

## Poland

As we have said elsewhere, Mr. Boissier and Mr. Pictet, in the course of their recent journey in Poland, had the opportunity of visiting one of the most active Committees of the Polish Red Cross, that of Gdansk. They were given interesting information on the work being carried out in this voivodship and we have pleasure in mentioning the main aspects below :

Before doing so, we would mention that according to a booklet issued in English, French and Spanish by the National Society (*The Polish Red Cross 1957-1963*), there were 20 voivodship committees, 367 district committees, 22,000 borough committees and 23,000 junior groups. In town and country, in 1963, there were about 3,500,000 members (1,800,000 of them being juniors). Out of this total membership, the strength of the active volunteer detachments is 500,000 and is composed of committee and commission members, first-aid posts and teams, rural hygiene workers, voluntary nurses, school group leaders, teachers, etc.

In the Gdansk region, where destruction was particularly extensive, the Polish Red Cross went into action immediately after the liberation by setting up medical posts, reception centres and a hospital. During this difficult period it also attended to housing returning civilian refugees and detainees released from prison and concentration camps. It also provided these people with first-aid and gave them the means of subsistence. It also had to help in the reuniting of families. With the co-operation of medical teams from Societies of other countries, the Red Cross organized medical examinations of children and undertook various emergency measures, such as vaccinations, food distribution, etc.

At present, the Gdansk voivodship has over 83,500 members, with 84,500 school age juniors. The activities of the school groups are directed by four thousand doctors, nurses and instructors.

## NEWS OF NATIONAL SOCIETIES

In the field of hygiene, training is given each year to some 25,000 juniors and 10,000 adults working in factories and in agriculture. A hygiene education centre is staffed by specialists in hygiene and first-aid leaders, rescue workers and teachers entrusted with the propagation of the rules of hygiene among the population.

Last year the first aid posts and teams organized more than 11,000 talks and cleanliness competitions in schools and agricultural enterprises. No less than 328 films were shown on problems of health education. In this connection, it must be added that the Red Cross at Gdansk is assisted by the Public Health Service, rural services, social organizations, women's and various other organizations and institutions. As a concluding note, we would mention that in the field of blood transfusion the Red Cross has recruited over 12,000 donors who have freely given more than 2,000 litres of blood, of which nearly 900 litres were given in the last year alone.

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