

New Poland

A MAGAZINE OF BRITISH-POLISH INTERESTS



Three lasses from Lowicz (Central Poland) come to a 3-day Festival.

**IN THIS
ISSUE**

- ★ KINGSLEY MARTIN on Poland
- ★ TYRONE GUTHRIE—Polish Theatre
- ★ Maj. D. BRUCE, M.P.—Commentary

SEPTEMBER

1947

6^D
MONTHLY

BALTIC UNION SHIPBROKERS, Ltd.

SHIPBROKERS AND CHARTERING AGENTS

OUR SPECIALITY IS
**Chartering of ships for
Polish Cargoes**

J. S. HAMILTON, Ltd.
Shipbrokers

LONDON & BALTIC TRADING Co., Ltd.
Speciality Trading with Poland.

24, St. Mary Axe, London, E.C.3

Telephone :
AVENUE 4501



For Efficient Service Use

PSA TRANSPORT LIMITED

Customs Clearances, Transhipments, Reforwarding
and Deliveries Promptly and Efficiently arranged

Speciality :

**Chartering of Tonnage
for Polish Cargoes**

HEAD OFFICE

6, CARLISLE STREET, LONDON, W.1

Telephone : GERrard 9441/9445 Telegrams and Cables : POLSTEAM, London

PASSENGER OFFICE :

47, WHITCOMB STREET, LONDON, W.C.2

Telephone : WHItchall 7561 Extension 42/3

RELIABLE AGENTS AND CORRESPONDENTS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

"It is safe to say that of all the war-devastated countries of Europe Poland's recovery is the most remarkable." In these words Alexander Werth introduced a series of three excellent articles on new Poland in the "Manchester Guardian" last month.

Werth, whose epic Russian commentaries during the war established him as a top-line reporter, is no stranger to Poland. He was in Lublin in the anxious days of 1944 and returned to the country again in the summer of 1945. Writing the present reports from Warsaw this August, Werth describes Poland's two years of reconstruction, her trade with the West, and the Polish attitude to Russia and the "German Menace." The following quotations are particularly interesting.

The Polish Foreign Minister, M. Modzelewski, told Werth: "The political conception of an emigre Poland has fallen through" and the writer comments that "the Poles from Britain become absorbed into the general population, and I might add from personal observation that although many are, in principle, still hostile to the Government, they are undoubtedly impressed by conditions in Poland, and several recalled to me with a touch of anger the horror stories about Poland that they read in the emigre Press in Britain."

Poland's keen desire to build up commercial relations with the West is stressed by Werth who reports: "Mr. Minc (Minister for Industry) several times emphasised his desire for extensive trade 'with East and West alike.' He has, indeed, gone to Paris to negotiate a new trade agreement with France,* 'to make sure of another link with the West,' as was widely remarked in Warsaw—even though, under the last agreement, France had failed to carry out her part of the bargain

* On August 20 it was announced that a one-year trade agreement between France and Poland had been signed and a longer term agreement discussed.

No. 9

New Poland

Vol. 2

A MAGAZINE OF BRITISH-POLISH INTERESTS

Contents for September 1947

Short view of Poland— Kingsley Martin 2	Shakespeare Festival— Tyrone Guthrie 8
Poles and the Trade unions 4	3-year Plan successes 9
Regained Territories' news 5	How Poland learns about us 10
Letter from a "repat" 6	First post-war film 12
Scots Diary 7	Books 14
	Parliament—Maj. D. Bruce 16

EDITORIAL BOARD

Editor: STEWART VALDAR

Chairman: Mrs. Cecil Chesterton, O.B.E.

Gordon Schaffer

Mrs. Joseph Macleod

Com. L. P. M. Milner (R.N. retd.)

almost all along the line.

"When I saw him Mr. Minc already said: 'We could not go to the Paris Conference. But our refusal to go does not mean that our economic relations with the West have been severed. Far from it. We have no autarkist tendencies either in terms of Poland or in terms of some imaginary "Eastern Bloc." We can contribute to Europe's recovery, but not on the basis of "Germany first." If we get credits to develop our agriculture and our coal industry it will help Europe. We can export—and have already begun to do so—eggs, bacon, and dairy produce to Britain, with which we have a satisfactory, though still small, trade agreement.'"

IN our columns this month we report the decision of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and En-

gineering Unions to exclude Poles from trade union membership. Union spokesmen point out that there is no intention to make an exception of Poles as such, but it is felt that the undesirable character of General Anders' men raises a special problem. On the other hand the National Union of Mine-workers has agreed to the employment of Poles in the pits, after the men have gone through a "screening" process. It is not our purpose to discuss the wisdom or otherwise of these decisions, but it is clear that the main problem remains to be tackled, i.e., how to encourage the Poles to return home.

In an article, reprinted in our magazine from the "New Statesman and Nation," Kingsley Martin says: *I can find no good reason why any Pole now living in England should not return to his country, if he is willing to work.*

SEPTEMBER 1947

Page One

Short view of Poland

A 95 per cent Catholic country, ruled by Socialists and Communists without repression — the elections — the fight against black marketeers — successful amnesty — “repats” make good — press censorship — Socialist-Communist teamwork — What has happened to Mikolajczyk? — relations with Britain.

THEORETICALLY the Polish eagle is an impossible bird, a chimera whose head and body do not fit. Here is a country whose population has been, during a six years war, reduced from 35 to 24 millions. It is 95 per cent. Catholic, and it is ruled by a coalition of Communists and Socialists (who are at least as anti-clerical as the Communists), and it is ruled without repression. Foreign (including British) residents tell me that the regime, though not popular, is generally “accepted,” and there is evidence in the obviously co-operative activity of the people, who are rebuilding Poland at a greater rate than any other war-devastated country. I am not suggesting that liberty is complete, but that, for easily discovered reasons, the great mass of Poles “accept,” most of them readily, a Government which is ideologically unrepresentative and which owes its power at least in part to a steamrollered and carefully “managed” election.

How is this possible? There are, as I see it, three reasons. First, every Pole, Left to Right, demands a Government which can be trusted to oppose with all its might the recreation of Germany as a great Power. They have all experienced the systematic attempt finally to destroy Poland as a nation. When the war ended, the Nazis had just completed the murder of 6 million Jews. They had also murdered or carried off to slave labour millions of Poles, and Poles are convinced

by
KINGSLEY MARTIN

Editor of the *New Statesman and Nation*, who was recently in Poland as a guest of the Czytelnik Publishing Co-operative.

that in a few years they would have been reduced to a slave remnant; all those who showed any sort of independence would have followed the Jews into the gas chambers. Therefore they know that security lies in Russia even though they are traditionally hostile to Russia, fear Communism, and criticise the Government as being too pro-Russian. Exceptions to this rule are to be found, for instance, among farmers from East Poland who were deported to Russia in 1939 and who have been repatriated to the Western Territories. We gave a lift to one such farmer who, seeing we were English, no doubt had a propagandist intention when he talked. But he was not at all afraid to talk; he talked freely to an interpreter who was likely to have official contacts. He said that he had once had 30 hectares in East Poland and now only had 10 in Silesia and found it difficult to make them pay because of taxation. He then added that the only hope for Poland was that Britain would make war on

Reprinted from the New Statesman and Nation by kind permission of the Author and Editor.

the Soviet Union to regain Polish lands. As we were driving through villages which had been destroyed house by house by the Germans, such talk sounded hysterical. But he was a characteristic survivor from the old Poland. He held that one must always fight to the death for everything one has ever had. Therefore he would fight the Russians—on principle. But I have no doubt that he was completely at one with all other Poles in his attitude to the Germans.

The second reason for the general acceptance of the Government is that it guarantees that Poland will retain the Western Territories. I really do not believe you could find a Pole in the country who would have doubts on this score.

The third reason for accepting the Government is that it is energetic and efficient and carrying out the only policy which makes sense for Poland. Here I found no dissension among the Socialists, Communists, Democrats, Catholics, peasants, miners, middle-class people and British officials to whom I talked.

