

XXI International Anti-Alcohol Congress

The XXI International Anti-Alcohol Congress has lately taken place in Warsaw under the protectorate of the President of Poland, Professor Ignacy Moscicki. The Marshal of Poland, Edward Smigly-Rydz, stood at the head of the Honorary Committee.

The congress was participated in by 161 delegates from foreign organizations and 350 Polish delegates. Special delegates from foreign governments and representatives from foreign embassies and legations were sent, namely: by the Holy See, the League of Nations, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland, France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, Lichtenstein, Greece, Bulgaria, Egypt, Iran, Mexico, Chile, Argentine, Uruguay, Venezuela, Haiti, Dominique.

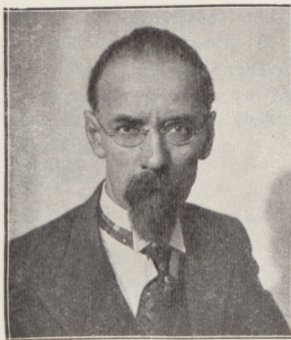


Ex-Minister of Health, Dr. Witold Chodzko, Director of the Government School of Hygiene in Warsaw, Chairman of the Polish Organization Committee of the XXI International Anti-Alcohol Congress, and a good friend of the Polish YMCA.

Special conventions took place within the framework of the congress: the I Catholic International Anti-Alcohol Convention, the I Evangelical International Anti-Alcohol Convention, and the I International Women's Conference.

Over 100 reports were made during the deliberations, and special consideration was given to the questions of: 1) The leisure of workmen and alcoholism. 2) Education of children and the young in the non-use of alcohol. 3) Medical treatment of habitual drunkards. 4) Traffic safety and alcoholism.

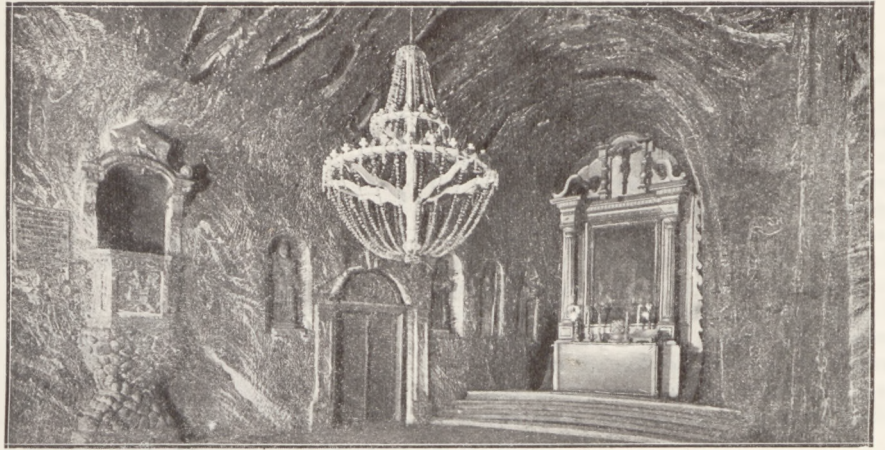
During the congress a large international anti-alcohol exhibition took place.



Mr. Jan Szymanski, General Secretary of the Polish Organization Committee of the XXI International Anti-Alcohol Congress, author of many works on anti-alcoholism, one of the leaders of this movement in Poland, and a valued cooperator in the work of the Polish YMCA.

In its entire activities the Polish YMCA takes the view that the best method of combatting *negative* manifestations is to oppose them with practical *positive* possibilities. Thus, as to anti-alcoholic action, the Polish YMCA considers that the best method is to form centers of social life for youths and adults which have greater magnetic power than glittering attractions of destructive effect. Not an easy task, but none the less, in the opinion of the Polish YMCA, the most rational one; and we believe that all the YMCA Associations hold this same opinion.

Therefore we must continually tend toward the enriching of the activity programs of the YMCAs and see that they are conducted with a full understanding of the psychology and necessities of the younger generation, the future of every nation



Chapel of St. Kinga in the salt mines

Photo by Stanislaw Mucha

The "City of Salt"

In one of the last numbers of "The World Observer" a description is given of the Polish Salt Mines of "Wieliczka". These mines are indeed worthy of attention, not only from the point of view of their industrial value, but also for their artistic individuality.

