

WARSAW TO-DAY.<sup>1</sup>

BY MARION HAVILAND.

WARSAW is the principal city of the ancient kingdom of Poland and has always been a center of Polish sentiment and culture. Until recent times Poland has been a part of Russian territory. Now it is in the hands of the Germans, who have promised to reinstate it as an independent nation. Warsaw to-day presents an unusually interesting situation, which few outsiders have witnessed because of the strict German military regulations.

Last December a telegram from my teacher, Felicia Kaschowska, a Polish opera singer, asking me to assist her in teaching German music at the newly opened conservatory in Warsaw, proved sufficiently eloquent with the military authorities in Berlin, and I was granted permission to go there. I made the trip without difficulty or delay, as there is a through train from Berlin which covers the distance in about twelve hours. The greatest disappointment was that of crossing the battlefields at night. It is said that hardly anything has been changed since the day the Russians retreated and that the view from the train window is most interesting. It was impossible to see because of the darkness and the driving storm.

Warsaw has always been a gay little city, and, in spite of her trials, still gave me somewhat that impression. One saw much life in the streets everywhere—sharp contrast of color and race. Everywhere the gray of the German uniform was the strongest color note, but there was a fair sprinkling of olive with a dash of silver and red, the uniform of the Polish Legionists. On the whole, the scene did not remind one of war. On the pavements of the broader principal streets passed crowds of people, military and civilians, smartly dressed ladies and beggars. In the streets, in the snow, one saw sleighs and peasant wagons, and sometimes a drove of cattle—few motors, except those bearing German officers.

Warsaw to the eye of an American is not a large city. A stranger could visit it in a day and see most places of interest, with the exception perhaps of museums and picture galleries, of which

<sup>1</sup> We are indebted for the illustrations of this article to the Rev. Francis Gordon, of Chicago, editor of *Free Poland*. They give an idea of the architecture of the city in general, but do not illustrate the portions here described as affected by the war.—Ed.

there are several. In modern Warsaw there are some fine wide streets and parks and some interesting and beautiful buildings. Among the latter, two of the most conspicuous were the post-office



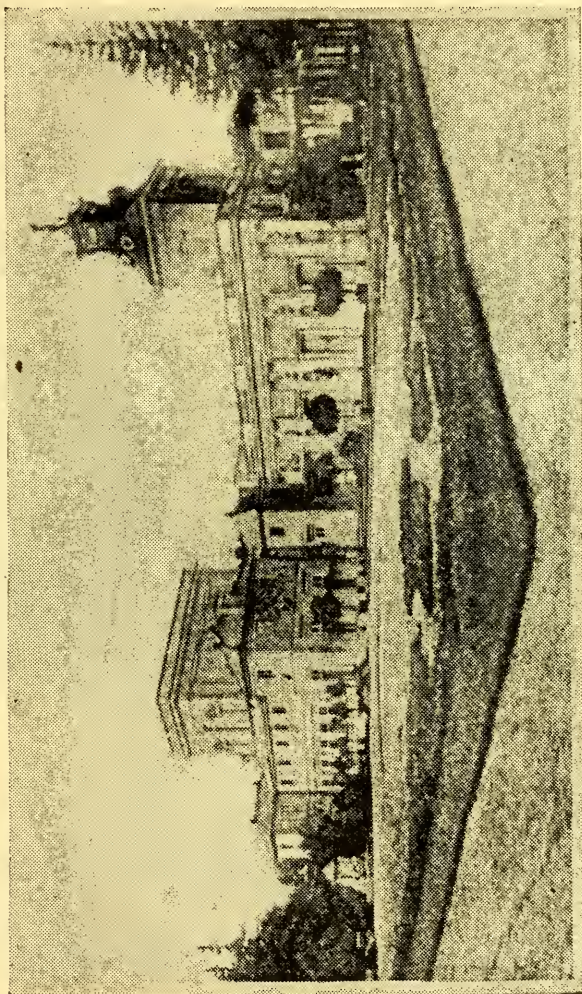
CHURCH OF THE HOLY VIRGIN.

