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LIFE OF SCIENCE

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Editor: MIECZYSLAW CHOYNOWSKI

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"Life of Science" is to be an organ of Polish scientists and of all interested in the problems of science.

Its aim is to promote the knowledge about science in all its aspects, treating it from the methodological as well as from the social point of view, discussing its history and organization, and considering it as social technology and as the base of a scientific general outlook. "Life of Science" tends also to increase the importance of science as a cultural and a social factor and to create among the Polish scientists a feeling of professional solidarity.

The Editor

SCIENCE AND SOCIETY

By MIECZYSLAW CHOYNOWSKI

DURING the twenty years between the last two wars, science has often been accused of causing various disasters, from which our civilization suffers, such as war, unemployment, and so on. The writer proves that science as the sum of the results of scientific thought and research cannot be held guilty. Politicians, society, capitalism, and also scientists themselves are guilty of these calamities.

The writer considers the ideal of pure science, abstracted from life and devoted only to investigation, to be the principal cause of the asocial attitude of scientists.

Criticizing the ideal of pure science, the writer discusses six aspects of the social character of science. Science rises from social needs, its development depends on social conditions, all domains of science can find practical application, scientific work has a growing character of team work, science is an international activity and has a social criterion of truth, it being social agreement. In the end, the writer defines various postulates concerning the social duties of scientists. Scientists should take a conscious part in the life

of the community in the name of science, they should proclaim that science should be cultivated and applied only for the welfare of man, they should tend to develop social and political sciences in order to make use of them in life, they should join in professional organizations of scientific workers in order to obtain greater influence upon the course of events, they should cause the modernization of the educational system, popularize knowledge, promote scientific culture and the scientific attitude, and take an active part in the crystallization of cultural trends and the general outlook, creating a new world on a scientific basis.

The writer calls this attitude *scientific humanism*, the programme of which is to organize social life to give every man a full life and to educate the individual to enable him to organize the life of the community scientifically.

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION AT UNIVERSITIES

By STANISŁAW SKOWRON

THE WRITER, drawing conclusions based on experience in secret university instruction during the German occupation, demands a change in the methods of pedagogical work in the Polish Universities pointing to the necessity of closer contact between the professor and his students, of a continuous observation of the progress and interests of the undergraduates, of reducing the number of lectures in favour of seminars and laboratories, and of introducing the students into independent scientific work.

THE NEEDS OF POLISH HISTORICAL RESEARCH CONCERNING THE HISTORY OF SILESIA

By KAZIMIERZ PIWARSKI

THE WRITER discusses the need for Polish Historical Research in connection with regained Silesia and draws special attention to the problem of its Polish character. Modern history of Silesia has been neglected by Polish and partially by German historians and its study is one of the most urgent necessities. One should also begin publishing documents proving the Polish character of Silesia which were in German hands, and were specially kept by the Germans from Polish historians. The Germans did not publish them and would not let Polish historians make use of them. A great care should also be taken of libraries and archives, and of training many young historians.

SCIENCE IN THE SERVICE OF DEATH

By ARKADIUSZ PIEKARA

THE WRITER discusses the two greatest discoveries made during the war — the atomic bomb and radar — and draws a number of conclusions as to the relation of scientists towards war. This depends on their political attitude.

Beside two extremist attitudes of integral pacifism and fanatical nationalism, there exists a third alternative which the author considers to be the right one. One should take part in the war and carry it on with all available scientific means, if the country's welfare requires it, but on the other hand in peacetime one should do all that is possible to prevent war in the future. The education and the improvement of human ethics are the roads to this end.

SCIENCE IN THE SERVICE OF LIFE

By ZDZISŁAW PRZYBYŁKIEWICZ

THE WRITER exposes the beneficent rôle of medical science as opposed to the application of science to war, and describes widely the history of the discovery of penicillin and informs the reader of the results obtained by its application.

SCIENCE AND LETTERS IN POLAND OF TO-DAY

POLISH science and letters had suffered terrible losses in this war. Our most important scientific institution, the Polish Academy of Sciences and Letters, has lost seventy members who were either murdered by the Germans in concentration camps or died in consequence of persecutions and hardships suffered during the war. All universities have had great losses, in some cases amounting to fifty per cent of their scientific staff. For six years scientific pursuits could be carried on in Poland only in secret, and that has had in consequence a fatal effect on the number of young scientists.

The material losses are not smaller. Warsaw Polytechnic has been completely destroyed, Warsaw University nearly completely; University of Poznań, Jagellonian University in Kraków, and the Mining Academy have also suffered great losses. Many laboratories and libraries have been destroyed or plundered by the Germans.

The peace found Polish science in a worse position than ever, and the Ministry of Education in recognition of its enormous requirements has created the Scientific Council that is to inquire into the general scientific policy of the State. The Council consists of nineteen leading Polish scientists (see page 39).

All big scientific centres show intense activity. Poland has at present 8 Universities, 6 Politechnics, over 10 special high schools, and many institutes for scientific research, museums and libraries. The exact number of scientific societies which have renewed their activities can not yet be given. The most important is the Polish Academy of Sciences and Letters, which held its general meeting in June 1945 and elected new members in place of those murdered by the Germans or deceased in consequence of hardships suffered during the war.

The publishing activities have been also revived in spite of great financial difficulties and shortage of paper. The Polish Academy of Sciences and Letters.

has revived its *Comptes rendus* (in Polish), and is preparing to revive its *Bulletins internationaux* and other publications.

It is to be hoped that most scientific periodicals in Polish and foreign languages will begin to appear again in the course of this year. Some periodicals popularizing science, several of which have already been issued, will also be published. Some special publications, concerning the period of German occupation in descriptions and documents, are planned to be issued this year. First volume of one of them — *Documenta occupationis Teutonicae* — has already appeared.

We suffer greatly from the lack of books in public and private libraries, especially in Warsaw. Sweden has done us a great service by offering to print some Polish university manuals.

During the last year there were in Poland several scientific congresses — amongst others those of Physicists, the State Council for the Protection of Nature in Poland, the Polish Botanical Society, the Association of Polish Museums, the Historians of Arts and Conservators. A special congress devoted to the problem of reestablishing historical Polish names to localities in regained Western Territories took place in Szczecin.

For Western Territories specially, a Scientific Council has been created to investigate all problems waiting there for an appropriate solution.

Before Polish science lie enormous tasks of repairing losses caused by the war, tasks demanding great financial means and good organization. On the other hand Polish science has great possibilities of development, as its requirements are well understood by both the Government and the nation.

Much, however, depends on the help that could be given to us by foreign science, especially in scientific laboratory equipment and scientific literature published abroad during the war.

OBITUARY NOTICE

ONE JANUARY 7 in Cracow died Professor Stanisław Kutrzeba, aged 70, President of the Polish Academy of Sciences and Letters, former Rector of the Jagellonian University in Cracow, eminent legal writer and brilliant historian, social thinker and writer, author of fundamental scientific works and publisher of texts, initiator and organizer, leading personage and chief representative of Polish scientific life.

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