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# FACTS

RELATIVE TO THE LATE DISMEMBERMENT

OF

# POLAND.

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[Price One Shilling and Sixpence.]



AN  
AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE

OF

FACTS

RELATIVE TO THE LATE

DISMEMBERMENT

OF

*Poland.*



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## INTRODUCTION.

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**I**N contemplating the events by which the fate of nations has been decided, we are naturally led to attribute them either to the exertion of extraordinary talents, or to the want of capacity and spirit in those whose situation implied the power of guiding and controuling them.

This way of reasoning may be applicable and just in many forms of government, and in many instances. But in others we may deviate from just reasoning, by imputing such events solely to kings or to nations themselves, without examining external causes and peculiar circumstances; for, if in the moral world, the best and the most virtuous men, are not always the happiest, it may so happen in respect to nations, that *they* likewise suffer the greatest misfortunes, who have the least deserved them.

Such seems to be the case at present with respect to Poland. Although it cannot be denied, that there were some radical defects in the form of that government, particularly since the intro-

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duction of elective Kings; yet it has stood nearly two centuries all the evils proceeding from elections, and from the careless indifference of transient rulers, who were only holders of the crown for life. It was natural under such disadvantages, that Poland should be on her gradual decline. At last we see her catastrophe. We see her repeatedly invaded, plundered, and partitioned by her ambitious neighbours, and what remains after the partition, becoming in some measure a province to Russia.

As this memorable event has happened in the reign of the present King, whose patriotic zeal for the welfare of his country, is known to be equal to his other excellent qualities, it may be thought interesting both to an historian and politician, to trace by what steps and means this event was brought about. To do this, we must examine, 1<sup>st</sup> the state in which Stanislaus Augustus found the nation on his accession to the crown. 2<sup>d</sup> The reciprocal conduct between him and the nation. 3<sup>d</sup> The influence of external circumstances that have produced such extraordinary events in his reign.

A  
SKETCH

OF THE

*Reign of Stanislaus Augustus,  
King of Poland.*

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FROM the time of the death of John Sobieski, during a space of seventy years, the Polish nation, from causes very generally known, had been so little in the habit of paying an uninfluenced attention to its own affairs, that it appears to have almost forgot its political existence. For the last thirty years of this period, no Diet had been held, and the legislative power appeared so thoroughly benumbed, that it hardly seemed to exist; the necessary consequence was, that no one either from education or experience, had attained the qualifications requisite for the discharge of the functions of a statesman and politician. So little indeed were the political interests of this country known, as far as they related to strangers, that when at length it became indispensibly necessary to write occasionally to countries beyond the frontiers, foreigners



were employed in this business, as no attention had been paid to render the natives capable of undertaking it; and except to those, whom the spirit of adventure had thrown into the military service of other nations, the science of war was totally unknown. It became then a matter of importance, to train persons to the public service in each of these departments. This consideration gave occasion to the establishment of a corps of cadets, for which purpose the King employed in the two first years of his reign, the sum of 120,000 ducats, as appears by the declaration of the constitution in 1766, in which this donation of the King to his country is registered. But every thing that was done to ameliorate the condition of Poland, or to raise it from its abject state, had the misfortune to be displeasing to its neighbours. Benoit at that time minister from Prussia to Poland, wrote to his master, that this institution was the forerunner of projects, which it would be right to smother at their birth. Yet, because the establishment of a corps of cadets could not be openly stated as a subject of complaint from the court of Berlin, his Prussian majesty artfully availed himself of another pretence to disturb the tranquillity of the nation. He knew that the Empress of Russia was disposed to extend her protection to those in Poland, who were not of the established religion, because by protecting the Polish Dissidents, she furnished means of extending her influence; the  
king

king of Prussia likewise held out to his own subjects, a strong temptation to transport themselves to Poland, by his exertions to ameliorate the condition of the Lutherans and Calvinists; though he was fully aware at the same time, that in the year 1766, the Catholics were so absolutely averse to every species of toleration, that the mere endeavour to put this design into execution, would produce a civil war in the kingdom; the consequence of which would be, an emigration of a number of the inhabitants to seek an asylum in the territories of Prussia. The object of the king of Poland was, to adopt a line of conduct between two extremes, in making some concessions to the demands of Russia, to avoid the giving a cause of complaint in that quarter; however, under such restrictions as to give no offence to his own subjects, in a matter of so delicate a nature as religion.

But the spirit which prevailed in this diet, not only excluded the modifications so much desired by the King, but gave birth to all the events which followed each other from the year 1767 to 1775, events which first produced the confederation of Radome, introduced the guarantee independent of the king's participation, and ended at length in the dismemberment of the kingdom.

In these two first years of the reign of Stanislaus Augustus, the ruinous effects of the money coined at Berlin, with the impression of Augustus III. demonstrated the necessity of opening again the office of the mint.