A “MILD REVOLUTION”

I shall be asked whether I am sure that this, apparent support of the Government is not faked. I know well that a foreigner may live under a “terror” and never see it. I therefore made a particular point of meeting “Opposition” people, both Poles and foreigners, in cir-

cumstances where they were likely to talk freely. Only six months ago bandits were still holding up trains and cars and even now they occasionally raid villages. The country has been the prey of black marketeers. There is corruption among local officials. These conditions have now greatly improved. A “mild revolution,” as it has been called, has been achieved. There is a new atmosphere of stability and the necessity for violent police measures has grown correspondingly less. At one time or another a very large number of middle-class people have been arrested, generally for a few days or weeks, and then released. Under arrest they are not badly treated. They often have no idea why they are arrested, but the reason usually becomes obvious. In a country so disturbed as post-war Poland, the police throw a wide net in which to catch a particular fish. They do not mind arresting six hundred people to find three “underground” or black market contacts. Thus I heard of a maid-servant who was picked up as she innocently went into a shop and was kept in the cooler for 24 hours. The reason? The shop had been a black market centre. The police therefore arrested everyone who called there during the next week in the hope of finding illegal traders. The maid-servant found herself in a single room with some 300 others similarly detained for inquiries. I heard of another case, also of a maid-servant, who was released after a short period in gaol and told in future not to abstain from joining in May-day demonstrations! According to my British, as well as Polish informants, such indiscriminate and arbitrary arrests, common last year, are now rare.

SUCCESSFUL AMNESTY

The most important factor in improvement was the amnesty which severe critics of the regime tell me was genuine and successful. Most of the underground fighters against the Government surrendered with

their arms and a large number of them have been absorbed in jobs. Nothing astonishes or annoys Poles more than the continued absence in Britain of Poles who, they feel, ought to be working on the reconstruction of their country. The Government policy is not one of revenge or punishment. Those who have come back from England have been welcome, and I have the names of Anders men who have now secure and official jobs in Poland. I can find no good reason why any Pole now living in England should not return to his country, if he is willing to work. People are not deported to Russia, nor are they persecuted because they have been slow to support the present Polish Government. On the contrary, their country desperately needs them and will use their ability.

CONTROL OF PRESS

There remains one limitation on liberty. There is a domestic Press censorship, though none for foreign correspondents. Polish newspapers may not abuse Soviet Russia, foment anti-Semitism, nor, as I learned from one of the censors, print terrifying stories of new American weapons of war because that would discourage people from reconstructing their cities. Both Socialist and Catholic newspaper editors said that they thought some censorship still necessary, though some Catholic journalists strongly complain of its application. There is a very large variety of daily, weekly, and monthly newspapers; and public questions are freely debated. In Warsaw, for instance, I saw an Opposition Catholic paper whose main article headed “Marxism, Science and Revelation,” was a thorough-going onslaught on Marxism and the scientific trend of modern society. The Church, as Catholics assured me, is absolutely free in all religious matters. It is not, however, permitted to take part, as such, in political propaganda.

Some people believe that the Communists are only biding their time and will make Poland totalitarian as soon as possible. I believe this to be a complete, even if natural, mistake.

THE UNITED FRONT

The Communists are well aware that they are a tiny minority in a Catholic country. A large part of their mass following is composed of Catholics. Communist leaders are very well aware that Poland belongs half to the West and that the overwhelming mass of the peasant population would never stomach the violent changes that Soviet Communism was able to impose on the Russian peasantry. If only for this reason Socialists are as essential to the Communists as Communists are to the Socialists. Socialists have explained to me that they differ from their Communist colleagues, not on the general programme, but in possessing a more Western, humanitarian and tolerant approach. The alliance at the top has not been by any means easy. At least two first-class controversies between Communists and Socialists have been fully and publicly debated in the Press. The Communists desired to fuse the P.P.R. (Polish Workers' Party, as the Communist Party is called) with the P.S.S. (Socialist Party). After long debate the Communists gave way. Similarly, Socialist and Communist newspapers held a great public debate about the problem of distribution. The Communists, who always like centralisation, proposed an extension of State distributing stores. The Socialists, fearing the growth of a not always efficient bureaucracy, believed that they were supporting the cause of individual liberty by advocating co-operation as against State distribution. Again it was the Communists who made most of the concessions. The truth is that the extremely able group of Communists in the Government is well aware that Polish recovery de-

(continued on next page)

depends on Socialist support and is willing to make concessions to keep it. This is made all the more easy by the fact that Mr. Cyrankiewicz, the Socialist Premier, is a man of exceptional strength who can hold his own with his Communist colleagues.

MIKOLAJCZYK'S MISTAKES

What, it may be asked, of the "Opposition?" What has happened to Mikolajczyk, the Peasant leader, whom the British Government so ardently and sometimes so unwisely supported? I much regret not meeting Mikolajczyk, who was on holiday in the country, but who lives in Warsaw and leads his opposition group in the Polish Parliament. He is no longer, however, a great figure in Poland. He had his chance, many chances, and threw them away. He is said to have always been one river too late. When the Russians were on the Bug, he could have been Premier with half the Cabinet. He could still have been Premier with three Ministers of his Party when the Russians reached the Vistula. He might still have been Premier when the Red Army was on the Oder, but he only accepted the Vistula terms when the Russians had reached the Elbe, just as before he had been willing to take what he was offered on the Bug when the Russians had arrived at the Vistula. In the final discussions of the formation of the Lublin Government he outraged his colleagues by informing them that he had been sent by Mr. Churchill to accept the office of Prime Minister. He made his last fatal mistake just before the elections when he was guaranteed a large number of seats in the Chamber, but refused in the belief that he would win a majority. Pressure, propaganda, and some nicely-calculated arrests of the more dubious among his Parliamentary candidates prevented his victory. He is now a comparatively unimportant figure. The concluding stroke in his defeat was the political amnesty. He had declared through-

out the election that if the Lublin Bloc won, Poland would be terrorised and all who were in opposition to the Government liquidated. When the Government did precisely the opposite and amnestied even those who were in arms against it, Mikolajczyk's last political weapon fell from his hands.

I was surprised with the obviously sincere desire of the Polish authorities, let alone ordinary citizens and workpeople, to be on the best terms with the British. I am not referring to the remarkable fact that in Warsaw many of Shakespeare's plays were being played by dramatic companies from all over Poland. They want the best possible trade, as well as close cultural relations with Britain. One great stumbling block to friendship has been the British Embassy, where Mr. Bevin made one of his very worst errors. It was inexcusable to send, as Ambassador, a man like Cavendish-Bentinck, known by the Poles to have particular experience of British intelligence work and to be the friend of the bitterest enemies of the regime. It is widely believed in Poland that most of the Anders intrigues and the threads of the underground movement passed through the British Embassy. The Polish authorities agree that this is a past phase; they speak highly of the new Ambassador, whose behaviour is scrupulously correct, and even friendly. They see that Mr. Bevin and some members of the British Embassy, who have given up hope of Mikolajczyk, now support the Socialists, perhaps in the forlorn hope of detaching them from the Communists. This would be dangerous policy, if it had the slightest chance of success, which it has not. What is important is that relations between some members of the Government and some members of the Embassy are becoming friendly and that both Britain and Poland have everything to gain by agreement. Poland is not behind any iron curtain and does not desire to be so and we need all the trade in Eastern Europe that we can get.

POLES AND THE UNIONS

THE Polish newspaper (*Tagodnik Polski*), published in London, has interviewed British trade union leaders on the subject of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions' decision to exclude Poles from union membership. A leading engineering trade unionist told *Tagodnik Polski*:

If the Polish emigration were an emigration to earn their livelihood the employment of Poles would not raise any objections, taking into account the present labour situation in England. The question is, however, that this is a military and political emigration. Nobody emphasizes this political character and political aims of the emigration more than its own leaders and journalists. It is quite different when people come to us to help us in our work and earn their bread at the same time, and something quite different when they set up centres of political action, directed, not only against their own country, but indirectly against the fundamental interests of British workers.

We have also strong objections against the Polish Resettlement Corps; this organisation allows the most politically reactionary elements—the officers—to influence the rank and file. If we had to examine individual applications of the candidates to our industry, we should take into account the fact whether or not the candidate belongs to that organisation.

