

THE POLISH REVIEW

VOL. VI

MAY 23, 1946

No. 10



Still smiling . . . in the "ghost city" of Europe — Warsaw.

International News Photo

The American Friends Service Committee Presents

Distressing Facts About Poland

VITAL STATISTICS: Population, 1939—34,000,000. Present, 21,600,000. 7,000,000 killed during 5½ years' occupation, including most of key people of the country—educators, scientists, engineers, doctors, judges, and civil servants.

2,500,000 deported as slave laborers.

2,500,000 caught in eastern portion when occupied in 1939 by Russia. Many of these two groups now being returned to Poland, but uncertain how many or in what condition.

Ratio of women to men in some cities, including Warsaw, said to be 7-to-1. Only 50,000 to 80,000 Jews remaining out of 3,500,000. Infant mortality 25-30%.

2,500,000 children need nourishment, clothing, medicines; not to mention books, writing equipment and recreational materials. Children average 2 years behind normal development, are over 30% tubercular.

Over 450,000 orphans.

Yearly birthrate 400,000, yet no layettes, cleaning supplies, etc. In Warsaw, of 14,500 children below school age, only 2,500 now go to kindergarten; of 40,000 of school age, only 21,000 attend school; of 21,500 over 14, only 200 attend night schools.

FOOD: Main foods bread and potatoes. Typical family gets, for each person, 12-16 oz. bread per day and 16-20 oz. potatoes. No milk except for children under 3; limit for them, ¼ pint per day. If there is sugar or meat, ½ oz. per day. But practically no meat, fats, or oils except at fantastic prices of open markets.

No official rationing, but workers get supplementary meals and food tickets (allowing purchases at low official rates) as part of wages.

ECONOMY: Inflation: Official rate, September, 1945, 100 zlotys to the dollar. Actual rate, 280. January, 1946, 450.

Average office worker's salary, 3000 zl. per month. Unskilled laborer, 600 zl. per month. In September 600 zl. would buy one cake of imported soap, or 24 kilos of bread. Women on farm work two days for the price of one liter of milk.

Agriculture: Cattle reduced to 35% pre-war. Horses to 30% former numbers. Hand level of agricultural economy except where tractors have been supplied by UNRRA or by the Russians. Land reform dividing all land holdings over 125 acres has resulted in great confusion of farming continuity. Disruption of agriculture in former eastern Germany, now western Poland, where Germans are being evacuated from lands richly cultivated for centuries and Poles replacing them have no means, no equipment and no security.

Strip of country running north and southeast of Warsaw, which was in the midst of fighting for a long period, is extensively devastated.

Complete desolation. No buildings, few trees, fields mined and uncultivated. Farmers in this area doggedly stay on, living in cellars and holes. Family of ten in hole 5 feet by 7 feet, for instance, covered over with earth and grass. Estimated to be 800,000 persons living in Poland in such conditions.

Industry: Lack of transportation the main problem. Supplies coal to excess at the mines. Much being exported, mostly to Russia. Government doing all it can to rebuild industries.

Destruction of Warsaw: Former population 1,300,000. About 400,000 now living in ruins. 90% buildings almost totally destroyed. 100,000 bodies still under ruins, November, 1945. Huge rat population multiplying.

HEALTH: 10,000 Poles dying each month of tuberculosis alone. 70% hospital facilities destroyed in the war.

Warsaw's 18 dentists can make only 50 fillings a month on account of lack of supplies and instruments, or one filling per 8000 persons. Only 6000 doctors in Poland, one to 3500 persons. (U. S., one to 200 persons.) No young physicians graduated since spring of 1939. At least four years now before there will be new graduates.

Great scarcity of linen and blankets, bandages, towels, etc. Only 5,570 hospital beds available for tubercular patients, for at least 1,200,000 reported cases.

Toilet paper and old rags used as surgical dressings, old packing cases for operating tables. Few instruments. No anesthetics.

High venereal disease rate.

At least 800,000 invalids and cripples in Poland.

CLOTHING: Very critical shortage. Germans requisitioned all reserve clothing and monopolized clothing manufacture and products. Pieces of second-hand clothing sell on open market at fabulous prices. Suit of German ersatz material costs 60,000 zl., two years' salary.

Shoes desperately needed. All sorts of rags worn on feet; many totally barefoot.

RELIEF: UNRRA has shipped in supplies of food, clothing, medicines, equipment, transport, (488,492 tons to February 1, 1946) but supply still described as "infinitesimal in proportion to the need."

Other agencies active in Poland: American Relief for Poland, War Relief Services of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, YMCA, American Red Cross, Unitarian Service Committee, Brethren Service Committee, JDC, Swedish Government.

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Soviet Dictated Maneuver in UN

"We Shall Raise a Million Dollars!"

"Because of Sienkiewicz . . ."

The Death of Lieutenant Scazighino at Monte Cassino

Polish Women's Alliance of America

Polish Studies in Pennsylvania

You Can't Keep Polish Humor Down

Annual Subscription, Five Dollars
Single Copy, Twenty-five Cents

SOVIET DICTATED MANEUVER IN UN

ON April 17, 1946, Dr. Oscar Lange, Ambassador to the United States of the Provisional Polish Government, presented to the UN Security Council a resolution proposing the breaking off of diplomatic relations with the Franco Government in Spain because that Government is allegedly a threat to international peace.

It cannot be denied that the Polish people are against dictatorship in Spain or elsewhere. But at the same time, they see in Ambassador Lange's ill-timed action a Soviet-dictated maneuver calculated to embarrass the Western democracies.

Spain is ruled by General Franco's military dictatorship. But Poland is ruled by a dictatorship too—only it happens to be a Communist dictatorship nominally headed by Bierut, a Communist agent imported from the Soviet Union.

All steps taken by the Bierut Government should be viewed in the light of the fact that it is a government of Communist agents, exercising dictatorial power in Poland in behalf of the Soviet Union. And it must be borne in mind that the Soviet Government has never been concerned with ideological scruples in its international dealings. Its policy is directed at provoking revolutions in many countries and at gradually introducing a uniform Communist dictatorship throughout the whole world. The Soviet Union is not squeamish about its methods and does not hesitate to cooperate politically or economically with its ideological opponents. It has already happened that these ideological opponents and at the same time political partners of the Soviet Union were, like Mussolini, against the democratic system, or, like Hitler and his Nazis, against Western civilization.

Let us not forget that the voting of sanctions by the League of Nations against fascist Italy did not prevent Italy from being supplied with oil products from Soviet sources. The same story was repeated on a larger scale in 1939 with respect to Germany, whose policy of aggres-

sion and war was supported by the Soviet Union through all its economic and political influence.

A similar situation existed in the Argentina affair. Genuine as well as pro-Soviet "democrats" the world over ran themselves ragged protesting against the Peron regime, while an official Soviet trade mission arrived in Argentina just after the elections, thus granting de facto Soviet recognition to the Peron Government even before the resumption of normal diplomatic relations.