In the foreground is a typical Russian sleigh-cab, such as is used by every one in going to and from all kinds of functions—especially this winter when no automobiles were available.—M. H.

and Russian church. The post-office, a large, light-colored stone building, covering nearly an American city block, had been started by the Russians and has been finished and opened by the Germans

since the occupation. The Russian church is a typical modern Byzantine structure and occupies a prominent place in one of the large squares.

The Russian church has been the subject of much controversy because the Germans have taken the copper from the domes. The



THE WILLANOV PALACE NEAR WARSAW.  
Built by Sobieski in 1678-1694 and containing many memorials of Polish kings.

building is one which was built and used by the Russians for the exclusive use of those who worshiped in the Russian faith. Many think it not unfair of the Germans to have appropriated the several hundred pounds of copper, which is, of course, of great value to them now. The church is in no way damaged, and the German



authorities have offered it to the City of Warsaw to be used as the people desire. The new tin roofs were partly on and the church was soon to have been dedicated to the use of Roman Catholic services when I left.

The Hotel Bristol is another building of interest, because it was described in the American newspapers as having been completely destroyed by the Germans during the siege. People say that the wall at the back is very full of bullets, but a passer-by detects no further marks of damage.

An interesting building near the river front is an old castle formerly inhabited by a Polish ruler. It is a relic of the kingdom of Poland of centuries ago. It bears the seal of old Warsaw over



GENERAL VIEW OF WARSAW.

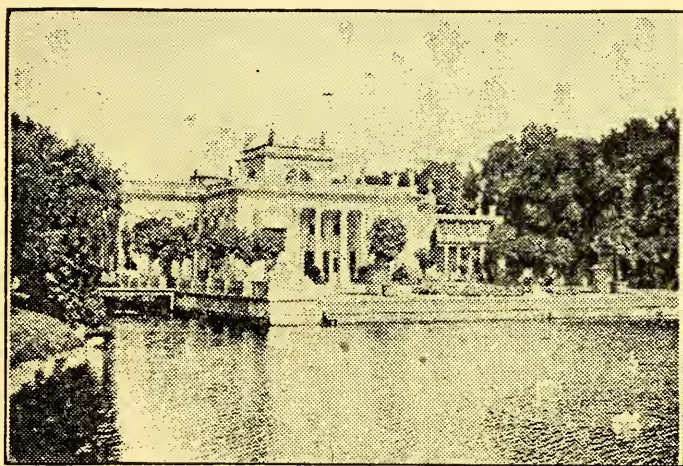
From the eastern Bank of the Vistula.

the doorway, a silver mermaid on a crimson field. She holds a shield in her left hand, and with her right brandishes a sword above her head. What must have corresponded in former times to the castle garden was used by the Cossacks at the time of the German invasion as practice ground for the cavalry. One may still see the hurdles standing in the mud of the much trampled ground. Near the castle is a bridge crossing the Vistula, which was blown up by the Russians and mended by their conquering foes. The old part of the original bridge may still be seen at both ends, joined skilfully to the new modern German structure in the center. Tram-cars and other traffic now go over the bridge as usual.

In this part of the city may be seen some few other reminders

of the siege. There are some iron railings bordering a park front along the river, and they are torn with bullet holes. Here there are some steps leading down to the river, which flows swiftly along the quiet shore now. On both sides of the steps the railing is badly damaged and the ugly jagged bits of iron speak to the imagination. The scene was still and gray and cold the day I visited there with a German officer who acted as guide. "Just here," he said, pointing to the bank near the railing, "the Germans fired their last shot at the retreating Russians over the river. Plenty of our men fell here," he said; "these steps must have been wet with German blood."

Following the road on the other side of the river one comes to Prage, a suburb of Warsaw, where there are two railroad