The *Tagodnik Polski* comments:

The attitude of the British trade unions requires few comments. If the Polish emigrants encounter, in their way to a normal, settled life, the difficulties unknown to any other emigrants in the world, they owe it to those who justly or unjustly pass as their leaders. To those people who so many times have shown a complete lack of scruples and responsibility for the

fate of people under their care; the mere promise that they would be allowed to settle in this country and a hope that they would be able to continue their sinister political games was enough for them. The promise of the renewal of the status in the Polish Resettlement Corps which they had in the Polish Army was sufficient for them. What is to happen to the privates, left in an environment and considered as "Fascist" for the sins committed by the officers of the Anders' Army—that, according to them, was those privates' concern.

One cannot lead an everyday campaign against the social achievements of English workers (see what "Polska Walczaca" says about the shortening of the working week for the miners) and at the same time ask for the admission to a British trade union.

One cannot incite to war, the chief cause of the impoverishment of nations and the cause of Great Britain's difficulties, and at the same time offer hypocritically a few thousand hands for the reconstruction work.

These are the cardinal faults, if outbursts of spite and hatred against everything that marks the progress of the working people can be called faults.

NEW POLAND comments: Both Poland and Britain are engaged in battles for production, upon the outcome of which our future depends. Let us say to Poland; "we are short of manpower, but you have prior claim to these men for they are Poles."

The continued sojourn of these soldiers in Britain, whether in the "Resettlement Corps" or otherwise is obviously a source of bad feeling and misunderstanding between our countries. This reason alone is sufficient to warrant the speediest possible return of this lost army.



RECOVERED TERRITORIES

NEWS IN BRIEF

WHEN GDYNIA WAS restored to Poland the destruction of the harbours was so severe that no ships could enter them, all the cranes were out of action and all the warehouses lay in ruins. The first ship was able to leave Gdynia in July, 1945. Up to the end of 1945, the two main ports handled 166,000 tons. Today Gdansk and Gdynia are handling over 1,000,000 tons monthly, 70 per cent. of the pre-war figure. 63 per cent. of the quays had been reconstructed, 34 per cent. of the loading equipment and 33 per cent. of the warehouse space.

Between June 26 and July 25, 206 ships entered Gdansk port, most of which were Swedish and Danish; 211 ships, mostly loaded with coal, pig iron, salt, pipes and transit goods left the port. In the same time imports through Gdansk amounted to 167,024 tons, export to 417,259 tons and transit goods to 9,503 tons.

THREE DELEGATES OF THE BRITISH Relief Committee for Polish children have visited educational centres of the Association of Friends of Workers' Children in Lower Silesia, where they attended the Association's conference.

Mr. Shonfield, representing the "Financial Times," and his wife, who represents the British Export Trade Research Organisation, are on a visit to Silesia. They are particularly interested in Polish coal problems.

Mr. Leslie Forder, Welsh port director, and other British experts have arrived in Szczecin. The visitors are touring Polish ports and will in particular inspect coal-loading facilities.

FOREST FIRES ARE RAGING in Lower Silesia, though the greatest danger has passed. The biggest fire is the Boleslawiec district where about 250 acres of young forest and 1,500 acres of old forest have been destroyed. The second centre of the fires is in the Sgorzelec district, where about 1,375 acres of old forest have been destroyed. In a number of cases fires have been due to sabotage by Germans. Germans have recently been captured with detailed maps of the forests and bottles of petrol in their possession. Since the end of the war, German diversionary activities have led to the destruction of about 25,000 acres of forest in the Boleslawiec district alone.

THE GDANSK INTERNATIONAL FAIR was opened on August 2 by vice-Premier Gomulka, Minister of the Regained Territories.

There are some 400 stands at the Gdansk Fair, including about forty foreign stands. Attendance has been very high. On the first day, the textile industry made a deal with Danish interests for fishing equipment such as canvas, ropes, etc., for the sum of 150,000 dollars. The French and the Belgians, too, are interested in Polish textile goods. The deals are greatly helped by special facilities granted by the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, permitting the sale and purchase of goods against foreign currencies.

ABOUT 100,000 SETTLERS on farms in the Regained Territories have received title-deeds this year. Some 300,000 more will get their title-deeds by the end of the year.



Homecoming

An Airman returns

A letter from Leonid Teliga, who was a flight-lieutenant with the Polish air force in Britain, describes his feelings as his native land comes into sight. Trained in Canada he took part in the final bombing of Germany by the R.A.F.

It was a fine morning. The thin veil of mist dissolved quickly under the warm rays of the sun. We could already see the white buildings of Gdynia and were looking in vain for the innumerable towers and turrets of Gdansk. I stared towards the shore trying to imagine my home country which, after being overrun by the steam roller of war, was gathering all her energy for erecting new cities from ruins and for building new life for her people—for building up the New Poland.

The ship's first officer asked me in his quiet British voice: "Do you know these places?" I replied: "I knew, but cannot recognise them now."

"Oh, it's all right now," said the officer, "you can see cranes and there is no need to fear hidden wrecks. When I came here for the first time I was shocked. For a moment I thought that we came to Hiroshima rather than Gdansk. It was a very sad picture. I received a further shock on my second visit for the place did not look the same, with the wrecks cleared and cranes waiting for the boat. Now it is easy to come here, easy as that." He snapped his fingers to emphasise the point.

Our conversation was interrupted by the urgent, short whistles of the tug boats, and leaving me the officer said: "I don't know how your people have done it. I really don't know!"

I felt proud that "my people" did it, and I was grateful to that broad-

shouldered Scotsman for his fine words.

Very slowly, following the tug, we were gliding into the entrance of the port. On our left we passed the

Poland, too, exports to live

— Maj. Elwyn Jones, M.P.

FOLLOWING a two-week tour in the Western Territories, Major F. Elwyn Jones, M.P., British prosecutor in the Nuremberg Tribunal and President of the British-Polish Society, told the Press:

"I saw everywhere in Western Pomorze, a creative swing and dynamics in combating great difficulties." He continued: "The German Minister of Agriculture in the British Zone told me before I left for Poland that the land beyond the Oder is a desert. Now I can see that rumours circulated by certain circles in the West are pure phantasy. I have studied the position of agriculture here and know that last winter was particularly hard for the peasants but I have seen the confidence of the new settlers, their gigantic efforts and the aid given by the Polish Government. I visited the beautiful Mariacki Church in Slupsk now in the course of reconstruction. The new democratic State gives assistance to the Catho-

shell-ploughed grounds of Westerplatte, which in 1939 fought to the last round against overwhelming odds.

All our men stood silently on the deck as "Westerplatte" slipped behind us. In front, on the shore, stood small crowds waving and shouting. The men on the deck made ready to disembark, for in the crowds were their relatives, wives and sweethearts waiting for them. They had waited through the grave years of war and occupation. Now it was all over.

Happy shouts of welcome filled the air. We knew that those people down there on the shore had been waiting all too long, and that only now the real life was beginning. We realised that we were home.

It was a fine morning.

lic Church which enjoys full freedom. Poland is a country of vast possibilities. I cannot understand the attitude of those Poles who hesitate to return to Poland. Life is not easy here but a characteristic feature is that every day brings improvement.

"The Polish production of artistic rural handicraft industry which was exhibited at the Gdansk Fair is perhaps unique in Europe. Poland's export possibilities are growing daily. Poland, like Britain, must export to live, but I believe that the period of post-war difficulties will soon be over, creating better living conditions for working people."

Discussing the repatriation of Germans, to which he was an eyewitness in Slupsk, Major Jones declared:

"Germans leaving Poland enjoy full protection from the Polish authorities, meet no obstacles in taking their property with them. I am full of admiration for the humanitarian attitude of the Poles towards the Germans."

Twelve Poles come to Clyde

CALLING at the Polish Consulate I met twelve young Polish ex-soldiers fresh from Gdynia. They are studying marine engineering and naval architecture for the Polish merchantile marine and are spread over the various shipyards on Clydeside. I had the opportunity of questioning them and found they were enthusiastic in their work. In the Drawing office and Engineering shops they are perfectly happy and their fellow workers are helpful and friendly.

