such cession of Polish territory, and accept such dangerous compensation, perpetually subject to a German campaign of revenge. Further, they felt that without a formal guarantee of real independence within their new frontiers, a guarantee in which the United States would not join, they might be signing away half their country for nothing.

WHY CHURCHILL SPOKE

That brings us up to Mr. Churchill's latest speech reiterating his support for the Russian claims. A year after Teheran, we still face a redoubtable task in defeating Germany. Stalin's armies have been halted on the major Eastern front for five months, while a politico-military campaign, which has undoubtedly weakened Germany but has also brought Eastern and much of Central Europe under Soviet occupation, has been pursued. It was not a far-fetched deduction that Stalin was demanding a final settlement of his Polish boundary claims before he stroke out again on the main road to Berlin.

From his long-held views on the essential enmity of the Western "capitalist" world towards Soviet Russia, this may seem sound procedure. I suppose he could easily convince himself that our cordial public pronouncements and the supplies we have poured in to him since 1941 represent a purely selfish policy by which we put arms in the hands of Russian soldiers to save the lives of our own. Yet he surely underestimates the friendly intentions of "letting bygones be bygones" which went with the arms and the speeches, and the need of reciprocal acts of friendship if there is to be any true co-operation between our countries for peace.

From *Saturday Night.*

After the Moscow trial of the 16 Members of the Polish Underground Movement the following story was circulating in the diplomatic circles of the Russian capital.

One of the Western European diplomats in Moscow was in conference with three high ranking Soviet officials after which he had an audience with Mr. Stalin. He came late and apologized to Mr. Stalin. He said that at the end of the conference his watch was missing from his pocket and he could not tell the exact time.

Mr. Stalin said nothing but in the presence of the diplomat rang up the Chief Soviet Prosecutor and ordered him to arrest the three officials and to prosecute them for theft.

When however on the following morning the watch was found in the pocket of another suit the diplomat thought it imperative to inform Mr. Stalin about it in order to get the detained men released.

Having heard the news Mr. Stalin communicated at once with the chief Prosecutor and ordered him to drop the case and release the men.

"It's too late, Comrade Joseph Vissarionovich," said the Chief Prosecutor "They have already pleaded guilty and laid down a full confession."

CAN WE TRUST RUSSIA?

by Rev. RAYMOND T. FEELY, University of San Francisco

The future peace of the world lies in the hope that the victorious United Nations can work out a plan to which all will conscientiously adhere. Can we trust Russia?

Every thinking American is silently asking that question. Every peace-loving American is hoping that the answer is affirmative. What does the record show?

Truth and honesty are moral virtues. All Marxists, including Joseph Stalin, deny a free will, a moral law and a Divine Law Giver, Who alone is above rulers and nations. No atheist can logically be trusted to keep his word, for no atheist recognizes any moral obligation. Joseph Stalin is an atheist. Therefore—!

Yaroslavsky, one of the great high-priests of Communism, has crystallized the doctrine, "Whatever helps the proletarian revolution is ethical."

Marx and Lenin have also admitted the guilt of Communism to the above charge:

"*We deny all morality taken from superhuman or non-class conceptions. We say that this is a deception, a swindle, a befogging of the minds of the workers and peasants in the interests of the landlords and capitalists.*"

"*We say that our morality is wholly subordinated to the interests of the class-struggle of the proletariat. We deduce our morality from the fact and needs of the class-struggle of the proletariat. . . . we say that a morality taken from outside of human society does not exist for us; it is a fraud. For us morality is subordinated to the interests of the proletarian class-struggle. . . .*"

Can we trust Stalin to keep his word? Stalin drafted the Soviet Constitution granting freedom of speech, press, etc. Has he kept his word? Stalin promised the United States not to allow on the soil of the U. S. S. R. "any organization or group—which has as an aim the

overthrow or the preparation for the overthrow of, or the bringing about by force of a change in the political or social order of the whole or any part of the United States, its territories or possessions." Has he kept his word?

Stalin is the man who, according to Ambassador Davies of *Mission to Moscow* infamy, has not broken his word in ten years. What does the record show?

Non-aggression Pact signed between the U. S. S. R. and Poland on July 25, 1932, extended for ten years on May 5, 1935. Soviet troops crossed Polish border on September 17, 1939.

Non-aggression Pact signed between the U. S. S. R. and Latvia on February 5, 1932, extended for ten years on April 4, 1934. Soviet troops crossed Latvian border on June 17, 1940.

Non-aggression Pact signed between the U. S. S. R. and Estonia on May 4, 1932, extended for ten years on April 4, 1934. Soviet troops crossed Estonian border on June 17, 1940.