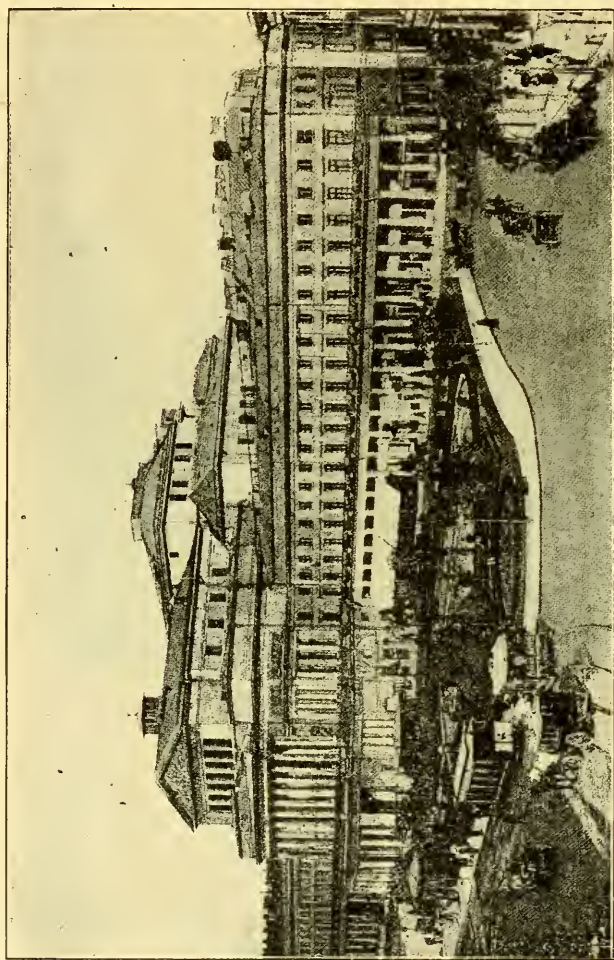


THE PALACE IN LAZIENKI PARK.

stations, completely destroyed by the Russians before they left. There is a socket of a clock in the tower of one, a few charred signs directing one to Moscow and Petersburg in front of the other. The Germans were beginning to clear away the wreckage and had long ago repaired the rails.

There are several theaters in Warsaw and they were well filled last winter. The opera too, it was said, had not been so crowded in many years. Because of the new national spirit, only the Polish language is heard on the stage. In spite of this, a great number of German soldiers and officers were always to be seen in every audience. There were good concerts given throughout the city, and many places of amusement, such as movie shows, vaudeville, etc., were well filled.

Food conditions in Warsaw were still very good for those who could pay. Indeed, to a late sojourner in Berlin, where the diet was so limited, Warsaw seemed an epicurean heaven. All the staple articles of diet were on sale, including the luxuries of sugar and butter, eggs and white bread. To my amazement whipped



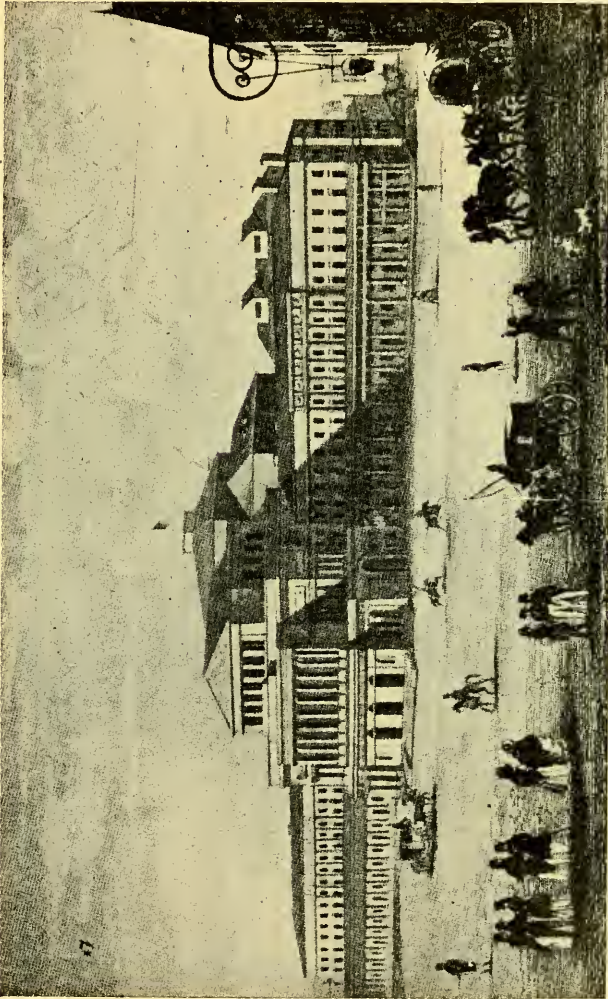
THE GRAND THEATER OF WARSAW.