In their spare time the men are being taught English by Mr. Hugh Aitken, a Glasgow teacher, who has sacrificed his holidays for this work. Not one of the men could speak a word of English when they arrived in Glasgow seven weeks ago. To my surprise they could not only speak understandable English but could read English from manuscripts prepared by Mr. Aitken. One can't help paying a tribute to the tutorial methods of Mr. Aitken and the high intellectual standard of the students. Or is it that English is easier than Polish? From personal efforts I vote for the former.

As the British Council is responsible for suggesting such training facilities and as Mr. Hector McNeil, M.P., Minister of State, sponsored the scheme it may be a further gesture of friendliness to the Polish Government and people. All twelve were invited by ex-Bailie Uncles to attend the match between Third Lanark and Rangers at Hampden. Unfortunately they were unable to see their countryman, Feliks Starosciak, as he was playing with the second team against Rangers A at Ibrox. Incidentally Celtic Football Club have signed K. Conrad, a young Polish soldier from Forres, about whom more anon. British football followers are surprised to

learn there are no professional footballers in Poland.

A good deal of favourable comment is heard regarding the behaviour of Polish soldiers at the Polkemmet Repatriation Camp in West Lothian. Some thirty families of Squatters occupied huts vacated by repatriates. Polish soldiers fed the Squatters and gave every assistance to the homeless people. Since when West Lothian County Council have recognised the Squatters as tenants and charge a rent, all in, of 6/8d. per week. A sharp contrast to what is happening in parts of Scotland where Anders followers are quartered, notably at Caithness.

It must be said that most of the Poles at the recalcitrant Camp at Caithness desire to go home but a large number, indiscriminately recruited by Anders, appear to be the real cause of the trouble which has caused the Caithness County Council to demand their removal. Many of these men can't speak a word of Polish, German being their only language. One such case came before the Glasgow Sheriff's Court who knew no Polish and had to have a German interpreter.

The latest news from this Camp, according to the "Aberdeen Journal," of August 16, is that "for morale purposes" a Company of British soldiers are on their way to the camps at Castletown and Skipton. The difficulty in Scotland is to discriminate between the decent fellows who want to go home and those among them who will neither go home nor work abroad.

On August 14, the fifteenth repatriate ship left Glasgow for Gdansk with 1,600 officers and men. Among the 1,600 were 188 officers and men who were going direct to their homes in territory now incorporated in the Soviet Union. The band of the 2nd Battalion Royal Scots Fusiliers played

EDITED BY

JOHN CARTWRIGHT

Our Scottish Correspondent

them off and addresses were delivered by Colonel Saunders, Commander, Polish Repatriation Group and Lord James Stewart Murray.

In all 12,847 Polish Nationals have left Scottish ports making a total from Britain of 87,000. There are still 30,000 remaining in Scotland but as the conditions in Poland become better known and anti-Polish propaganda recedes, the response becomes more and more apparent.

The Scottish Mineworkers Union have taken no decision regarding the employment of Poles in Scottish collieries but have left the whole question to the local branches. Thus, Fife County bar such employment while the Dysart miners in Dumbartonshire have voted in favour of Poles entering the local collieries. It seems odd that whilst the Polish coalmines are undermanned, Poles should be seeking employment in foreign pits where conditions are worse than in coal mines in Poland—I know for I have worked in pits at home and visited coal mines in Poland.

Ex-Sgt.-Major Stanislaw Brzoszak (see British-Polish Society Notes—Ed.), who was repatriated nine months ago, is back again in Britain. Towards the end of August he had a number of miners, other Trade Unions, and Trades Councils to address. By all accounts he will be warmly welcomed because of his knowledge of International Trade Unionism and particularly his intimate knowledge of mining both in this country and in Poland.

I HAVE just returned from Poland.

Lionel Hale and I have been there by arrangement with the British Council as the guests of the Polish Ministry of Art and Culture. We went to see a most interesting theatrical event organised by this Ministry: a Festival of Shakespearean productions in which almost all the leading professional theatres of Poland took part. In addition to stimulating the whole plan, the Ministry offered a prize to the theatre whose production was considered the best by a committee of distinguished judges. Our job was just to see the productions, meet some of the people involved, compare what we saw in Poland with what we know of Shakespearean productions elsewhere, and, I think, to symbolise a brotherly interest in the proceedings on the part of the theatrical profession here in England—the land of Shakespeare's birth.

In Krakow we saw a production of *Othello*, extremely handsomely staged—far more richly and elaborately than any London production of *Othello* in the last twenty years. The acting, however, was patchy—alternating between a rather old-fashioned flamboyant theatricality, and the tentative gaucherie of obvious beginners. The direction was competent but treated the play as though it were the libretto for Verdi's opera.

At Cestochowa a resident repertory company, subsidised by the town, offered the *Taming of a Shrew*. The setting was simple but sufficient. The direction had pace and verve but no originality either of style or of outlook on the play. The acting was acceptable and I couldn't help feeling that this show would compare very favourably with any Shakespearean productions I have seen in the repertory companies that play towns like Rugby or Peterborough.

The remaining four productions were seen in Warsaw—two of them by Varsovian, two by provincial companies.



Prize-giving at the conclusion of the Festival.

The Shakespeare Festival

by Tyrone Guthrie *

Here I must say that the fact of theatrical performances being given at all struck us as simply miraculous.

At the Teatr Mali we saw a sparkling little production of *Much Ado*. The theatre is a long, narrow room on the first floor of a bombed house that has been re-roofed, shored up with wooden buttresses, given a festive air inside with bright paint, and holds about two hundred people. The stage is about as large as a pocket handkerchief. On this the producer had achieved a really brilliant choreographic arrangement of the play—rapid, lively, inventive. The lighting, which was excellent, was contrived by means of bulbs placed in home-made reflectors which had once been fruit cans.

* Broadcast on August 27. Extracts reproduced by kind permission of the B.B.C. Programmes Department.

The cast as usual was patchy, but Beatrice and Benedict were excellent.

But I could not help feeling that the spirit of Shakespeare would have been more pleased with this modest, lively little performance than with some of the solemn ceremonies that in well-meaning reverence for the "Great Classic" overlook the primary considerations of good entertainment.

The other Warsaw performances were all given at the *Polski Theatre*.

A company from Lodz—the Birmingham of Poland—played *The Tempest*, under the direction of Leon Schiller, a celebrated Polish regisseur and an interesting writer on the theatre. The staging was simple and daring, but did not, in my view, quite "come off." But I fancy it was designed for a smaller stage than the *Polski*, and that neither the set nor the choreography were seen there to good advantage. The dresses were lovely

—the only example of what I consider really well-designed clothes that we saw. Everywhere immense pains and immense expense had been lavished on the actors' clothes; but these were the only ones which seemed to me to have either homogeneous style or to be becoming and easy to wear. All the performances were well attended; most of them packed.

One interesting result of the Festival is that the Ministry will probably either commission or offer prizes for new translations of Shakespeare. The existing ones are not considered good enough.

On the whole, I do not think that the best of what we saw in Poland is as good as the best contemporary production of Shakespeare in London—the best of the Old Vic, for instance, or of John Gielgud's productions.

On the other hand I'm not sure that the general level of six simultaneous productions by six different companies in England would be higher than that of the six different companies we saw in Poland. I'm not sure.

It is in the matter of manpower that the Polish theatre is at a disadvantage. To begin with, there has been no Polish theatre for eight years. They have had to begin again at 1939.

I have several times referred to the "patchy" quality of the acting. This, I think, is the explanation. The leading personalities were to a frightening, sickening extent destroyed by the Germans. Of the rest, the seniors are prematurely aged, are but tired shadows of their former selves. The younger ones have, as yet, insufficient experience of their job.

The whole Festival was a deeply moving experience.

I felt proud of the part that my profession is playing in Poland just now; and I salute these gallant people, not merely as a grateful guest, but for the example they are showing to the world of invincible courage in adversity, and invincible faith in their own Resurrection from the grave.