Hence it is apparent that the Soviet Union would likewise have no scruples in the Spanish case if it saw any advantage in maintaining diplomatic relations with Franco.

But the Soviets have their old scores to settle with Franco dating from the Spanish Civil War in which the Soviet Union intervened on the side of the Republicans in the interests of Communism. Besides, Soviet policy in the case of Spain is meant to go further—it hopes to revolutionize and communize all of Western Europe, by the same token undermining the position and acting against the interests of Great Britain and the United States in this region.

The French Communists were the first to be used for this end. Bowing to their pressure, the French Government closed its frontier with Spain and approached Great Britain and the United States in the matter of economic sanctions. This initiative was doomed to failure, for although Britain and America would gladly see Spain change its military dictatorship to a representative government, they certainly do not wish a Communist dictatorship to be set up in that country.

Realizing that it could not hope to gain American and English backing in its stand, the French Government adopted a wait-and-see attitude. Despite the presence of Communists in the French Cabinet, official France did not permit itself to be used further as a pawn in the Soviet game.

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"WE SHALL RAISE A MILLION DOLLARS!"



WITH the slogan "We Shall Raise a Million Dollars!" — displayed prominently in the Polish language press, broadcast over all Polish radio programs and pictured on attractive posters in shop windows in every city and town where Americans of Polish descent reside — the Polish American Congress auspiciously launched a drive on May 1st, to raise funds to carry on its various activities.

The Polish American Congress in appealing for contributions, announces that it needs a million dollars for the promulgation and publishing of truth about

Poland—for the presentation of the Polish case to American public opinion—for emphasizing the importance of Polish culture to Americans of other backgrounds—for educational and civic activities and for asserting and raising the position of Americans of Polish descent in all fields of endeavor.

Ten thousand workers are soliciting subscriptions among Americans of Polish origin in cities and towns under the direct supervision of local committees appointed by state district chairmen. There are thirty branches of the Congress in twenty states which cooperate closely with Mr. Ignatius Nurkiewicz, of Brooklyn, N. Y., chairman of the commission on finance, who is also chairman of the drive.

The Polish American Congress is confident that the drive will be oversubscribed in less than sixty days. Its officers place much faith in the incomparable patriotic and public spirit of Americans of Polish extraction, so emphatically demonstrated on innumerable occasions.

One of the purposes for which the fund is to be used, said Mr. Charles Rozmarek, president of the Congress in a message published in the press, is "to combat discrimination wherever and however directed against Americans of Polish ancestry in this country."

Further, emphasized Mr. Rozmarek, "this fund will be used primarily to acquaint everyone with the truth about Poland and to carry out the following objects and purposes for which the Polish American Congress was founded:

"To give complete support to the Government of the United States in its efforts to win a just peace in accord with the principles of the Atlantic Charter.

"Unification of action of Americans of Polish descent within the lawful limitation of their rights and duties as citizens of this country.

"Establishment of a special fund for the purpose of carrying out the aims and objects defined by the Congress.

"Impartial information to the American public on Poland's historical role, her aims and her needs.

"Activities in the direction of closer and deeper cooperation of American democracy with the democracy of Poland, in the fields of civic, ideological, cultural and social-economic life.

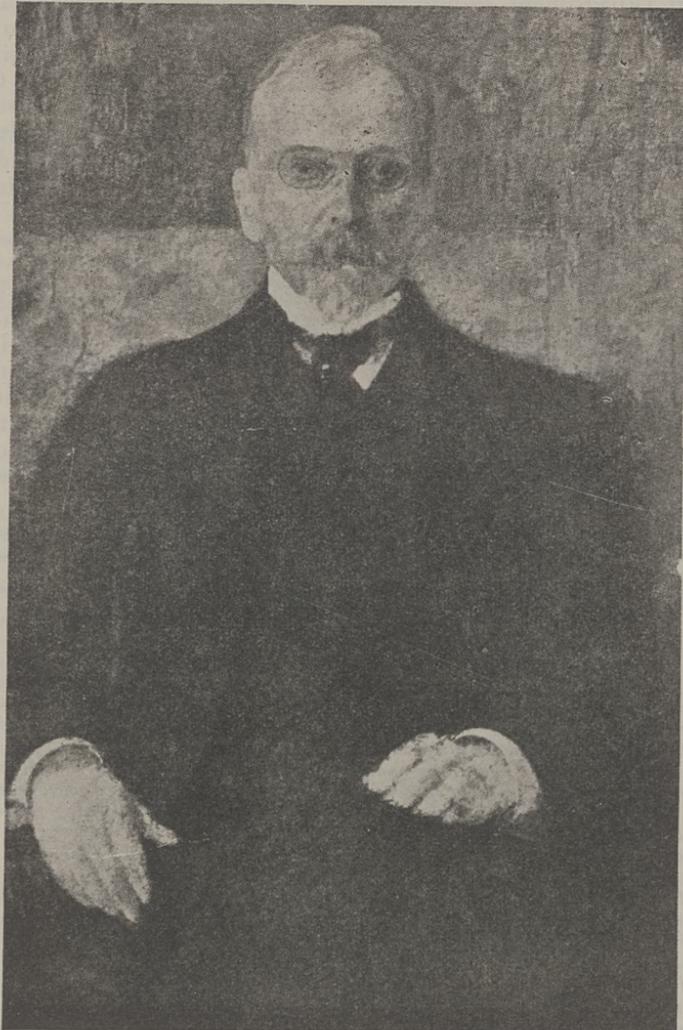
"Drafting and applying a constructive program of activities for the welfare of Americans of Polish descent, with the view of raising their material well-being through increasing the ranks of their fraternal, professional, ideological and other associations, through supporting and protecting the Polish press, schools and parishes, and through general support of Polish industry and trade in America."

Subscriptions to the Million Dollar Drive may be sent directly to the Polish American Congress, Inc., 1520 W. Division St., Chicago 22, Ill.

"BECAUSE OF SIENKIEWICZ . . ." By WLADYSLAW REYMONT

This month marks the 100th anniversary of the birth of Henryk Sienkiewicz (1846-1916), world-famous author of *QUO VADIS* and the *TRILOGY*, winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature, and a great Polish patriot. Below is a reminiscence of Sienkiewicz written by another Polish Nobel Prize winner, Wladyslaw Reymont, which was published in the monthly *SPINKS* under the German occupation of Warsaw during World War I. The events described by Reymont took place in 1888 in that part of Poland which had been seized by Russia a hundred years earlier. They proved to be the turning point in the life of 20 year old Reymont, who subsequently entered upon a career of writing that was to bring him glory and fame.

