

Dr. Bresler

The most popular physician, during the time of the Nazi persecution, was Dr Bresler. He came to Częstochowa from Płock, actually wishing to assist his persecuted brethren. By that time, no one entertained the thought of curing themselves and the doctor had no medications. The patient's purpose was how to get out of going to work. The physician could "heal" the "patient" by writing him a sick note. Dr Bresler was a specialist in this field. He was unable to say no to anyone and, whoever came to the dispensary, received a sick note.

The head physician of the hospital in the "Small Ghetto", Dr Szperling - a surgeon - did not wish to free almost anyone from work, but only in an actual exceptional case when a patient could no longer stand on his feet. As a result, Dr Szperling vigorously hounded Dr Bresler, oftentimes tearing apart the sick notes that he had issued. The patients would wait, until the moment when Dr Szperling was not there, in order to receive the leave of absence without obstacles.

In his defence, Dr Bresler told the head physician, Dr Szperling, that it is the sick who come to the doctor and not the healthy people and, if the patients are ill, he must free them from work. Dr Szperling was of a different opinion - that all patients are malingerers and [just] do not want to go to work. Because of that, he would check the patients' temperatures and keep an eye on Dr Bresler so that he should not issue any sick notes.

Following the liquidation of the "Small Ghetto", Dr Bresler worked in the HASAG-Pelcery camp. Here, Dr Szperling was already even stricter and did not let himself be "fooled" by Dr Bresler. Firstly, the patients were all sat on a bench and a nurse inserted the thermometers. Dr Szperling monitored that no one should "manipulate", by rubbing the place of the mercury in the thermometer. After the temperatures were measured, each one was given a note with his [exact] temperature. Under such strict supervision, there was already not much Dr Bresler could do. At most, he could have someone admitted to hospital or prescribe a [special] diet for two or three days, and these orders had to be approved by Dr Szperling.

On such occasions, there were scandals between the patients and Dr Szperling, who refused to approve the diets, which Dr Bresler had prescribed. Because of that, Dr Szperling introduced a system of penalties. For such a "transgression" as prescribing an "unlimited" diet, he had to be on duty at night, in addition to the normal working day. As a result, Dr Bresler, a sixty-year-old man, was forced to suffer and work day and night and, into the bargain, say nothing. To whom would he appeal? To the Nazi authorities?

In the dispensary there were [only] two homemade remedies - aspirin to treat fever and "Kogutek" for headaches. Dr Bresler referred to the tablets in an abbreviated form, as "A" and "K" and, because of that, they called him "the doctor from the AK". In his free time, he would write lyric poems. Among other things, he composed *The Vidui of a New-born*.

Dr Bresler was in a whole series of difficult situations and was always saved. As a result, he had a profound faith that he would survive the War. His optimism was made a reality - he was

liberated from the HASAG-Pelcery camp after the Soviets marched in on 16th -17th January 1945. He is currently in Częstochowa, where he runs a surgery.