Many famous singers have sung here from Patti to Geraldine Farrar. There was opera here every night during the season this winter, when Wagner was sung in Polish for the first time, Felicia Kaschowska taking leading parts.—M. H.

cream and fancy cakes were still served at the patisseries. Meat and poultry could be bought everywhere. One heard expressions of hope, however, that the Germans would soon regulate the food supply and control the shopkeepers' exorbitant prices. Even generous people hesitate before paying fifty and thirty-five cents a loaf



for white and black bread. Butter was a dollar a pound and sugar almost as high. It was rumored that in spite of the quantity of food displayed in the shop windows there would surely be a shortage in the spring. Two meatless days a week, therefore, had

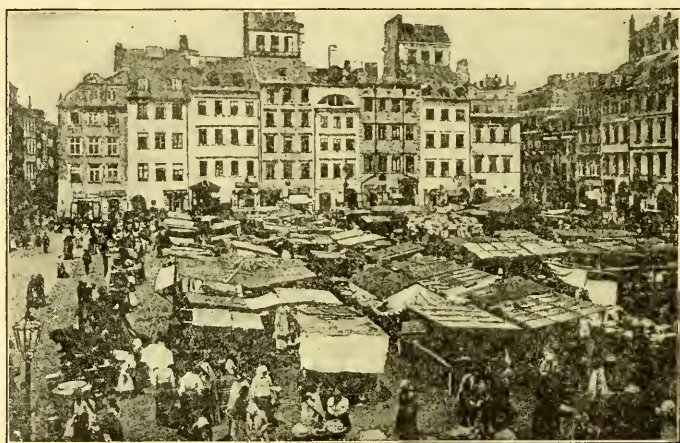


THE GRAND THEATER IN 1830.  
From an old print.

just been adopted when I left. Other reforms had been planned but not yet carried out. The shops, though for the most part small, still displayed many tempting wares. Unlike Berlin, soap could be bought without police cards. Clothing and leather goods, though unrestricted, were very expensive.

At the restaurants one might have favorite dishes even prepared in the French fashion. The famous Café Ours kept fairly late hours with every table taken, and the English restaurant too was most popular. For those who could pay Warsaw offered many attractions and did not seem at all uncomfortable as a place of residence.

The private entertainments are numerous and the people most hospitable. The Poles like to think of Warsaw as a little Paris and pride themselves on a knowledge of the French language and customs. Polish homes show an influence of French taste, but they have an added charm that is Polish, possibly Russian. Small open fireplaces make the drawing-rooms seem more cozy than those at Berlin. Flowers and plants are used profusely for decoration, in



THE OLD MARKET PLACE.

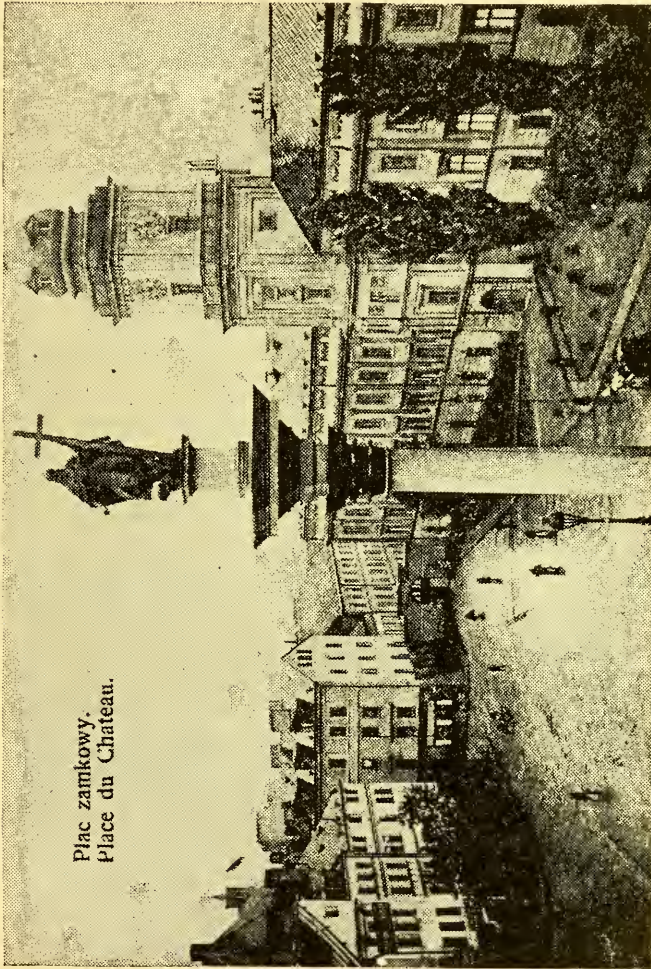
spite of appalling war prices. There are not so many parties given as before the war and no balls, but there are some very delightful private musicales, dinners, luncheons and teas.