MY lot in life was very hard, and although I tried to keep in mind the rustic proverb, "With accustomance and good grace, even hell is not a bad place," I could not accustom myself to the poverty which consumed me. At that time I occupied a position on the Warsaw-Vienna railway, a position so important that my salary was just sufficient to pay for my tea and cigarettes. For the rest I had recourse to credit at the station buffet, and to borrowing. My berth was a wretched one, the conditions horrible, and there were no prospects for advancement. But I was twenty, hardy and healthy, and possessed an unshaken faith in ideals. I sometimes even went so far as to indulge in dreams of an increase in salary, or of transfer from the line to the office. But dreams they remained, as my chief and the dignitaries on the line were prejudiced against me, and showed me no cordiality. And no wonder, for I was suspected of writing poetry—worse even, of malicious contributions to a progressive publication concerning conditions on the railway. Worst of all, I had let my hair grow into a long, splendid mane, I wore spectacles, and I subscribed for *Truth*. That sufficed to render me an object of scorn. My reputation was gone, and my position depended solely on the good will of my chief. I had neither friends nor protectors. I was very wretched, so I took refuge from the frightful reality in a marvelous realm of wild, intoxicating, maniacal dreams—dreams of fame and of conquering the world. Of course no one had any inkling of this. I was terribly shy. More than anything else I feared ridicule and contemptuous glances. And I was particularly afraid of women. I preferred to dream of them at a distance. And they made fun of me—I had a very poor position and I wrote poetry. I was indeed an object of scorn and ridicule. Perhaps that is why I was never



Henryk Sienkiewicz, Nobel Prize winner, by Olga Boznanska.

invited anywhere. My colleagues kept me at a distance.

Mr. W., one of the higher officials on the line, was a really good and educated man. He was very kind to me, and sympathized with my ambition to be transferred from the line to the office.

"The chief is prejudiced against you, it is true, but perhaps we might be able to do something through his lady friend," he said. "But the question is, how to go about it?"

I was silent. I had never dreamed of the existence of such ways of approach as "lady friends."

"We shall simply have to do the same as all the superintendents—even the workmen: send her from time to time some eggs, butter, or a hare . . ."

I followed the advice, and although it cost me a great effort, I managed to show this obligatory munificence. I was especially generous with game. Among my workmen there happened to be several experienced poachers and the Imperial forests were close to the line. I sent partridges, I sent pheasants, I sent teal; but not until she had received from me a magnificent wild boar did she request me to call. Trembling, I presented myself, and was received very graciously.

A few days later, Mr. W. wrote asking me to call on him the following Saturday.

"The hares have taken effect," he said, smiling. "The chief has relented, and will take you into his office as substitute of the draughtsman, for the moment as a supernumerary. Tomorrow is New Year's Day; we shall all go together to wish him a Happy New Year (an official Russian custom), and you must come with us. For the sake of form you must ask him for the position—that is all arranged. Come about ten o'clock, and don't be late, as at noon he leaves for Warsaw. You must also thank your protectress—I have a letter for you, she sent it by porter." He handed

it to me with an enigmatic smile. I slipped the letter in my pocket. I was astounded by the news. The gates of Paradise opened before me. I seemed to be suddenly endowed with wings. I was dumb with joy ineffable. Ended all my wanderings, my misery, my loneliness! Now I would be able to live like a human being. I was impatient to be alone with my dreams, but just as I was leaving my attention was arrested by a heap of books lying on a side-table.



Painting by Wojciech Kossak

"I remember the forest of waving banners, the flash of a thousand swords . . ." (Reymont)

"Sienkiewicz's *Trilogy*. It is only just out; I bought it for the library."

I borrowed the books just to look through them, promising to return them on the morrow with all the leaves cut.

I went to a squalid little hotel. It was a beastly hole. Nevertheless I had to pay half a rouble for a tiny room. I ordered a lamp to be brought, also a samovar, a quantity of rolls, and half a roast goose. The lean Jew who waited on me demanded immediate payment. I protested in my haughtiest manner, but to no purpose.

"Guests hurry off to the train and often forget to pay," he explained.

At last I was alone with my dreams of the near future. Through the wall came the sound of discordant voices and drunken quarrelling, and through the window I could see the glimmering, multitudinous lights of the station. The trains passed with a shriek, and a savage clatter that made the window shake. There was a sharp frost, and it was very cold. I began to read. I knew a little of the *Trilogy* from a few installments I had read by chance in various cafés of Poland. I began with "With Fire and Sword." My intention was to glance over a few pages in cutting the leaves, but with the first page I was under the charm. I read with breathless interest. New worlds opened before me. I heard the rustle and murmur of the steppes, grey with the morning dews. I frolicked with Zagloba, I was the friend of Skrzetuski, Podbipienta was my chosen comrade in arms! I was constantly making the most marvelous acquaintances. I was in a fever, enthusiasm, wonder, joy possessed me. My heart swelled with unknown rapture. The moment came when I forgot completely my sur-

roundings, when I was no longer conscious of reality. I was living in those times, centuries ago, among those fearless knights. I fell upon the enemy singing the battle-hymn "Bogarodzica."—I remember the forest of waving banners, the flash of a thousand swords slashing the heads of the Cossacks, and all the tumult of war: the blare of the trumpets, the wild squealing of the horses, the road of the muskets, the groans of the dying. I was there, and I was everything, I was everybody that was in the pages of this book. I was the might of the illustrious Republic, its majesty and its avenging sword. I was the King. I was Jarema. I was Skrzetuski! And I was the lowest and the most wretched among the wretched camp-followers. I was tossed and buffeted by the great tempests of history. I endured all: the battles of Zolte Wody and Korsun, and the ravishment of the girl I loved; the terrible time in Zbaraz and the death of Podbipienta! Days of struggle, days of defeat, days of humiliation and despair . . . Not until, led by unutterable anguish, I had left the trenches of Zbaraz, and Providence permitted me to prostrate myself before the King and implore succor for the knights that were perishing from bullets and hunger—not until then was I overcome by a strange weakness. I wept. I confused the living with the dead, my own misfortunes were transformed into the misfortunes of my country. My bowels were rent with the immensity of our abasement. I was puffed up with pride, and at the same time devoured, stifled, martyred by shame. I had no knowledge of what was happening to me at that moment: I was brought to myself by the angry voice of the Jew:

"What do you make, sir? My guests they complain you stop them from sleeping! What is the matter, sir?"

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You sing, you shout, you tumble about the room like you had the epilepsy! You think this is a street? This is a decent hotel. You are a little bit off your head, sir!"

I pacified him with a coin. Outside it was dark, snow was falling fast and there was a sound of sleigh-bells, just as in Wodowty when I went with Kmita to see Olenka. I was now on the stormy waves of "The Deluge." Now and again I swallowed a little food or drank a little tea, and smoking cigarettes one after another I read on. The cold made itself felt so keenly that I ordered a fire to be lit in the stove, but it produced more smoke than warmth. So I wrapped myself in the quilt, put on my cap, covered my feet with the pillows, and continued. Some girl, I remember, opened the door as if by mistake, excused herself but drank tea from my glass, smoked some of my cigarettes and was very anxious to tidy up my room. I very discourteously turned her out.

