

# No. 4 News From Poland 1936

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## The Polish Boy Scouts

Among the truly constructive agencies influencing the character of Polish youth the Polish Boy Scout Movement holds a deservedly high place. It arose shortly after Poland secured its freedom, gained the hearty endorsement and backing of the educational authorities, and, well led, spread throughout the Republic. It stands today as one of the largest Scout movements of the world, enrolling 102,867 boys and 60,205 Girl Scouts, to which should be added some 50,000 younger children, „wolf-cubs”.



Governor Michael Grazynski  
Head of the Polish Scout Movement

At the the head of the movement stands one of Poland's most energetic and capable provincial governors, Dr. Michael Grazynski, now made better known to a wider world through Dr. W. J. Rose's recent book, "The Drama of Upper Silesia". To assist him there is a well conducted headquarters organization.

The Polish Boy Scout Movement has enjoyed the high honor of having the founder of the Scout Movement, General Lord Robert Baden-Powell, as its guest in Gdynia in 1933. In 1935 there was a great international Scout camp at Spala, the official summer residence of the President of Poland, an event which brought to Poland thousands of scouts from many other lands.



Polish Boy Scouts with a veteran  
of the Polish Insurrection of 1863

Some of the most respected and useful younger leaders in the Polish YMCA are young men who as boys spent several years as boy scouts and after reaching manhood brought into the YMCA the values they had acquired in the Scout Movement. No longer able to devote daylight hours to school boys, they in the same spirit work in the YMCA among men of their own age or a bit younger.



Awarding honors in camp



Mr. Adam Koc  
President of the Bank of Poland

## The Bank of Poland

The inauguration of a new president of the Bank of Poland makes a brief article on that institution appropriate, the more so in a YMCA news letter as the new president, Mr. Adam Koc (pronounced kawts) belongs to that group of the leaders of Poland, happily a large group, who have lent both their names and their efforts to the providing of a fine modern YMCA building to the city of Warsaw.

Early in 1924 Poland saw its way to bring to an end the frightful depreciation of its currency which had followed the war, and in April of that year launched the Bank of Poland as the national bank of issue, the bank issuing the new Polish currency, the zloty, based on gold. To make this adoption of the gold standard possible the entire capital of the bank, 100,000,000 gold francs, roughly \$20,000,000, was subscribed and paid by the Poles themselves, no foreign aid being sought.

After two years this capital proved quite inadequate to the needs of the bank of issue and the famous Republic of Poland 7% Stabilization Loan of 1927 was floated, bringing Poland \$70,000,000 of new capital, and making the retention of the gold standard possible to this date. For three years the bank enjoyed the benefit of the services and advice of Mr. Charles S. Dewey, American financial expert, former assistant secretary of the United States Treasury. The Bank of Poland enjoys a high reputation in Poland, its shares being regarded as one of the best available investments.

The gold reserves of the bank at the end of the year 1935 were roughly \$84,000,000, and the ratio of gold to currency issued was 40%, a good margin above what is legally required. The dividend for 1935 was 8%. The bank employs 1465 people in the Warsaw head office and in the provincial branches. Each year it gives a liberal sum to institutions doing social, religious, and educational work, and the Polish YMCA has for a number of years received substantial gifts from this source.

Mr. Koc is a man of long financial experience, coming to the presidency of the bank from the vice-ministry of the Treasury, and having for several years represented the Treasury in its relations to the Bank of Poland. He is well known in London and will doubtless in due time extend his acquaintance to include the great financial centers of North America.



Preparing to raise the camp flag

## Y Wins in Chess

The Warsaw YMCA Chess Club, an organization of 63 members, has won the Club Championship of Warsaw in competition with 27 other clubs, each club represented by a team of six members. Last year the YMCA Chess Club won in Class B, this year in Class A, thus securing the Henry Gruber Cup, founded by the president of the Postal Savings Bank.

## Polish Humor

Some months ago the question arose in my mind, what is the essence and fundamental character of Polish humor? What makes a thing funny to a Pole? What sort of humor does he appreciate most? What is his native element as regards jokes, for instance?

So I began studying Polish jokes and humor, asking Poles what they themselves considered their own type of fun, and discussing the subject with groups as occasion offered. Here are my conclusions. But first a bit of background. No one form of humor can be said to be exclusively characteristic of any nation and of that nation only, but certain generalizations contain a basis of truth. For instance, the secret of English humor is understatement, and of American humor, exaggeration or overstatement, while the French like the use of words with a double meaning.

Well, this may seem a bit vague, but the essence of Polish humor is a humorous situation, one which seems to be funnier the more one thinks about it. The Pole does not care especially either for understatement nor for overstatement, nor is he greatly given to puns nor double meanings except as he has gotten this from foreign influence, but he does indeed like to turn a funny situation over in his mind and contemplate its humorous aspects, especially when the situation is, as a Polish friend of mine put it, "a great leap from probability".

A sample. I am not sure this is of Polish origin, but it illustrates the point as to type.

"Father, what is wireless telegraphy?"

"Well, son, now here is a dog, a real long dog. His tail is in Warsaw and his head is in Krakow. That is telegraphy. Wireless telegraphy is the same, only without the dog."

The picture below is essentially a situation joke. It is by W. Leski and appeared in "Mucha", a Polish magazine of humor and satire.

Satire also appeals to Poles, and irony. And these express themselves beautifully in political jokes, for which the Poles have an enormous talent. Warsaw literally hums with them. Popular marionette shows are devoted exclusively to them, and they are always successful. The Russians have this same gift. Perhaps it is especially Slavic. It supplies no small part of our Polish laughs.



Resemblance

"What a resemblance! Your mother's eyes, your mother's nose, hair, everything!"  
"No, not everything; the pants are father's".