The 3-year plan: good news

by Stewart Valdar

TARGETS set by the Economic Plan have reached, and in many cases exceeded by the main Polish industries during the last six months.

This heartening news augurs well for the successful carrying out of Poland's "Plan for Plenty" which ends on December 31, 1949. By this time, it is estimated, the central task of the Plan—"to raise the standard of living of the working masses above pre-war level"—will have been achieved.

Poland's economy is based on coal, and during the first half of this year 27,168,000 tons—61,000 tons above the target were excavated. By the end of the year 19,000,000 tons will have been exported to Europe (including Britain), in exchange for vital imports.

Most of the coal, however, will help restore industry by producing electric power, coke for smelting, and chemicals for other industries.

In electric power, over 1,741,000,000 kilowatt-hours were generated during the last six months—99.8 per cent. of the target. This will enable over 600 more villages to be electrified this year, as well as serving the needs of an expanding industrial machine.

The fulfilment of the coal target assisted the coke industry to exceed their plan by 3 per cent.; pig iron by 7 per cent. and raw steel by 6 per cent. Meanwhile the foundry industry, during the first six months of this year, topped its target by 5 per cent.

This steel has been cast, rolled, and forged into machine tools, agricultural machinery and rolling stock. During these six months 1,189 lathes have been built—72 per cent. of the plan (the deficiency was due to shortage of ball-bearings).

In the first quarter of this year 2,297 threshing machines and 11,768 ploughs were produced. By the end of June, the agricultural machine industry produced 154,126 products—103 per cent. of the plan. In the same period, at the rate of 15 railway engines and nearly 900 trucks a month, the rolling stock industry topped its target by 6 per cent.

All this equipment has assisted the manufacturing industries and agriculture to achieve their targets, as well as improve vital railway communications.

Oil—the lifeblood of machinery—has not been forgotten, and with the production of 60,881,000 tons the 6 months' plan was fulfilled. Nevertheless oil output is still only 25 per cent. of the pre-war figure and the new borings on a large scale are planned.

Chemicals—that essential auxiliary industry, also exceeded its target—by 25 per cent.

High on the list of "Guiding Principles" of the Plan is the demand for "necessary footwear, textiles and clothing." Although import difficulties and the effect of the severe winter on transport affected cotton production during the first half of this year, 124,657,500 yards of cloth were produced against the 137,000,000 yards planned. The woollen industry, however, topped its target by 167,000 yards of textiles.

These are the results of six months hard work by men and women in State, co-operative and private undertakings, all working to a master plan. The successful achievement of the Plan will assure a prosperous future to Poland and have a profound effect on the whole economy of Europe.



English is taught in 20,000 schools in Poland

How Poland learns about us

by G. G. Bidwell

British Council representative in Poland

THERE has just closed in Warsaw an International Exhibition of books for children, organised by the Polish Teachers' Union, with the co-operation of many bodies such as the British Council. The exhibition was accompanied by lectures on children's literature produced in Russia, Czechoslovakia, France, Italy, the United States and the United Kingdom.

From the point of view of the Polish visitor, the exhibition indicated the direction being followed by all nations in the production of children's books. But for the foreigner like myself, it threw the spotlight on the great need for edu-

cational books of all kinds in post-war Poland.

Throughout the dread years of oppressive German occupation, Polish publishers were not allowed to produce educational books. And the stocks and libraries which they possessed were plundered and burnt. When I first came to Warsaw in January, 1946, I was shown, in ruins that had been libraries, piles of ashes which once were books in the English language.

The so-called cultured German was particularly vicious and thorough in his theft of scientific works and of books in English. And when the Nazis fled they destroyed the printing presses which

must otherwise have sprung to life, at the call of Polish culture, before the sound of machine-gun fire had died away.

This war on books, on science, on information, on culture, faced the Polish people with a vast and many-sided problem when at last the yoke of barbarism was lifted. First, professors and teachers were six years out of date. Second, students and pupils had nowhere to turn for the basic information which their studies required: third, up-to-date books could not be written by writers themselves lacking in knowledge of modern developments: and fourth, the printing

(Continued on next page)

NEW POLAND

presses were smashed and the printing shops razed to the ground.

But the Poles, though horrified by this condition were not dismayed. Printing presses—I have seen them myself in Poznan—were built up from bits and pieces foraged from far and wide. And there went forth to the nations of the world the cry for books to supply the information needed immediately by students and by those writers who turned to the task of restocking the empty shelves with books.

U.N.R.R.A., and many other organisations, did all they could to help. The British Council, whose work in Poland I have the honour to direct, strained every nerve to contribute to the solution of the problem. In a year the British Council presented to university, school and municipal libraries over five thousand books, thirty-two thousand informative pamphlets, and twelve thousand scientific and other periodicals. We established also, a central library in Warsaw with 5,000 volumes.

Not only the universities and the schools wanted books. Every professor, lecturer, teacher, student, and ordinary reader was starved of information on his own subject or longing for the sheer relaxation of reading. In March, 1946, the British Council, with the co-operation of Transport Command, brought five special aircraft from England loaded with books as a contribution towards filling the booksellers shelves. In one year over fifty thousand British books and sixteen thousand informative pamphlets were sold in Poland. This was a great contribution by British publishers to Poland's educational need.

The post-war famine of books in Poland is one of the three vital material factors in the progress of education. The other two factors are the dearth of buildings and the shortage of teachers. School buildings were destroyed by bombs, by shellfire and by deliberate malicious dynamiting. Teachers were killed

in battle and in the insurrection of Warsaw, publicly shot in the streets, tortured to death in the prisons and life beaten out of them in the concentration camps.

To-day the remaining school buildings, and former factories and houses now pressed into service as school buildings, do double duty day by day—for boys and girls schools in the morning and for adult education in the afternoon.

The interest of the British Council in the teaching of English makes us particularly conscious of Poland's teacher shortage. English is taught today in 20,000 Polish schools. The demand by pupils to learn our language is more than ten times greater than it was before the war.

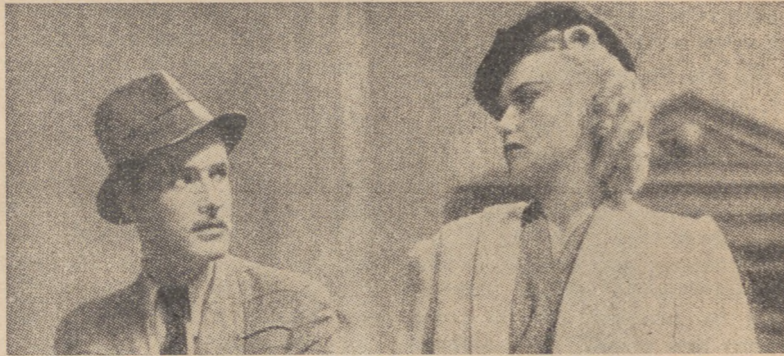
And there are far less qualified teachers of English to meet the demand. Teachers have been switched from teaching other subjects, other languages, in order to bridge the gap. Rapid training courses have been conducted by District Education Offices and a summer course embracing teachers from all over the country was held last year by the Ministry of Education. At this course, lessons and lectures were given by British Council staff, as well as by Polish pedagogues. We have assisted also, whenever our too limited numbers found it possible to do so, in district training courses. Last year the British Council was able to send twenty-one teachers to England for short courses and three for a year's training. We hope to be able to send no less this year.

The results achieved by these inevitably patched-up methods of training are little short of miraculous. The English of the Polish teachers is often far short of perfect. But they are mostly fundamentally good teachers, able to impart all their knowledge, and, more important still, their enthusiasm for learning, to their pupils. Many of these teachers do more than 40 hours teaching per week. I recently spent many hours visiting English

classes in schools of the industrial city of Lodz, and I was amazed at the standard reached by boys and girls who had been learning English for only two years. They were able to speak clearly (though, of course, imperfectly) and to ask and answer questions without difficulty. Most impressive of all—and a great tribute to their teachers—was the eagerness of the pupils to learn and the courage they displayed in trying to speak his language to the first Englishman many of them have ever met.