It was while I was in Kiejdany, the home of the traitor Radziwill, at the ball where he was the object of contempt and execration. And afterwards, what misfortune and suffering! The Swedish deluge flooded the whole of Poland. There was enough to fight for! And then the endless wars with Sweden, with Moscow, with the faithless Elector, with Rakoczy! The more than human efforts by which the Republic withstood all, everything. Up to the last moment, when Olenka fell at my feet with the cry: "Andrew! I am not worthy to kiss thy wounds!"

I finished the book. My head was swimming, and I could not have been quite conscious, for it was not clear to me what day it was that had just ended, nor what starlit night was looking through the window. I buried myself in "Pan Michael." I could not resist. Reflection came, but I drove it away angrily, as I would a vicious dog. What did I care about a position! What did I care about my chief, or all the railways in the world! Let them go to perdition as long as I might continue to read, so long as I might move among those enchanting visions, so long as I might breathe in an atmosphere of greatness, power and heroism. I threw myself into new battles, new adventures. I experienced the life of the camps that were scattered on the remotest borders of the Republic, the sweetness of winter evenings and of long tales told by comrades. I experienced also in no small degree the torment of love for Basia. I fought with Moscow, I fought the Turks, I fought the Swedes. My sword, my blood—all my life belonged to my country. And when, in the struggle for Krzemieniec, the fatal moment arrived, and conscience commanded, together with the castle I blew myself up with gunpowder rather than surrender to the enemy. *Usque ad finem*. Duty, that was the motto of that knight without fear and without reproach! Listen, every one of you: Duty!



Wladyslaw Reymont, Nobel Prize winner.

I closed the book. There is an end, alas, to everything. Day was breaking.

"It's Tuesday morning!" timidly announced the Jew, remaining near the door.

Good heavens! And the New Year, my chief, my position!

I took back the *Trilogy* to Mr. W. He gave me a very sour reception, and berated me soundly.

"You must be an idiot to sacrifice your whole career for the sake of a few books. It's all up. The chief waited for you, and you didn't come. He's furious. He took it as a personal insult. And your protectress sent to inquire about you."

"I clean forgot all about her letter!"

"Well, I congratulate you! You've lost your berth, and for that you may thank Mr. Sienkiewicz. To lose one's position for a few stupid tales . . . Well! . . ."

"You are right. I shall thank him for the indescribable happiness he has given me. I shall thank him for filling my heart with hope and faith, for these mighty songs of an unconquerable Poland."

A knowing smile was his only reply, and as I turned to go I overheard him say to his wife:

"He'll never come to anything—he's not quite all there."

(Abridged version of translation by Kate Zuk-Skarszewska).



SOVIET DICTATED MANEUVER IN UN

(Continued from page 3)

Faced with this situation, the Soviet Union deemed it appropriate to employ the services of the Warsaw Government, which in contrast to the French Government can hardly be said to have a direct interest in conditions in Spain, but which does not hesitate to do the bidding of Moscow.

The Warsaw Government's move cannot be construed otherwise than as an anti-British and anti-American political maneuver. It is also a form of Communist pressure upon the non-Communist government parties in France.

It is of the utmost importance that public opinion in the United States remember that Oscar Lange does not speak for the people of Poland, who are against dictatorship in any form, but who have no wish to use the *affaire Franco* as a pretext to launch a political offensive against the governments of the English-speaking nations.

The Death of Lieutenant Scazighino at Monte Cassino*

by MELCHIOR WANKOWICZ



Lieut. Jan Scazighino.

THE courier sent by Major Rojek to Pańczyszyn's company passes the squadrons of the 12th Lancers Regiment, returning to its former position, which it had abandoned to leave the field open for its own artillery.

The Lancers have ducked and are waiting "for things to calm down."

"Stick your head out and see if the coast is clear," Lt. Maciejewski tells Lt. Kołodko.

Lt. Kołodko leans out and a shell bursts close by. The unfortunate lookout pulls his head in like a turtle and says with phlegm:

"I think it is not . . ."

A moment later Lt. Kołodko says:

"Stick your head out . . ."

A shell . . .

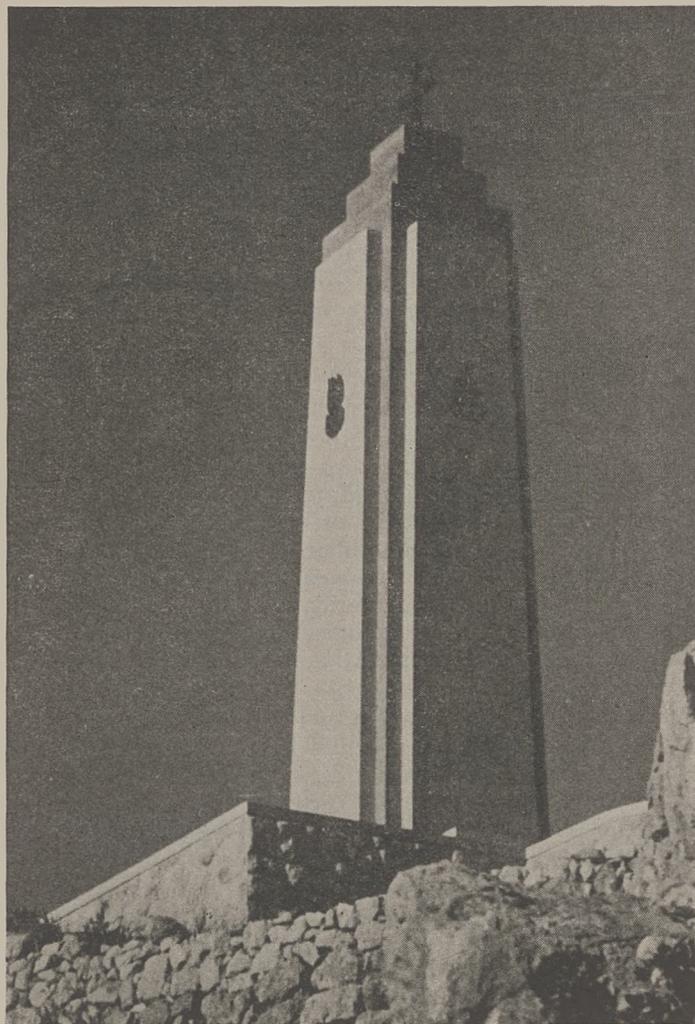
"I think not . . ." Lt. Maciejewski is now uncertain. And so it goes, round and round.

Elsewhere platoon commander Lt. Jan Scazighino is lying with his second in command, 2nd Lt. Śniechowski. A grenade splinter severs his artery. Sergeant Fęski jumps up with a dressing, applies a tourniquet, bandages the wound, runs out into the infernal cannonade for a stretcher and having advanced barely a few feet, falls dead.