Distinguished guests frequently attend some of the social functions, and sometimes amusing incidents occur because of different nationalities and languages.

One afternoon we were drinking tea at the home of Madame X, an American married to a Polish nobleman. Among her guests was a Spanish priest who was the only representative of his nation in Warsaw, a German baroness on her way to nurse at the front near Russia, a young German lieutenant, who had accompanied the baroness, and myself. The Spanish priest did not understand Ger-



man or English so we spoke in French part of the time for his benefit. The young lieutenant only spoke German, though understanding some English. The Baroness spoke all three languages equally well, but particularly enjoyed speaking English, as she had spent some time in Canada and the United States. She had a



Plac zamkowy.  
Place du Chateau.

SIGISMUND PLACE AND THE ROYAL PALACE.

winning personality and looked particularly charming in her simple nurse's costume. Every one had interesting tales to tell and each lapsed at times into speaking the language which came most natural. The poor priest finally became quite bewildered with so many sounds. He got the idea that the young German lieutenant was the husband of the baroness, addressed him repeatedly as Monsieur le

Baron and asked about his family and estates. The young lieutenant struggled to understand the priest's French, but failed to grasp the point of his remarks. The baroness herself finally overheard them and laughing heartily told us the joke in English. The poor priest, not knowing his mistake, no doubt left with a sense of importance, thinking he had conversed with an influential nobleman.

The question of the Jewish people in society must be given place in any discussion of life in Warsaw. Polish aristocracy is still deeply prejudiced against the race, but no community, especially in such times, can quite dispense with the wealth and services of that brilliant people. A large part of the population in Warsaw is Jewish and much of the commercial, intellectual and civic interests are controlled by them. In society there is a definite line drawn. Only those Jewish families that are Christianized, preferably those of several generations standing, are now received by the élite, and they are usually spoken of as Israelites by the Christians among themselves. The Christianized Jews among themselves usually make the most criticism against the Jewish race. Most of them staunchly deny Jewish origin and consider themselves quite apart from the customs and tradition of their forefathers, even though bearing the features and characteristics of the upholders of Jewish faith.

The Jews in their turn exclude Christians from their social festivities and print their own newspapers and have text-books for the Jewish schools in Hebrew. The poorer classes live in a quarter by themselves, possess their own market and little shops, which the crafty Christian readily visits in search of bargains.

The hope of a new kingdom of Poland has put life and energy into the hearts of the people and given birth to a new national spirit. There are skeptics of course who doubt the benefit of a new order, and many of the older generation who were happy and prosperous under the Russian rule have little interest in the new movement, but to the majority the thought of Poland reinstated is a matter of great importance and joy. As a result of the enthusiasm Polish poetry, Polish music and Polish art are rapidly being revived.

It is only with an effort that the people begin to realize the full significance of a national spirit, because the Polish language and customs have been suppressed by Russia for many years. Under the Russian rule schooling was not compulsory so that the percentage of illiteracy is very great. Few cab drivers can read a written address and many servants and peasants can neither read nor write. This is more or less of a shock to one accustomed to

conditions in Germany or the United States. In the old part of Warsaw and the Jewish quarter the shops have painted signs on the outside quaintly depicting the articles on sale within. There is almost no lettering used, which goes to prove that people not long ago were evidently not expected to be able to read.



CHURCH OF THE SISTERS OF THE VISITATION.