Non-aggression Pact signed between the U. S. S. R. and Finland on January 21, 1932, extended for ten years on April 7, 1934. Soviet troops crossed Finnish border on November 29, 1939.

Non-aggression Pact signed between the U. S. S. R. and Lithuania on September 28, 1926, twice extended, second extension for ten years on April 4, 1934. Soviet troops crossed Lithuanian border on June 15, 1940.

The U. S. S. R. proposed a convention defining aggression and signed document with Estonia, Latvia, Poland, Iran, and Rumania on July 3, 1933, with Lithuania on July 5th, and with Finland on July 23rd. The definition of aggression included invasion by armed forces, even without declaration of war, an attack by any type of armed forces, even without declaration of war. Soviet troops crossed Rumanian border on June 28, 1940.

When the peace treaty ending World War II is written, have we any guarantee that Stalin will be more faithful to his word than in the cases of Poland, Latvia, Estonia, Finland, Lithuania, or Rumania?

We might as well be realists and face the question. Poland, the Balkans, Greece, etc., are forcing us to be realists. Let us be intellectually honest.

Let the reader recall a few basic tenets of Communism, and the apparently baffling international moves of the U. S. S. R. clarify.

It has been shown that the ultimate objective of Communism is a World Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, headquarter Moscow. The achievement of this objective was challenged not so much by the powers of capitalism as by the rise of another international plot, *viz.*, Nazism (Fascism).

War to death became inevitable A traitorous alliance whilst democracy was being murdered in Europe, gave the Red military machine the opportunity to build to maximum strength.

The superb defense of the U. S. S. R., the tremendous sacrifice of men and of lend-lease equipment turned the tide. The democracies of America and Great Britain were now joined in an "Anti-Fascist War of Liberation." No one dared question any longer "the democracy" of any of the United Nations.

The war is won. The peace must now be won. "Governments in exile" were weakened or supplanted. The Baltic States were incorporated into the U. S. S. R. "Free Polish"—"Free German" groups sprang up at Moscow's direction.

Tito was the national hero of Yugoslavia; Ercoli was rushed back to Italy and subsidized; Thorez was forced on France; Greece, Belgium, and Holland Communist groups sought not to rebuild their countries, but to overthrow their governments.

The old Lenin technique of seizure of political power through violence and propaganda by a highly organized minority is under way.

Economic chaos, war shattered peoples, the technique of the Popular Front, the superb organization of "the underground," direction by Moscow-trained experts are tremendous assets for a Communist-controlled Europe.

"Peoples' Governments," slander-murders of any political opposition (as every anti-Communist is stigmatized as a "Fascist"), all the methods used by Hitler in Austria, and Stalin in Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania (and in many labor unions in the U. S. A.)—these are the tactics of the "defunct" Communist International. "Friendly governments" must be Moscow-dominated and dictated. Whatever pattern Europe may assume, new governments must not be "anti-Communist."

The diabolical shrewdness of this early "peace" movement lies again in the very nature of Communism. Any sovereign nation, if it would preserve its existence must be as strongly opposed to Communism among its own subjects as it would be again the existence

of Nazi Bunds. A group owing its allegiance to Moscow, and not to its own rulers, a group which upholds Red Fascism with its liquidation of personal, political, and religious liberties, a group which aim "by violence" to seize political power—such a group is a menace to any new government set-up in Europe.

To co-exist as a sovereign State with the U. S. S. R.—to protect oneself from the Communist enemy within and in so doing not to be condemned and rejected by Moscow as "unfriendly"—this is the greatest problem facing the peace table. At this writing, it is likewise an unsolved problem, and Moscow seems to hold the winning hand.

The cleverest of all recent Communist tacticts, and one that is lulling many individuals and groups otherwise hostile to Communism, is the widespread belief that after the war, Russia will need a generation or more to recuperate and will desire peace and friendly relations with other countries for many years to come.

The U. S. S. R. will need all but the last of these, and yet her European, and later on global strategy will proceed. "The underground," the organized, armed, and ruthless Communist minorities in the liberated countries can and will receive financial aid, war materials, and above all, direction from Moscow, without in any way "officially" involving the U. S. S. R. or retarding its recuperation from the ravages of war.

Never since the demoralized conditions when Lenin, with less than 100,000, seized control of one hundred and seventy millions, has Communism had the opportunity which peace will bring. Chaotic economic conditions, dazed, leaderless peoples, disorganized social conditions—such times are made for the dream of a Lenin and the plans of a Stalin.