Time drags—no sign of a stretcher. Scazighino is beginning to grow delirious:

"You know," he says to Śniechowski, "I understand . . . that they are far away . . . and yet . . . it seems to me . . . that my mother and wife are here . . ."

His mother was in Teheran. His wife, *Pani Krysia*—in the United States, where the deceased had been Polish consul. I had visited them at their quiet home near New York two months before the war and I had gotten acquainted with their infant daughter *Małgorzatka*. It is



Monument to the fallen heroes of the Battle for Monte Cassino.



Monte Cassino Abbey as it looked when the Poles took it on May 18, 1944.

for her I am writing about her daddy as well as for all other children of the fallen who will hang under their father's photograph on the wall his battle decorations or his mementoes from the battle of Monte Cassino, just as the swords of the Napoleonic soldiers had hung in our homes.

A long, long time had elapsed when a sudden roar deafened both officers. A branch struck by a shell fell down upon them.

"Has a branch hit me?" Scazighino asked in a fading voice. And noticing that 2nd Lt. Śniechowski had been wounded, he made a gesture attempting to come to his aid.

"I can't help you," he whispered and was seized with shuddering. For he had not been struck by a branch but by a shell, in the lungs.

He placed his arm around his friend's neck:

"Janek, let the . . . platoon . . ."

The wounded Śniechowski leaned over the dying man:

" . . . bury me . . ." the final whisper wafted up to him.

*From Melchior Wańkowicz's memorial volume *Bitwa o Monte Cassino*, published in Rome and Milan in 1945.

POLISH WOMEN'S ALLIANCE OF AMERICA

by FRANK STLEY BARC

THE universal toast of all mankind stands Americans of Polish ancestry in good stead when saluting the Polish Women's Alliance of America—the largest Polish Women's organization in the world today.

Any write-up of the Polish Women's Alliance (P.W.A.) would have to take into consideration the two principal activities other than the insurance program of this splendid organization, which is steeped in the culture of two lands, in the history of a proud race, and in the tradition of fighters and upholders of the torch of liberty everywhere. These two exceptionally outstanding activities are (a) relief and (b) youth.

Before summarizing the extra-curricular activities, let us look into the background, historical life and resources of the P.W.A.:

The first organizational meeting of the P.W.A. was held in Chicago, Illinois during May, 1888, with Stefania Chmielinska of Chicago in the active role of founder. Successive organizational meetings were held in the same city during the next two years and in 1902 the Polish Women's Alliance of America was duly chartered by the State of Illinois as an insurance society authorized to underwrite insurance on a national scope.

From this humble beginning the P.W.A. in 48 years has grown to be an organization of national prominence numbering 1,124 adult and juvenile lodges operating in the following states:—Illinois, Missouri, Pennsylvania, Indiana, New York, Michigan, Wisconsin, Ohio, West Virginia, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, Maryland, Nebraska, California and District of Columbia.

Further indication of the substantial progress the P.W.A. has made is the fact that as of December 31, 1945, the close of the last year, \$34,445,612 in insurance was in effect for 67,322 members in the form of benefit certificates in sums ranging from \$300 to \$3,000.

Total assets of the P.W.A. at present, using the figures available at the close of business last year and at the

start of 1946, is \$8,904,115 which marked an increase over the preceding year of approximately eight per cent. During 1945 investments of the Alliance yielded 3.62 per cent in interest, indicating a phenomenal and shrewd investment program in these days of low-interest - bearing securities. All investments, other than U. S. Government and other gilt-edged bonds, were in the form of real estate first mortgage loans.

Reserves accumulated under Illinois state law requirements total \$6,222,045; a special reserve of \$37,389 has been set up to pay claims awaiting completion of proofs and claims payable in installments. In other words, the Polish Women's Alliance of America has \$1.38 in assets to meet each single dollar of actual liability under benefit certificates, with a net surplus—"safety fund"—for members of \$2,455,570 in excess of all contractual liabilities.

Insurance for adult women, from age 16 upward, issued in certificates from \$300 to \$3,000 is carried in six forms. These forms are: Whole Life; 7-year Term; 20-year Payment Life; 20-year Endowment; Paid-Up at Age 65; and Endowment at Age 65. Juvenile benefit certificates, in sums from \$500 to \$2,000, are carried in four classes, as follows: Term to Age 16 for \$500; Whole Life; 20-year Payment Life; and 20-year Endowment.

The latter three classes are written in certificates from \$500 to \$2,000.

At the end of the third year all term insurance forms have (a) cash or loan values; (b) paid-up insurance value; and/or (c) extended insurance value. These last-named features are unusual and exceptional for beneficial societies underwriting insurance of members.

The Polish Women's Alliance of America has been deeply and signally honored as an insurance underwriting agency by Dunne's Insurance Report, world's largest policyholders reporting service, granting its insurance underwriting department with a certificate holders' rating of A-plus (Excellent) as of January 1, 1946.

* * *

General offices of the P.W.A. are located at 1309 North Ashland Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, in a four story stone front building which was originally built in 1912 and remodeled in 1933. Here the P.W.A. officers — president, vice president, general secretary, treasurer, attorney, editor, medical examiner, and office personnel have their offices.

A number of special rooms, in addition to the official family offices, are located in the P.W.A. "home office" building. The board of directors room is named the Maria Sklodowska-



Officers of the Polish Women's Alliance of America seated left to right: Leokadia Blikowska, Adela Lagodzinska, Honorata B. Wolowska (President), MA. Porwit, Helena Sala. Standing left to right: Bronislawa Jakubowska, Felicja Cienciara, Weronika, Jadwiga Karłowicz, Bronislawa Karczewska, Barbara A. Fisher, Jancja Rybinska.

housed the portraits of the presidents of the P.W.A. the portrait of the late Stefania Chmielinska, the organization's founder; of Anna Neuman; a carved mantelpiece, and plaque of A. Emilia Napieralska (deceased); and the portrait of Honorata B. Wołowska, incumbent president. Other rooms are the Urszula Kochanowska room; the Maria Rodziewicz room; the Seweryna Duchinska room; the Maria Dulebianka room; and the Eliza Orzeszkowa room. Most of these quarters are used as meeting places.

Management of the Polish Women's Alliance of America is vested in a Board of Directors elected by conventions held quadrennially. The board consists of the president, vice president, general secretary, treasurer, and five directors. Serving in an advisory capacity to the directorate are an attorney, editor, and medical examiner. The board of directors meets twice monthly. Subsidiary to the national officers and directorate are state lodges or circuits, now numbering twelve, each having its own state officers commencing with a state chairman.