To the English Seminar in the universities of Warsaw, Lodz, Lublin and Wroclaw, the British Council has been able to give direct assistance through supplying resident lecturers or arranging special courses by visiting lecturers. There are over 250 advanced students of English language and literature at Warsaw University, and over 80 at Lodz—figures which indicate the belief of young Poland that English is the international language of the future.

To have watched through eighteen months, as I have, the rehabilitation and reorganisation and reform of Polish education is to admire, without qualification, the amazing progress made. The Germans sought by unprecedented repression and stark bestiality to kill Polish culture for ever. They only succeeded in making the Polish nation more conscious of itself and more determined to resuscitate its own culture and establish on a sounder basis than ever before its educational system. Professors, lecturers, teachers, students rushed headlong, after the liberation, to the fountains of learning. By devotion, diligence and tremendous effort they have achieved much, in spite of the handicaps and difficulties which must have daunted a lesser people. They will achieve more: they will overcome all obstacles to educational rehabilitation and progress: they will achieve all. And the British Council will be proud to continue to co-operate in this great work.



Hero (Jerzy Duszynski), underground fighter, meets Nazi agent (Zofia Jamry).

Forbidden Songs — first post-war film

Discussed by G. D. H. Douglas

ZAKAZANE PIOSENKI ("Forbidden Songs"), the first full-length post-war film produced by Film Polski came out six months ago but I never saw it till last week. Nor did I read the reams of controversy that appeared about it in the Press.

All I knew was that the opponents of the film were numerous and vociferous, and that they included not only the professional oppositionists who like to make the worst of anything produced in present day Poland (the equivalent of the current British gloom Press), but also sophisticated people who professed to find the film over-simple, over-emotional and untrue to life, and too the more fire-eating anti-Germanists (including local branches of trade unions and the League of Political Prisoners) who passed resolutions condemning the film because it whitewashed the Germans and slurred over their atrocities.

From time to time I heard other opinions: "Forbidden Songs" was a really good film; it showed how life in Warsaw really felt under the

occupation. These were usually the opinions of simple people, people without much to say for themselves, working people, young people.

When I saw the film I didn't take long to decide that the simple people were right and that the criticisms of the sophisticated people, though true, were hopelessly beside the point.

The film is not realistic. True. The story is thin. Certainly. Some of the incidents are far-fetched, some of the characters overdrawn, the two new stars who play the hero and heroine have far too much of the style and gesture of the stars of Hollywood, Denham or . . . where was the German studio that stabled Elizabeth Bergner? (The practical partisan heroine sticks both her practical hands in her practical jacket-pockets and practically shakes a lock of hair out of her practical eyes).

Yes, yes. And there are two lamentable sequences: one (to the accompaniment of the most serious of the songs) a sort of nineteenth century nightmare of clouds,

crosses on lone graves and weeping autumnal trees; the other, the final march on Berlin with the marching, sweating hero, grasping a tommy-gun, fading in through newsreel battle-scenes while the Song of the First Polish Division slowly mounts in a deafening crescendo.

Yes, my sophisticated friends, I give you that. And I concede that the shots of the Warsaw Rising, though technically excellent and highly impressive, are not *the* film of the Warsaw Rising—the great documentary film that will have to be made, building up the true atmosphere of that appalling tragedy whose repercussions will be felt for fifty years.

Such a film would show sultry apprehensions of those July days when the guns approached and faded and the German columns rumbled east, the gambling of the A.K. leaders, the suspicions and hesitations of the Red Army, the hysteria of the Germans, the blunt misery of the surrender, the dispersion and the destruction of Warsaw, and the heroism of the War-

saw people that will never be surpassed.

Only a great documentary film could untangle the knot that their occupation experience has tied in the souls of Polish people. "Forbidden Songs" is not, and could not be that film. But I am convinced that for many thousands of simple people, "Forbidden Songs" succeeds in untangling the knot by the use of a technique from a very different genre of film—a technique that hits directly at the deepest feelings of Warsaw people.

Such a curious hybrid is only possible where there exist songs such as the Poles sang under the occupation—songs which everybody knew (usually the tunes are old Polish folk-songs or well-known music-hall numbers), songs whose words directly expressed, vividly, picturesquely, often crudely, the realities of the life they were living.

The people who liked the film, I found, were the people who really sang the songs—the people for whom and about whom the songs were written.

Such a film could not be made in England or in America, or even in Holland or France, because there are no such songs. Imagine a film constructed around "We're sure to meet again some sunny day," or "Somewhere in France with you," or "There'll be bluebirds over the White Cliffs of Dover, Beloved, just you wait and see!"

Even a film made out of "Roll Out the Barrel," "In the Mood," and "We'll hang out the washing on the Siegfried Line," though less nauseating, would probably lack something in coherence and objectivity.

But the Polish songs are not commercial smash-hits; they were written neither by solitary geniuses nor by syndicates. Nobody knows how they were written. They are just genuine popular music. Objectively, I don't think all of them are such awfully good songs; but they were good at the time.

Siekiera, motyka . . ." (it literally means "Axe, hoe . . .") is a pre-war

music-hall tune with something the same lilt as that to which we sing our limericks about the young lady of Tottenham, etc., etc. Everybody knew it; it had an indefinite number of verses.

One of them goes:

"Siekiera, motyka, bimbru szklanka
W nocy nalot, w dzien lapanka
Siekiera, motyka, pilka, buda,
Kazdy wziewa gdzie sie uda."

Which may be freely (and feebly) translated as:

"Oes and axes and picks and spades,
Daily roundups, nightly raids
'Oes and axes and 'ammers and tongs
Crawl to the 'ole where you belongs."

In the film it is sung by two beggars, who are obviously more than beggars, standing on the Poniatowski Bridge.

Another most insidious song—to the tune of the famous Polish folk-song (a Kujawiak), "Gesi za woda"—tells of the fate of a silly girl who became a Volksdeutsche and an agent with a flat and fine clothes stolen from murdered Jews, to avoid being sent to a concentration camp.

It begins typically with a seemingly innocent image:

"Czerwone jabluszko przekrojone na krzyz
Czemu ty dziewczyno krzywo na mnie patrzysz . . ."

"Round and rosy apple chopped up into four

Beautiful, what makes you look at me like that for?"

In the film it is sung by a hard-boiled female in the street while in the flat above the fluffy little Volksdeutscherin (one of the film's characters) is being shot by men from the underground. The effect is electrical—if you have sung the song. It is one of your bitterest dreams come true.

And that is the purpose of the film—to make the people who suffered most under the occupation to see it rather as an achievement, as a matter for pride and humour,

than as a subject of endless lamentations.

That is why the most serious criticism—that of the film's handling of the Germans seems to me beside the point.

If "Forbidden Songs" were intended as a piece of propaganda for the outside world, or for those Poles who escaped the worst of the occupation, then of course the omission of arrests and beatings up and crematoria and street execution victims with cement in their mouths would be a very serious defect.

But the people for whom the film was written do not need to be reminded of those things.

The world which never saw wartime Poland may need to be told that the Germans were beasts; but for the people who saw only too much of it, it may be healthier to portray the Germans simply as animals, stupid, coarse, misled, often outwitted by the superior Poles, but occasionally betraying kindly impulses.

After all, the Nazi or "colonist" whom they saw cannot always remain the type-image of the German in the minds of the Polish people.

Above all, the Poles need to be shown *themselves*, not as exhausted, beaten, down and out, but as irrepressible, resourceful, gay—as, for 90 per cent. of the time, they really are.

"Forbidden Songs" does that—of course with typical exaggerations. Thus even the abject coward who has a heart attack every time he hears a forbidden song turns up as a medical orderly during the Rising.

But the essence of the film is its scenes of the Warsaw crowd—the dozens upon dozens of Warsaw faces, lean, tired, sweaty, dirty, unshaven, but still bright-eyed and undismayed as the pigeons that the R.A.F. used to take on bombing raids.

You can see those faces every day in the squeeze of a Warsaw tram. When you have seen this film you really begin to look at them.

BOOKS

"POLAND — THE STRUGGLE FOR POWER 1772-1939" by Henryk Frankel. Lindsay Drummond Ltd.