The Polish language is now being taught for the first time in all the schools. This work was started by the Germans after the invasion. There was much difficulty at first in securing teachers, school-books and school supplies. Little boys refused to attend



school founded by the Germans because they believed it was a ruse to have them enlisted to fight before Verdun. Their parents seemed to be convinced of this absurd idea too, but the schools now are established and well attended.

In Warsaw the sentiment of the people as regards the Germans is divided. The young people, especially the young men called Legionists (Poles who have volunteered to serve the German cause), are friendly. One of them, a young Polish poet, told me he sincerely hoped Poland would have a German king. He thought in that way the Polish people might be taught habits of order and good management. His opinion was shared by many, especially those who had received their education in Germany. On the other hand, there are still men in Warsaw who have done service in the Russian army. Many of them are Jews. They hate the Germans and all that is German. People who hold property in Russia naturally prefer Russian rule.

Society people are not altogether friendly to the Germans. Many hostesses of the older generation like to tell of the good days when the Russians were in Warsaw. At such houses one rarely meets German officers, and the German language is barred even for singing. French and even English is spoken everywhere, but little German, except in the shops where one usually pays extra for the privilege. Some of the younger, more daring Polish hostesses now invite the most distinguished German officers stationed at Warsaw to their homes, but not always without incurring criticism from their neighbors.

The Legionists, tall, well-built, good-looking young men, one sees everywhere. Many of them have been educated in Germany and have great sympathy for German thought. I met one that had been at the German front, but there were many who had never been called out.

The Polish lower-class people are childlike, easy going, slovenly and lovable, but difficult to train in efficiency.

The day after the publication of President Wilson's peace proposition several hundred Polish students assembled in front of the American consulate. There was a band and delegates offered a message of thanks to our President. The band played the Polish national hymn, while the students and many passers-by stood in the zero weather with bared heads and sang and cheered Poland and America. Hundreds of people sent their visiting cards to the American consul with touching words of gratitude to President Wilson for his thought of Poland.

In spite of apparent good conditions in the city of Warsaw there is much misery among the poor. For the first time Polish citizens have had permission to organize charity work in the cities, and the women in Warsaw have accomplished wonders in that



THE CARMELITE CHURCH.

respect. I visited many of the soup-kitchens and day nurseries and other charitable institutions. The problem of caring for the city poor, as well as the hordes who have drifted in from the ruined farming country is, of course, very great. Hundreds are quite destitute, with no means to buy the expensive food, and without

work, clothing or even shelter. I talked with one lady who had herself started, and even partly furnished, three day nurseries. In one of them, arranged for very little children, I saw a boy of eight lying in one of the little cribs. They had found him wandering about the street, where he had been for several days in the freezing cold, without food and wearing scarcely any clothing. He said his father had been taken to work away from Poland and had left him in the care of an old woman. She herself had no work or money, and the little boy was one day taken out and lost. He is an example of one of the scores of little drifting war-orphans to be taken care of. I saw hundreds of school-children getting their mid-day steaming soup and slice of bread. Many of the institutions distributed condensed milk, furnished by the Rockefeller Relief Fund. All that was given seemed pitifully little to offer those pale-cheeked, wide-eyed children, so patiently expectant of their right to live and be well fed.

Beseler is the name of the German governor at Warsaw. He is an elderly and courtly gentleman, tall and very robust, with white hair and moustache (the latter was quite icy the freezing day we met him out reviewing the troops). He gallantly kissed my hand and said some polite words to me in English. He is well liked everywhere, but does not care for nor go about much in society.

The Germans were not very tactful when they put the German colors and flag on the new passports which they gave to their Polish subjects. However, it was a matter of slight importance, and treated by the Poles as more or less of a joke. I saw no evidence of cruelty on the part of the Germans in Warsaw. The Polish people themselves said the city was far cleaner and more orderly than before the Germans took possession. Polish relief workers and German experts are laboring side by side in behalf of the health of the people. The words "Employment Bureau" I saw often written in German.

## ON CIVIL AUTHORITY.<sup>1</sup>

BY MARTIN LUTHER.

### AN ADMONITION TO ABSTAIN FROM INSURRECTION.

Perceiving that the oppressed common people of Germany were inclined to take his demand for liberty as a promise of relief for their temporal wrongs, at which he was no wise

<sup>1</sup> Translated and edited by W. H. Carruth.