Present national officers, elected at the 1943 (last) quadrennial national convention, are Honorata B. Wołowska, president; Adela Lagodzinska, vice president; Marya A. Porwit, secretary general; Leokadja Blikowska, treasurer; Barbara A. Fisher, legal adviser, Dr. Felicja Cienciara, medical examiner, and Jadwiga Karłowicz, editor. Directors — Helena Sala, Weronika Siwek, Bronislawa Karczewska, Konstancja Rybinska and Bronislawa Jakubowska. State chairmen are Amelia Szlak, Illinois; Florentya Knapp, Pennsylvania; Zofia Jerzyk, Indiana; Rosalia Biedroń, Janina Rzczkowska, Michigan; Pelagia Wojtczak, Wisconsin; Elzbieta Schwarten, Ohio; Anna Januszewska, Massachusetts; and Wiktorja Ciurej, Nebraska.

The cultural assets of the Polish Women's Alliance of America include a library, located in the Maria Konopnicka room of the national headquarters and honoring one of the greatest Polish poets and writers, and

Curie Room in deference to the memory of the discoverer of radium, an honorary member. The spacious auditorium has been named after Helena Modrzejewska, great Shakespearean actress. Opposite the auditorium, scene of conventions and impressive ceremonies is the Emilia Plater room, bearing the name of a great patriot and leader of another generation, where are

Glos Polek, national weekly newspaper embracing subjects of cultural, civic, and social values. In the library are located over 8,000 volumes in both Polish and English, as well as a great deal of juvenile literature; this library is sustained by Polish Women's Alliance educational funds. The newspaper, *Glos Polek*, established in 1910, is issued each Thursday and has been published uninterruptedly for 36 years; recent editorials contained in this publication relative to current events have been reprinted in the leading Polish newspapers of the United States.

WAR RELIEF WORK

Relief work—prewar, war, postwar—has gained international renown for the Polish Women's Alliance of America. Both at home and abroad—wherever a person of Polish ancestry found himself the victim of circumstances beyond his control that precluded him from earning a living, he has frequently been apprised of the existence in numerous American cities of a group of P.W.A. members determined to ease his lot and to provide the necessities for the maintenance of life, body and morale.

Devastated post-war Poland, the land which today is under the domination of an aggressive neighbor nation, knows full well the generosity of the Polish Women's Alliance in furnishing relief to destitute Poles. Food, case after case and in a countless stream, has been painstakingly collected by the P.W.A. and often in the face of almost impossible and impassable obstacles been shipped to the men, women and children in Poland, land of the "losing ally."

During the uncertain and hectic days of World War II, from September 1939 on to after V-J Day, the P.W.A. collected, packed, and shipped food and other desirable items to members of the Polish army, to Polish prisoners of war, to displaced Poles.

(Continued on page 13)



Polish Women's Alliance band.



The Polish Women's Alliance collects food to be sent overseas.

POLISH STUDIES IN PENNSYLVANIA

by PAUL R. SELECKY

These requirements, simply stated, concern the number of students, certification of the teacher, approval of study plan, proof of need of language, and limitation of cost. The first requirement took cognizance of Section 1704 of the Pennsylvania School Code of 1911, as amended, which reads as follows:

"... The Board of School Directors . . . shall employ for its high school . . . a sufficient number of teachers for the teaching of any of the subjects included in the program of studies of the State Council of Education for which there shall be an application by fifteen pupils belonging to the grade in which said subject is specified in the said program of studies . . ."

In fact, if fifteen or more students petition the Board of School Directors to institute a course approved by the State Council and if a certified teacher is available on the staff, the Board cannot legally refuse the request. The students' written petition should be in simple form and be signed by their parents, also, in order to convince the School Board that the request is not merely a passing whim of the students.

The teacher, in order to be certified to teach Polish by the Bureau of Certification, must obtain eighteen college credits in the study of the Polish language. The Bureau insists that these credits consist of studies of the language and literature in Polish, and not of lectures in English or the reading in English translation of Polish literature. The approval of the curriculum can be readily obtained by merely submitting a summary of the scope of the proposed studies for each year and indicating the Polish grammar to be used. The prospective teacher will find very helpful the excellent pamphlet entitled "Tentative Syllabus in Polish for the Senior High School," written by Adriana C. Gutowski, published by Teachers College, Columbia University.

The fourth requirement, that there must be a need for the study of Polish in our community, was easily met by furnishing the Department of Public Instruction, at Harrisburg, statistics showing the number of people of Polish descent in our school district. Finally, we indicated that no new teacher was to be hired, but that a teacher now on our high school staff was being certified to teach Polish, which would mean no increase in cost to the school district, except for textbooks.

The relative ease with which these requirements may be met makes one wonder why Polish has not been taught previously in a Pennsylvania public school. Every high school student accepts the study of Spanish, French, and German as an ordinary event; yet he might become quizzical when the study of Polish is discussed. Dr. Coleman explained to an assembly of our high school students that the study of the Polish language was as dignified as the study of any other language or literature and, also, informed the students of the many universities and colleges now teaching Polish. After his talk, many students asked our prospective teacher of Polish, Mr. Zigmund Shekletski, to teach them Polish after school hours in an informal class during the present school year. The Coleman lecture was followed by others, especially in vocational guidance classes, where the students were properly informed that they will need the Polish language much more than any other foreign language in their adult life in our community.

The next problem of interesting teachers to become certified to teach the Polish language is a little more difficult and seems to be the crux of the whole matter. In school districts where there is a shortage of teachers, the Board of School Directors may be persuaded to hire



First informal Polish class in any Pennsylvania public High School (Newport Township, Wanamie, Pa.). Polish will become part of the regular curriculum in September 1946. Zigmund Shekletski is the instructor.

a new teacher for this purpose, possibly even from among refugee teachers from Poland, because Section 1202 of the Pennsylvania School Code states that teachers of foreign languages need not be citizens. In school districts which are over-staffed, the practical solution is to persuade some high school teachers, most likely of Polish descent, already on the staff, to become certified by obtaining eighteen college credits in the Polish language.

This problem was solved in our area, with the help of the Tatra Club of Wilkes-Barre, which is composed of professional men of Slavonic descent, by creating a scholarship fund, from donations from its own members and from Polish fraternal societies. Two high school teachers are now receiving financial aid to obtain their eighteen college credits by commuting to Columbia University every Saturday during the school year, besides studying Polish at Bucknell University Junior College in Wilkes-Barre, under Konstanty Symonolewicz, former Secretary of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences, and at the University of Scranton. The teachers will be willing to pay some part of this cost because the recent salary appropriation Act 403, adopted May 29, 1945, in Pennsylvania, provides two additional increments of \$100.00 to his salary when the teacher obtains a Master's Degree, which can be obtained now in the Polish language field.

With at least fifteen students applying for the course, and with a certified teacher available on the high school staff, the only problem remaining then is to persuade the school administration and the Board of School Directors to adopt the course, by showing that Polish will meet the local needs better, as well as college entrance requirements.