This book, already reviewed in "New Poland," is so essential to the proper understanding of Polish history that we are publishing extracts dealing with the most salient points.

PART 2 THE RIGHT OF MIGHT

THE importance of the Polish towns up to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was recognised even in England. When Queen Elizabeth expelled the members of the Hanseatic League from England in 1596, she made exceptions only in favour of those who were "subjects of the Polish King." Cracow, the old capital of Poland, had 80,000 inhabitants in the sixteenth century; in 1787 it had little over 9,000. "With every year the towns became poorer; their pavements sank under a new layer of dirt; the means of communication, bridges and roads, already ill-famed, deteriorated. The stone churches and monasteries, showing signs of the growing fanaticism, became more and more numerous, and the land within their walls grew more and more extensive."

With the peasantry and towns thus weakened, the only force which might have rallied them and prevented the complete supremacy of the barons was the king, but the system of electoral kingship fatally impaired his position. This electoral system, though inaugurated in the fourteenth century, came into full force in the sixteenth century, after the death of the last Jagiellon king. The electors, an assembly of nobles and of the higher dignitaries of the Church, sought to impose their terms upon the candidates for election and, since it was easier to impose them on foreigners, the great

majority of the Polish kings after the sixteenth century were of foreign blood.

The aim of the barons, in their successful efforts to limit the power of the king, was twofold: to keep complete control of the state machinery, and to divide among themselves the Crown Lands which covered large stretches of country. In the first half of the sixteenth century, when the estates were being organised, the barons succeeded in securing vast parts of the king's demesne, partly in return for their support and partly by fraud.

Not only political but also purely personal considerations, played a considerable part, therefore, in the choice of the future king. The magnates looked out for a suitable person who would confer on them political and personal privileges and who would not be in danger of becoming too strong; for political and personal reasons the neighbouring kings and princes each tried to get hold of the Polish throne. No king so elected could count on having any considerable moral authority in the country. "The election to the throne often resulted in the choice of foreign princelings, who were placed at the head of affairs in Poland, without previous knowledge of the country, and without any sense of permanency of the throne in their families. This led to violent competitions and contests. Neighbouring states were greatly concerned in them. It was of great importance to obtain the influence and support of Poland in their rivalries with one another. Factions were therefore formed and subsidised in Poland by the most powerful of its neighbours, and when a vacancy to the throne occurred the country was thrown into a turmoil by these rival interests. Bribery was largely resorted to, and force, or threats of force, were used to secure the election of a candidate favoured by

some neighbouring power. Not infrequently a foreign army marched into the country in support of some candidate."

The gentry itself was not a homogeneous class. Wealth became concentrated among the nobles themselves. Where there is no law and no justice, the object of oppression depends on the immediate interests of the despot. The right of might was used against the poorer noble as well as against the peasant, and the magnates had no qualms about depriving a lesser noble of his land. The custom of dividing up property among the heirs gradually created smallholdings, hardly superior to those of the peasants, which could not provide a reasonable livelihood according to the standards of the gentry. No more peasant land was available for appropriation and the owners of these small estates were compelled to enter the household of one of the magnates or even to become serfs.

ABSOLUTE DOMINION

The magnates were not moved even by the prophetic homilies of the preacher Peter Skarga ("Skarga" in Polish means a "complaint") who thundered against their atrocities from his pulpit and in the Diet.

"Oh God! How much has our earth absorbed, and is still absorbing, of the blood of the innocent Abels, which continually cries out of the soil for the vengeance of God. And this blood and sweat of living subjects and peasants, which flows unchecked, what retribution does it have in store for the kingdom? You say yourselves that there is no country where subjects and peasants are more oppressed under such absolute dominion, which the gentry exploit without any legal hindrance . . . the angry noble or the king's prefect takes what the poor man possesses and kills him when he likes and how he likes, and will not hear reproach."

The death-rate increased considerably in the seventeenth century

and whole villages were depopulated. In 1660 Poland had 15 million inhabitants; in 1700, 12 million. In 1660 in Crown Poland (i.e., without Lithuania and East Prussia, which was then a Polish vassal) there were about 60,000 villages and hamlets, in 1676 only 23,657. Attempts to bring colonists into the country failed on many accounts. In 1633 a law was passed which transformed into a serf every colonist who lived at least one year on the nobleman's land. "There were cases where men and women were given away as presents, as a dowry for the daughters, and on the occasion of sales of land the barons often unceremoniously took away the peasant's holdings. So-cage, taxes, statute labour, oppressed the peasant on all sides. From his fifteenth year, often from his eighth, as long as his strength lasted, the peasant had to work for the noble, and in his old age, expelled from his holding, he was forced to beg for his living. The peasants' work was the best revenue in Poland."

NO LAW, NO JUSTICE

Demoralised by their success, the gentry began to neglect national defence. The towns were in ruins and presented no danger to the aristocracy. The peasants, their resistance broken, had already been turned into serfs, and the private armies of the magnates were sufficient, when necessary, to remind them of their duties. The king presented a potential source of danger to the aristocracy, but this danger was successfully averted by depriving him of any means of forming a national army or of having control of the state machinery. From the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries the Polish Commonwealth was so vast that the aristocracy, which alone decided national policy, did not consider any foreign Power as its rival. Poland covered 280,000 square miles and was the third largest country in Europe; it dominated the Ukraine, Lithuania, Prussia, White Russia and the Baltic States, and the king bore the

title, "King of Poland, Grand Duke of Lithuania, Russia and Prussia."

The advantages of such conditions of anarchy ("in disorder Poland stands" was the watchword of the magnates), which enabled the barons to do exactly as they pleased, outweighed any possible external risk.

The army was small and consisted mainly of mercenaries at the time when Frederick the Great was laying the foundations of the Prussian Army, and Maria Theresa in Austria and Peter the Great and Catherine II in Russia were introducing the mercantilist policy and creating bases for the development

POLAND'S LEADERS — 7



MICHAL KACZOROWSKI
RECONSTRUCTION

Minister Michal Kaczorowski was born on September 27, 1897, at Czestochowa. He finished secondary school in Warsaw and began to study economics at the University of Moscow. In 1918 he joined the Polish Army and took part in the fighting for Lwow and in the second and third insurrections of Silesia. He was awarded the Independence Cross, the Bravery Cross and the Upper-Silesian Ribbon of

of industrial production.

The backward economic system made recruitment for the national army an impossible task. "To go with the drum" (enlist volunteers for the army), was forbidden on the private estates of the magnates, who feared a reduction in the number of their serfs and thus of their property. When the patriotic "Four Year" Diet (1788-92) decided in January, 1789, to increase the army to 100,000 men, the magnates succeeded in introducing an amendment forbidding the recruiting on their estates. Recruiting was only allowed in the towns and on the royal ecclesiastical estates.

Bravery. Demobilised in July, 1921, he received the rank of second lieutenant. After finishing the study of Law at the University of Warsaw, he worked on the editorial staff of "Industry and Commerce" — published by the Ministry of Industry and Commerce. In 1930 he took over the Housing Department in the Ministry of the Interior. In 1931 he became Housing and Municipal Economy advisor to the Prime Minister. In 1935 he was head of the Economic Department of the Ministry of Finance and a member of the Board of the Polish Society of House Reform, one of the initiators and a member of the Society of Workers' Settlements and vice-chairman of the Commission of Planning in Warsaw. During the siege of Warsaw in 1939 he was an officer of the Ministry of Finance.

During the occupation he took part in secret educational work, and was also a member of the Planning Commission for Warsaw, organising the Office of Regional Planning.

In October, 1944, he took over the office of Planning and Reconstruction and in April, 1946, was appointed Minister of Reconstruction. Since his student days he has been a member of the P.P.S. (Polish Socialist Party).

PARLIAMENT

by

Maj. Donald Bruce, M.P.

THE yawning gap between Britain's exports to hard currency countries and the imports she is compelled to obtain for her very existence has driven Members of all parties to look reflectively towards the East. Progressively, as the facts of our overseas deficit position have become more deeply appreciated, the tendency has been first to bewail the backwardness in Europe's recovery and then to hazard wild guesses as to the economic possibilities of extended European trading. So far very few enquiring minds have fastened on individual countries.