This pamphlet cannot treat this problem. You, however, must ask yourselves as American citizens what we as a nation, with our increasing casualty lists and tremendous debt, could do, would do, to counter such a program.

On May 12th, 1917, Lenin had spoken as follows to the All-Russian Conference of the Russian Social Democratic Party: --

"No one has oppressed the Poles as much as have the Russian people. The Russian people have served in the hands of the Czars as the executioner of Polish freedom.

Why should we, Great Russians, who have been oppressing a greater number of nations that any other people, why should we repudiate the right of separation for POLAND, the Ukraine, Finland?"

On August 29th, 1918, the Council of People's Commissars passed this decree: —

"All treaties and the acts concluded by the Government of the former Russian Empire with the Governments of the Kingdom of Prussia and the Austro-Hungarian Empire, concerning the partitions of Poland, in view of their being contrary to the principle of the self-determination of nations and the revolutionary sense of law of the Russian nation, which recognizes the Polish nation's inalienable right to independence and unity, are hereby repealed irrevocably."

Yet it is evident that there were other ambitions in Soviet minds.

The final Polish-Russian peace treaty was signed at Riga on March 18th, 1921, when M. Joffe, the President of the Soviet Delegation, made the following declaration: —

"None of the peace treaties concluded by Russia and the Ukraine admits preparations for a new war, because none of them leaves any problem unsolved, or solved merely on the basis of the relative strength of the contracting parties.

By the conclusion of the Peace Treaty with Poland we have closed the circle of peaceful relations between all the nations which belonged to the former Russian Empire, liquidating the policy of violence of the Czars."

This Polish Russian treaty was recognized by the Council of the League of Nations on February 3rd, 1923, and by the decision of the Conference of Ambassadors of March 15th, of the same year. The U.S.A. accepted this boundary in a note of April 5th, 1923. It was ratified again between Russia and Poland in their pact of non-aggression, of July 25th, 1932 and in its renewal on May 5th, 1934.

The Eastern provinces of Poland have now been handed over to Russia. And this despite our guarantee to Poland in 1939. Advocates of the Yalta solution tell us that we guaranteed Poland against Germany, not against Russia. Let us not hedge like that. We made a treaty with Poland, as she was in 1939, not with a Poland as Lord Curzon may have conceived it, not with a ramshackle Poland which heeded to have half of its territory taken away in order that it might be "strong, independent and democratic." The first article of the Anglo-Polish agreement for Mutual Assistance, signed on August 25th, 1939, is quite general in its terms : —

> *"Should one of the Contracting Parties became engaged in hostilities with a European Power in consequence of aggression by the latter against that Contracting Party, the other Contracting Party will at once give the Contracting Party engaged in hostilities all the support and assistance in its power."*

The third article follows :

> *"Should a European Power attempt to undermine the independence of one of the Contracting Parties by processes of economic penetration or in any other way, the Contracting Parties will support each other in resistance to such attempts."*

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To a distant Russian village there came a Soviet Commissar from Moscow to investigate the local conditions and the progress of the Soviet educational work.

"I see that you are very pious in this village of yours" he said to an old peasant "perhaps you even pray down here."

"Yes, we pray" the peasant answered calmly.

"And what about Soviet leaders, do you pray for them?"

"Yes, we do" — replied the shrewd old timer slyly.

„Look here old man" remarked the commissar trying to convert the villager to atheism. "In the old days you prayed for the autocratic Tsar and what was the good of it? Did those prayers help you?"

"Yes, they did." Was the naive and unexpected answer.

QUESTION

Dear Editor:

I am stationed on the Adriatic coast in Italy and in my sector there are numerous Polish soldiers and Wacs. I have talked with many of them and they say they are never going home under conditions as exist in Poland today. Some even say that they would be killed if they returned to their old homes. Why? Most of them are veteran soldiers of the 8th Army and many saw action at Cassino.

In the meantime, these soldiers wait in Italy until a place can be found for them where they can make a home and earn a living.

I am not a Polish flag waver, but I contend there must be something drastically wrong somewhere when thousands of Poles do not wish to return to their homeland. If there is something wrong, why can't it be corrected?

—Cpl. DONOVAN O'LEARY

The Stars and Stripes (Rome), 25-X-45

ANSWER

The Polish people have a government "for" them but not "of" or "by" them.

Dallas News (Tex.)

...."Owing to our island position, our traditions and our long history, we have shown ourselves able, over and over again, in titanic struggles, to be the leader in marshalling a coalition against any power which has sought to impose its will on Europe."

Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Mr. Eden,
15.XII.44. Hansard.