There are two sources of reliable information concerning the make-up of the population of any larger municipality: the census of the United States and of local Catholic parishes. Table 18 of the 1930 census gives the number of residents of foreign birth by the country of their birth, and Table 19 gives the number of native-born of foreign-born parents, commonly referred to as the "first generation." Unfortunately, the 1940 census

omitted the latter Table 19. The sum of these two tables in the 1930 census shows that over nineteen percent of the total population of Luzerne County, of which Wilkes-Barre is the County seat, is of Polish descent. If the second and third generation were to be included, along with other Slavonic peoples, this percentage would be greatly increased. In my own school district, the census of the Polish Catholic parishes shows that over fifty percent of the population is of Polish descent.

When the school administrators are confronted with these statistics, they can easily be persuaded that many of their students will enter into the study of the Polish language with some background in the language and that they will continue to use the language in later life. Formerly, our school administrators persuaded us to study Spanish because of the possibilities of trade with South America. Yet, of some two thousand students who graduated from our high school, only two have ever gone to South America as engineers and the rest of us quickly forgot our Spanish. Strangely enough, one school administrator told me that his graduates who did go to South America learned that most of the natives spoke Portuguese in the countries they visited. It seems that the schools are teaching the wrong language even for this purpose. The school superintendent of another high school told me his school was considering the introduction of the Spanish language in line with the "good neighbor policy." After I discussed with him the statistics of the number of people of Polish origin in his community, he readily agreed that the vast majority of high school students returned to their home-community to make their living, and their neighbors are largely the Polish and other Slavonic people, not the Spanish.

Of course, this argument should not be used to persuade school officials to substitute the Polish language in the stead of Spanish, German, or French, but only to give the students the privilege of studying Polish as well as these other languages.

These efforts must be grounded upon reliable information about Polish studies in colleges and universities to assure the high school student that he will get credit

(Continued on page 14)

YOU CAN'T KEEP POLISH HUMOR DOWN

No people offered greater resistance to those who had invaded their country than did the Poles throughout the interminable years of German and Soviet occupation. The men, women and children of Poland struck back in many ways: sabotage, pitched battle, uprisings, underground press and a hundred other means devised by their ingenuity. One of the most effective weapons against their humorless enemies was ridicule. Here are a few of the countless jokes at the expense of the Germans and the Russians which circulated in Poland during the war years:

A WOMAN goes to confession. Having admitted all her sins, she finally says:

"Please, Father, I have one more sin, but I'm afraid to even mention it . . ."

"Do not fear, my dear, tell me . . . we shall see," the priest encourages her.

"Well, Father, when I see a German, I say to myself: 'I hope you drop dead, I hope you break your arms and legs!'"

"Yes, my child," says the priest, "that indeed is not Christian. It is far better to think at such moments: 'May you rest in peace!'"

* * *

One day after an air raid on Berlin, the residents of the German capital saw an old man sitting on a pile of rubble. He was deeply engrossed in a book and every once in a while burst out laughing.

"Is he crazy? What is there to laugh about?"

"Excuse me, sir," one passer-by addresses him indignantly, "the whole city is in ruins, and you are publicly reading humor and laughing out loud?"

"This isn't humor. I'm reading the Fuehrer's *Mein Kampf*. I've just struck the passage where he says, 'give me power and I'll fix you!'"

* * *

Four Nazi dignitaries—Hitler, Himmler, Goering and Goebbels—meet after death: They are being tried for the lies they told on earth. The penalty for each lie is a one mile walk. Asked how often he lied, Goering replies: 5 times, Himmler—3 times, Hitler—4 times.

"And where is Goebbels?"

"He went to get his motorcycle . . . just in case," says Goering.

* * *

A Soviet political instructor is lecturing to Polish soldiers. "Everything you might desire is to be had in Russia," he assures them. "If you want a sports plane, you can buy that too."

"Why would a poor man want a plane?" some one asks.

"What do you mean, why?" the instructor waxes indignant. "For example, you learn that they are selling herring today in a cooperative at Minsk. Now, you live in Smolensk. So you get into your plane, prr, prr, prr and you are the first in line in Minsk. Catch on?"

* * *

A man comes to a German registration bureau and states he would like to sign up as a Volksdeutsch.

The director of the bureau of course receives him very cordially, gives him a cigar and asks:

"What is your name?"

"Szczebrzeszyński."

The German tries to repeat the name, but is stumped. "Well, what was your mother's maiden name?"

"Trzet-rzewińska, Herr Direktor."

"So . . ."

the German does not even attempt to repeat this name. "And what was your Grossmutter's maiden name?"

"Ciunaziewicka!"

"I see . . . Did anyone in your family have a German name?"

"No, sir."

"Then why do you want to change your status to that of Volksdeutsch?"

"Well, you see, I had an argument with my wife and my mother-in-law yesterday and I told them I'd play such a dirty trick on them that they would be good and sorry."

* * *

During the bombardment of Warsaw two men are sitting on a fence. One of them has terrible hiccoughs. Bombs are falling all around them, the houses are crumbling and he is shaken by hiccoughs.

"Felek, frighten me," he finally begs his companion. "These hiccoughs are killing me."

* * *

The NKVD has sentenced a Polish patriot to death. After the verdict, he is asked where he would like to be buried.

"In the Cemetery of the Defenders of Lwow."

The same question is asked a Ukrainian.

"Next to Ivan Franko."

"And you?" they ask the Jew.

"If you please, next to the beloved father of our nation, Joseph Stalin."

"But Comrade Stalin is still alive," the commissar sternly admonishes the Jew.

"It's quite all right, I'll wait," the condemned man replies.

* * *

When Goebbels died, he was offered a choice between heaven and hell.

"What is heaven like?" the Reichsminister of Propaganda asked.

Shown a corner of heaven, he grimaced and declared he would find it boring to be among angels and saints. So he was given a glimpse of hell, where music was playing and couples were dancing.

"Oh, I'll go to hell," Goebbels exclaimed joyfully. No sooner did the doors of hell close behind him than



the devils dug their pitchforks into him and cast him into the fire.

"Where is the music and the dancing?" the terrified Goebbels called out.

"It was only propaganda," came the mocking retort.

* * *

The Russians boast that the ten-story Promotorg department store in Moscow where everything can be obtained is serviced by a single Stakhanovite, who stands in the doorway and tells the crowds of customers: "We're out of everything."

* * *

"Where does Berlin lie?" one German asks another after an Allied air raid.

"Where it stood before."

* * *

Under the German occupation "Nur fuer Deutsche" signs were much in evidence in Warsaw restaurants and at the front entrance to trolley cars. The witty Poles retaliated by painting "Only for Germans" on lampposts and by placing large inscriptions bearing the same legend

THE POLISH WOMEN'S ALLIANCE OF AMERICA

(Continued from page 9)

During World War I, while Poland was being overrun by the same ruthless enemy which virtually destroyed it in September 1939, the Polish Women's Alliance first gained fame internationally as a kind, gentle, considerate and determined relief agency.

