1,419 Enslaved in Russia Find Mexico Haven

BY STANLEY JOHNSTON.

Chicago Daily Tribune (Map and picture on page 6.)

LEON, Guanajuato, Mexico, Sept. 14.—Far from their native land and safety, and distant also from the vengeance of terror, 1,419 exiled Poles have found a war time haven in an unusual colony founded for them in central Mexico.

Their lives now are relatively serene, they still are suffering reactions from their slavery in Russia, from exposure, starvation, and brutal mistreatment, from sinister disappearances of their loved ones, and from the ordeal of traveling more than the distance around the globe —some of them nearly 56,000 miles —to get here.

Relatives in U. S.

Some have relatives in the United States. Countess Tryszczewicz, only member of nobility in the group of middle class exiles, is the sister of a frequent Chicago visitor, Prince Drucki-Lubecki of New York. With her are her four younger sisters, sheltered beyond their years by experiences that included helping their mother dig with bare hands in the grave for their father when he died in Russia from the rigors of their enforced journey.

Survivors of that terrible trip now live together in thankful contentment in an abandoned hacienda comprising 260 acres made available to them by the Mexican government. This refuge, Colonia Santa Rosa, lies about five miles from the city of Leon and about 250 miles north of Mexico City.

It is one of several such camps established throughout the world for exiled Poles. The Poles at Santa Rosa were seized by Russian troops who invaded Poland in September, 1939, in the rear of Polish forces fighting a German invasion of their western border. Taken to Russia, they were imprisoned in concentration camps and compelled to labor for the Soviets. After many months they were released and permitted to depart, if they could, to a place of safety.

264 Orphans in Colony.

About 700 exiles reached the Mexican camp on July 1, 1943, and approximately the same number arrived last November. Today there are 217 men, 547 women, 253 boys, and 423 girls. Among the children are 264 orphans, each marking a family tragedy, and a number born in the colony.

Expenses of the camp are shared by several sources, but all the money for its operation comes from the United States. Thru credits advanced by the United States Government, the Polish government in exile meets the cost of feeding, housing and managing the orphans. The Polish-American war relief council of Chicago bears the expense of clothing, heating and instruction. And the Catholic Welfare association in New York provides money for entertainment and cultural programs.

The exiles' surroundings are adequate but not luxurious. They live in the one story dwellings, the usual pina in the center, that
Route to Slavery and Then to Freedom for Poles Exiled by Russians

 Broken line traces tortuous route of 1419 Poles from their native land, first into the slavery of life in Russian Siberia, and thence back thru India, to India, Africa, to Australia, and finally to haven in Mexico.

were entirely devoid of stocks.

"While the Reds were there, my brother and his two children came from Stolpaa from Krakow, in southeast Poland, which had fled the invading Germans. But we discovered that while the Germans had burned the Jews of our town, the Russians were going to the village in mass and killing large numbers of people. It was decided that it would be less dangerous to return to the occupied territory. Still in my disquiet, I assisted him and his children across country to Lubow where we made occasional small purchases.

On the way to Lubow, we were stopped by the Russians at a little bridge and our clothing was removed. We were marched into the town and our fate was decided by a group of Russians.

"To escape further, we were sent to a labor camp. First we were loaded into a train, 2,300 to a train. There were about five Russian guards being sent into camp for each Pole among the prisoners, and the prisoners were treated as if they were criminals.

"The train I was on went 200 miles without food or water for several days, and frequently our only food was bread. In the train, we were crowded into a car. Our clothes were taken from us, and we were forced to stand for hours without food or water. We finally arrived at the destination, and we were told to proceed on foot.

"We walked for many days, without food or water, until we reached the place where we were to be transferred to a railroad train. The guards forced us to board the train, and we were taken to a place where we were to undergo further treatment.

"Finally, we were loaded onto a train, and we were taken to a destination where we were to undergo still further treatment. The guards were cruel and inhuman, and our treatment was inhuman.

"We were finally taken to a place where we were to be transferred to a railroad train. The guards were cruel and inhuman, and our treatment was inhuman.

"We were finally taken to a place where we were to undergo further treatment. The guards were cruel and inhuman, and our treatment was inhuman.

"We were finally taken to a place where we were to undergo further treatment. The guards were cruel and inhuman, and our treatment was inhuman.

"We were finally taken to a place where we were to undergo further treatment. The guards were cruel and inhuman, and our treatment was inhuman.

"We were finally taken to a place where we were to undergo further treatment. The guards were cruel and inhuman, and our treatment was inhuman.

"We were finally taken to a place where we were to undergo further treatment. The guards were cruel and inhuman, and our treatment was inhuman.

"We were finally taken to a place where we were to undergo further treatment. The guards were cruel and inhuman, and our treatment was inhuman.

"We were finally taken to a place where we were to undergo further treatment. The guards were cruel and inhuman, and our treatment was inhuman.

"We were finally taken to a place where we were to undergo further treatment. The guards were cruel and inhuman, and our treatment was inhuman.

"We were finally taken to a place where we were to undergo further treatment. The guards were cruel and inhuman, and our treatment was inhuman.

"We were finally taken to a place where we were to undergo further treatment. The guards were cruel and inhuman, and our treatment was inhuman.

"We were finally taken to a place where we were to undergo further treatment. The guards were cruel and inhuman, and our treatment was inhuman.

"We were finally taken to a place where we were to undergo further treatment. The guards were cruel and inhuman, and our treatment was inhuman.

"We were finally taken to a place where we were to undergo further treatment. The guards were cruel and inhuman, and our treatment was inhuman.

"We were finally taken to a place where we were to undergo further treatment. The guards were cruel and inhuman, and our treatment was inhuman.