Although operated and controlled as a monopoly of the State, the Wieliczka Salt Mines of Poland shelter in their depths the sparkling evidence of a beauty-loving, creative, and highly individualized people. Evidence of this, a masterpiece of carving, is the "City of Salt". It lies one thousand feet in the earth near ancient Krakow, and only a few hours distant from Gdynia, now one of the busiest ports in Europe.

The Wieliczka Mines are the oldest and richest salt mines in Europe. They are about three miles long and one-half mile wide. The passages total more than sixty miles. Over 1,600 men are employed by the mines and many of these are the sons and grandsons of previous Wieliczka workers.

Because of its monumental scale and the intricacy of its workmanship, this "City of Salt" was probably begun soon after the mines themselves were discovered in 1040. Now, after the passage of nine centuries, it is a memorial of marvellous beauty to those unnamed miners who, for thirty-five generations, consecrated their busy hands and their creative fire, to carve this testament of their self-expression and skill.

Descending in a shaft (named for Woodrow Wilson) the traveller enters a labyrinth of corridors which lead him upstairs and down into great glittering chambers where chapels, iridescent against the electric light, await their priestly celebrants. Two of these, the Chapel of St. Anthony and the Chapel of St. Kinga, are especially beautiful.

Among the various chambers are four which are particularly lovely. A functioning post-office of salt is still another part of the "City", and not far from it is a magnificent wall carving of the Miracle of Cana.

The tourist who wishes to see something beautiful and quite unusual would find the "Wieliczka" Salt Mines well worth a visit.

Polish Arctic Expedition

A Polish scientific arctic expedition has recently returned to Warsaw from Greenland, where during several months researches were made in the sphere of glaciology, geology, geomorphology, meteorology, botany, photometry, and cartography. The scientific harvest of the expedition is very prolific.

This Polish arctic expedition especially interested a wide circle of members of the Polish YMCA, for a young but already well-known man of science, and member of the Warsaw YMCA, Mr. Stanislaw Siedlecki, took part in it. His lectures on this topic meet with enormous popularity.

Our Educational Activities

An important position in the activities of the Polish YMCA is occupied by the educational divisions, of which there is one in each of the larger branches of our organization. The type of work done by these divisions depends upon the area in which they operate. These educational divisions do not carry out the functions of the usual school, but their activities aim to supplement education in various sections of life, in professional education, in supplying the possibility of self-education, the learning of foreign languages, etc.; and it is satisfactory to note how this work continually expands.

In the industrial city of Lodz the courses for builders are a great success and indicate the tendency of the Lodz YMCA towards practical vocational education. The Warsaw YMCA has prepared an educational program offering: high levelled general education courses, foreign language courses together with conversation clubs, oration courses, pedagogical courses for parents, stenography courses, courses for salesmen, office secretaries, etc. Both men and women take advantage of the opportunities offered by these courses.

Lectures and talks play a large part in the educational activities of the Polish YMCA, whose aim is to have one lecture daily in each of its buildings for a group. In order to be successful and attractive these lectures must be well thought out and on a high level. The educational bodies of the Polish YMCA have recently done very serious work in this direction and will continue to make every effort towards further improvement.

Smiling People

Mr. Walter Lambeth, USA congressman and representative of the State of Northern Carolina, visited Warsaw a short time ago.

When asked by reporters what impression the city made upon him, Mr. Lambeth replied that he was struck with several things. I have already travelled over practically entire Europe, he said, and yet never have I met so many kind and pleasant people as in Warsaw. I was surprised at seeing so many smiling people in the streets, and this rare symptom in present-day Europe caused me much reflection. Continuing, Mr. Lambeth said that his attention was caught by the large amount of flowers in Warsaw, especially the flower decorations on the street lamps.

Mr. Lambeth's remark about smiling people is of special consequence to us. The Polish YMCA is very happy if it can in a measure contribute to the formation of this atmosphere.