Before World War I days the P.W.A. of America took its place alongside such other potent relief-providing groups of Polish-American membership as the Polish National Alliance and the Polish Roman Catholic Union.

Youth, the youth of the Polish Women's Alliance of America, is symbolic of Young Poland as transplanted to become Young America in our midst. Back of the youth program of the P.W.A. is a story of 25 years duration which has few counterparts in either Polish or American annals.

It was in 1920 that the slogan "Mothers and Daughters Together" became a reality in P.W.A. circles as the juvenile division of P.W.A. was organized and virtually every P.W.A. lodge formed girls groups, some in the real youthful stage, some in the early teens, some slightly older. A program of practical science, culture, entertainment and education was developed for these youngsters.

The program was effective and constructive. Such useful pursuits as domestic arts and household duties, combined with the language and the three "Rs" of Poland, became educational factors for the Daughters of the Polish Women's Alliance of America.

Classes in Polish reading, Polish writing, Polish literature, Polish history, Polish music, Polish art, Polish folk dancing were regular parts of the Saturday, vacation period, and after school curriculum for the Youth of the Polish Women's Alliance. The older of the girls, after a preliminary course of instruction, took their places alongside adult instructors and soon became the

at the entrance to cemeteries. In the wooden promenade encircling the center of Cracow, the Germans painted "Nur fuer Deutsche" on the benches. The next day Polish inscriptions of identical shape and size appeared, setting forth the property rights of both nations: "Our benches, your rears." The Germans hastily washed off both notices.

* * *

An inebriated passenger in a streetcar loudly enumerates all the misfortunes that have befallen him during the war and ends by declaring that only one knave, villain, rat (and many other juicy epithets) was the cause of this stream of troubles. With drunken insistence he tries to recall the name of the culprit: "It begins with an H . . . Just a moment, it will come to me." The other passengers move away uneasily. But a very sugary gentleman sits down next to him and encourages him to recall that interesting name. Finally, after many imprecations, the bold fellow stammers: "I know now. His name is Hurchill (Polish phonetic pronunciation of Churchill). And whom did you have in mind, Mr. Gestapo-man?"

nucleus of an instructional corps that has few equals in American organizational fields.

In the early "youth organization" days of P.W.A. an interchange of instructors with Poland was effected; this instructional feature was beneficial to the youth of both countries.

The "youth program" has gained such momentum in P.W.A. circles as to make it an integral part of the sponsoring organization, the while having it retain its own identity. P.W.A. "Youth" has, since 1940, held two national conventions, maintains today numerous dancing groups, concert bands, choirs, athletic groups, and dramatic classes.

The Youth committee of the Polish Women's Alliance of America, consisting of Constance Rybinski, Bernice Karczewski and Halina S. Paluszek, takes justifiable pride in the purposes of its work and in the knowledge that many of the first members of the Youth Department of the P.W.A. now perform in a variety of roles for the P.W.A. They emphasize such facts as that a good many Youth instructors are in command in numerous localities, in some instances as Youth department directors and in others as presidents and secretaries of local clubs and societies.

The Youth Department of the P.W.A. has adopted for itself the title of "Junior Members of P.W.A." The originators of the youth movement in the P.W.A. still think endearingly of their offspring as they did twenty years ago when the momentous decision was made to rally behind and under the jurisdiction of P.W.A. its youth as "Nasze Wianki," — "Our Garlanders." And to this day older Polish Women's Alliance members think and talk of the juniors as "Wianki."

Numerous national convocations open to organization representatives, notably such gatherings as the Chicagoland Music Festival, have in recent years found "Wianki" or Youth of the P.W.A. among contestants for major awards and trophies.



Good Germans. Cartoon by Stanislaw Dobrzynski.

POLISH STUDIES IN PENNSYLVANIA

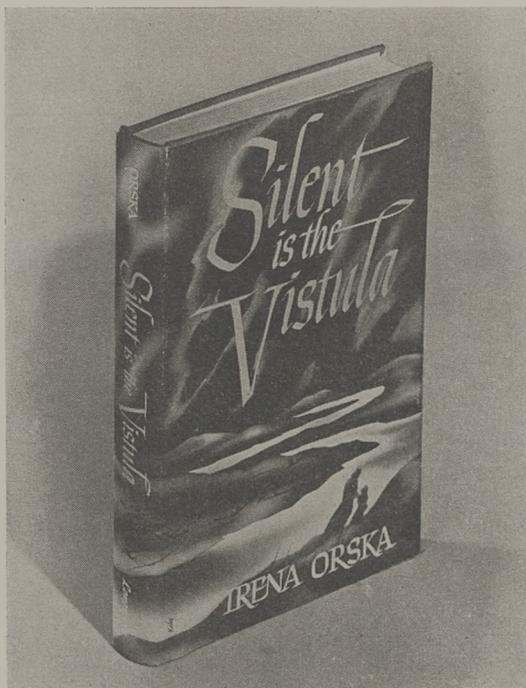
(Continued from page 11)

for his studies and will be able to continue them in college. For this reason, I have circularized all of the colleges, junior colleges, and state teachers' colleges in Pennsylvania, numbering eighty-two in all. The ten Pennsylvania colleges teaching Polish, or prepared to teach Polish if students are available, are the following: Bucknell University Junior College, College Misericordia, and King's College (to be opened in September, 1946), Wilkes-Barre; University of Scranton, and Marywood College, Scranton; Training School for Teachers and Nursing School (both conducted by the Bernardine Sisters), Reading; Alliance Junior College, Cambridge Springs; LaSalle College and St. Charles Seminary, Philadelphia. All of the other colleges in Pennsylvania have indicated their willingness to accept high school Polish toward entrance requirements. The Tatra Club of Wilkes-Barre has mimeographed this report and has printed another leaflet listing over forty institutions of higher learning throughout the United States which teach Polish. With such information at hand, the

students will not hesitate to study Polish in the high schools. The proponents of the teaching of the Polish language should fortify themselves, also, by reading other articles about the teaching of Polish generally, such as those listed in the footnote. (*)

I am convinced that if Polish is taught in the public high schools, the students will request the continuation of Polish language studies in colleges and universities; in turn, this will enable more prospective teachers to become certified, who will make possible the wider teaching of Polish in the public high schools. Courses in Polish begun in the high school will lead to untold progress in the dissemination of Polish culture which its ancient dignity deserves.

(*) See the American Slavic Review (Harvard University), Volume IV, pp. 185 — 208, where Dr. Arthur P. Coleman surveys the whole field of Slavonic language studies in American colleges and universities; "The Study of Polish in the United States of America," by Dr. Coleman, in the quarterly bulletin of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences, January, 1943; "The Polish Language Problem in America," by Joseph B. Osuch, S.J., the Catholic World, August, 1945, Vol. CLXI, pp. 410-515; and "Language Teaching and the High Schools," by M. Margaret Anderson, Common Ground magazine, Winter Issue, 1943, Vol. III, No. 2.



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