There has been much misgiving amongst Labour Members concerning the breakdown of the Anglo-Russian trade talks and questions have been asked sporadically on trading relations with Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia; but these apart there has been little crystallisation of current anxiety into more detailed and searching examinations of either existing trading relationships or of possible extensions of them. Clearly these topics will arise early on the resumption of Parliament, and Anglo-Polish trading relations will most certainly come under review with the rest.

In the meantime Members have been restive about the Poles remaining in this country. Difficulties have arisen in the absorption of Poles in certain industries, and Mr. Gammans (Tory M.P. for Hornsey) instanced a case where the A.E.U. refused to sanction the employment of Poles in branches of the engineering industry. The Minister of Labour was reticent on going into details since negotiations were (July 31) in progress; but the fact has to be faced that, despite production needs, the trade unions do

not take kindly as yet to the employment of many of those whom they feel would be better occupied in reconstructing their own country.

The House was perturbed to learn, from a reply given by the Secretary of State for War on July 29, that there were still approximately 5,000 Poles in Britain who had refused either to be repatriated or to join the Polish Re-settlement Corps. There was a time when many were genuinely anxious, albeit on the basis of Press propaganda of a dubious character, about conditions within the new Poland. But the published address by Cardinal Griffin on June 22 shortly after his visit to Poland should by now have dispelled any rooted misgivings.

INFORMATION PLEASE!

We have a team of experts on Polish affairs to answer your questions.

What is the attitude of Poles in Poland to those who don't want to go back?

Every foreigner who visited Poland after the war and spoke to the Polish people reports the same attitude. Everyone of them was asked the same questions: Why don't our men come back? We want them here so urgently. Why don't you let them go?

The Poles in Poland cannot understand that any honest man or woman who cares about his family, his home and his country, can stay away abroad when he is so much needed at home.

Therefore, the man in the street assumes that it is the foreign powers on whose territory the Polish soldiers remain at the moment which prevent them from returning. Every visitor who has taken the trouble to acquaint himself with the truth will confirm that the returning men are received with the

His Eminence's address was circulated to all M.P.s shortly before the Recess. "The people I visited" he writes "in those places which are described as the recovered territories are forging ahead with great plans for re-building and re-construction." Many of us have suspected this for some time and all who are concerned with the maintenance of religious toleration marked his further statement that: "The faith of the people is energetic, and everyone, young and old, of every class, takes his full share in Catholic life."

All of which is rather souring to those whose malice towards the new Poland is only outclassed by their bitter attacks on Britain's Government.

greatest possible joy and that the authorities far from punishing them, "shooting them or deporting them to Siberia" welcome them heartily and try to put the repatriates back into normal life as speedily as possible.

The steadily mounting number of Poles returning home from all parts of the globe is a reassuring proof that the truth about conditions at home is reaching the Poles abroad in spite of slanderous propaganda of Polish reactionaries. It was noted with amazement that at the recent commemoration in London on Monte Cassino's capture no Poles took part. Those Poles who stay in Britain should, Poland thinks, receive the same treatment and opportunities as those accorded to men of other nationalities.

WANTED

Urgently wanted at New Poland office: copies of the magazine for March and April, 1946.

NEW POLAND

THE BRITISH-POLISH SOCIETY

The Organiser says:

SEPTEMBER sees most people back at work again and the British-Polish Society is also back on the job with the first arrangements for public meetings already made and more to come. On the 16th Mrs. Joseph Macleod will speak to the W.T.A. at the Charterhouse Rheumatism Clinic in Weymouth Street, London, W.1. The same speaker will be addressing LUTON Rotary on October 10. Dr. Osiaowski will be the speaker at U.N.A. meeting in SUTTON on September 5 and for the WOKING Round Table at the Albion Hotel, Woking, on the 25th.

During August an interesting tour has been carried out by the Society through the co-operation of the National Union of Mineworkers. A Polish Miner's Trade Union official, Stanislaw Brzoszczak, who served in the armed forces under British Command during the war and was repatriated to Poland last November taking with him his Scottish wife, has been touring our coalfields, meeting miners and their families, comparing notes on coal production problems and methods and addressing meetings. He covered coalfield areas in South Wales, Scotland and Lancashire and spoke at a dozen meetings. It is hoped to arrange for a representative British miner to carry out a similar tour in Poland. Coal is one of the big practical things Britain and Poland have in common and this contact is of interest and value to both sides.

Mr. Brzoszczak came back to Britain under the auspices of the British Council to attend the Trade Union Summer School at Oxford last month. With him were Madame Krystyna Poznanska-Stagewicz, who is the International Secretary of the Polish T.U.C., and Mr. S. Kolaczowski, General Secre-

tary of the Polish Civil Servants' Union. The Society was able to introduce Mr. Kolaczowski to Civil Servants here, and he was entertained to lunch by the Executive Committee of the Institution of Professional Civil Servants, who invited him to attend their E.C. meeting. He also lunched with representatives of the National Staff's side of the Civil Service Whitley Council, and enjoyed an interesting interview with Mr. Ellerby, assistant general secretary of the C.S.C.A.

Interchanges of news and views of this nature are found to be interesting and fruitful.

Considerable interest has been shown in our recent publication of the report of Cardinal Griffin on his visit to Poland reprinted under the title of *Catholic Poland Today*. Attractively got up and priced at only one penny this is our first publication for some time as our policy is to publish as material of interest comes to hand, rather than to maintain a flow of print for its own sake. Another and slightly larger pamphlet is in the course of preparation devoted to the Polish Trade Union Movement. The date of publication will be announced shortly. Any member interested in education may have on application a translation of the Bulletin on *Problems of Education in Poland* which is a document of remarkable interest. The new Poland has her feet on the ground and her head in the air at the same time, and the realist approach, idealist aim and bold conception of the new educational system are an exciting example of Poland's faith in the future.

Have you any suggestion for a new publication or a new line of information? If so let me know some time and we'll try it out.

F. L. FARR

POSTBAG

Dear Sir,

What has become of the Polish cartoons which once appeared regularly in "New Poland?" Humour is an international language and here is one person who enjoyed the whimsical "Pocket Cartoons" in your magazine.

N. VERSTONE

Maida Vale, W.9.

Dear Sir,

Many Scots miners are refusing to work alongside Poles, despite much Government pressure to encourage them to do so. Why is Poland being deprived of her manpower? It is common knowledge that the high standards and refinements of living over here are not calculated to encourage Poles to return home.

R. J. CALDER

Alloa, Scotland.

Dear Sir,

I greatly enjoy your magazine and find in it much to interest and enlighten. I look forward each month to receiving it and must compliment you on its varied aspects of life in Poland. I should like very much to visit Poland and see for myself, as I had a very good friend in a Polish soldier for two years.

Wishing your magazine continued success and wider distribution.

(MISS) NAN HIGHLEY,

Musselburgh, Scotland.

New Poland

Offices: (Editorial and Business):

CHRONICLE HOUSE,
72-78, FLEET STREET,
LONDON, E.C.4.

Telephone: CENTRAL 3460.

ADVERTISEMENT DEPT:
33 Mortimer Market, W.C.1
Tel. EUSton 6707

Subscription Rates: Post free.
3/6 for 6 months 7/- for 1 yr.

Published monthly.

P111-221
1947

ANGLO-DAL LIMITED

PLANTATION HOUSE, FENCHURCH STREET,
LONDON, E.C.3.

Telegraphic Address:

Overseas: ANGLODAL, LONDON.
For Inland: ANGLODAL, FEN, LONDON.

Telephone:

Mansion House 2201.
Mansion House 2202.

IMPORTERS AND EXPORTERS

HEAD OFFICE

"DAL" INTERNATIONAL TRADING COMPANY S.A.,
WARSAWA, ul. BARTOSZEWICZA Nr. 7

C. & H. PRODUCTS, LTD.

Manufacturers of Herring Delicacies

Famous for its Smoked Herring Spread

136, New Kent Road, London, S.E.1
(and at Great Yarmouth)

The Sign of Quality . . .

a C. & H. Product

Trade enquiries invited.