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This was no sooner known, than a Prussian undertaker presented himself, and obtained of the King (with the approbation of several considerable persons) a grant of a contract; a few days after however, a violent opposition was made to this contract, by those who conceived that a more advantageous one might be made for the interests of the Republic, and more conformable to laws, almost indeed obsolete, by which the value of the coin of Poland, was to bear a nearer proportion to that of the empire, than to the currency of Prussia; to satisfy this scruple, the King redeemed his signature to the contract given to the Prussian undertaker at the expence of 900,000 franks, solely with a view to adopt the method deemed most beneficial to the state. The loan which the king was under the necessity of making to accomplish this, was the source of his debts; but even *this* turned to his majesty's disadvantage, for as soon as the confederation of Radome was formed in Great Poland, it enacted, that the ducats should be rated at 16 $\frac{3}{4}$  franks instead of 18, which had been the valuation fixed by the diet of 1766. By this decision, the new coinage sunk five pennyweights in each ducat beneath it's real value; the consequence of this was, that the country incurred a material loss, as the coinage being above the standard value, induced foreigners to buy it up, and the King suffered to the amount of 100,000 franks a year for twenty years in supporting the credit of the coinage, without  
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reckoning near a million which the first establishment of the mint had cost him. At the same time, the King at his own expence, laid out considerable sums in repairing the fortress of Kamienieck, by raising a dam to prevent a conflux of water, which would have deprived the fortress of it's best means of defence.

After eight years of commotion, a kind of pacification took place in 1775, when the king was despoiled of the nomination of Senators and Ministers, as well as of the Starosties (a privilege enjoyed by all his predecessors) to punish him for withholding his consent to the dismemberment of his country, and because he had refused to have any share in appealing to a foreign guarantee, which had enslaved it's independence. The distribution of employments and revenues had, notwithstanding, been appropriated to the king by the *pacta conventa*, of which his bitterest enemies could not accuse him of the smallest infraction. The king's harangue on the 10th May, 1773, is a sufficient proof of this, as those who wished to insinuate any such violation on the part of his majesty, were then under no restraints of either hope or fear; at the moment they were depriving him of the lucrative appointment of the Starosties, when he had no force to oppose three foreign armies that countenanced, even in the capital itself, those who were entrenching on the regal prerogatives.

In the course of the eight years of the commotions above mentioned, the King's revenue were frequently intercepted,



intercepted, his life exposed to danger, and the hands of his fellow citizens raised to destroy him: notwithstanding which he made up more than once the deficiency in the public revenues from his own private income, as well for the payment of the army as for the establishment of a Foundry, and the furnishing the arsenals of the Republic with near two hundred pieces of artillery; in paying Ministers employed in foreign countries at times when the treasury of the state was not in condition to advance their salaries; and in lending his daily support to those who were the victims of the public misfortunes. All these facts are authenticated in the Journals of the Diet of 1775. This Diet decreed an additional million to the King's revenue. In the ensuing diet the King voluntarily, and without any application from his subjects, relinquished this addition to his income in order to lighten the general burthens. When the literary establishment, called the Commission for Education, was founded by his paternal care in 1774, his Majesty made a distribution of many hundred gold and silver medals for the encouragement of those that distinguished themselves, which distribution has been annually continued to the present day. As an inducement likewise for good soldiers to remain in the army beyond the period of their original stipulation, the King, from his private purse, conferred on them pensions, and distinguished them with medals denoting the length of their services. It is a fact very generally known that,

that when the republic undertook to extend and facilitate commerce by cutting a canal from the Baltic to the Black sea, that his majesty contributed largely from his own income. The composing good geographical charts is an object of attention in all countries; and though the king has had, and still continues to have, obstacles thrown in the way of this undertaking, he persists notwithstanding, though at a great expence, in accomplishing so desirable a purpose. He has likewise without the smallest profit accruing to himself and purely with a view to the general good, used his utmost exertions to open copper mines in Poland. All the original costs on account of the salt wells in the Palatinate of Cracovia were at his expence. After having established a manufacture of arms at Kozienc, all the produce of the manufactory was sent free of costs to the arsenals of the republic. Warsaw must remember with gratitude, what difficulties the King had to surmount in forming a rampart round that city during the plague in 1769, and that one third of the charge was defrayed by his bounty. With a view likewise of relieving the Inhabitants of this city from the hardship of having troops quartered on them, he converted his palace of Dyazdow into a barrack, and at the same time amply contributed to the construction of other barracks. All the charitable institutions at Warsaw are indebted to his munificence for near a third part of their means of support. The

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ancient capital of Cracow will confess what it owes to his generous assistance; and the Academy in that city will gratefully acknowledge his annual bounty. Exclusive of the corps of cadets at Warsaw, the king maintains another purely at his own expence in the city of Vilna; besides which, this capital of Lithuania enjoys in many ways various marks of his royal generosity. It is a matter of record on the Journals of the Diet of 1788 how much the king has voluntarily suffered his own revenues to be diminished, that he might thereby increase the treasure of the public. And after all these instances of munificence it must be told, that the whole of the income for the civil list of the king of Poland, does not amount to four millions of French livres a year.

It will be necessary now to pass to a question, which under the present circumstances is the most important of any; it is this: has the King by any one of his acts infringed the *pacta conventa*? It must be understood that he neither received nor expected to receive any previous information of the motion of the act called the Universal, which was passed in the Hall of the Diet the 30th August, 1790, in which the first mention was made of the succession of the Elector of Saxony to the Throne of Poland. When this project had obtained the consent of the Diet, the King expressed himself in these words "It never entered into my thoughts " to bring forward any one as successor to the  
" Throne

" Throne during my lifetime, nor will I countenance such a proposal unless I find it is made " with the general concurrence of the Nation." After avowing this principle, a proposal was made on *his* part to the Diet to give public notice for the purpose of convoking the provincial assemblies, in order to afford an opportunity for the Citizens to declare their resolution of acquiescing in the nomination of a successor to the Throne during the life of the reigning Prince. As soon as these assemblies were decreed, many members of the Diet, as well as other Inhabitants of the provinces, offered their services to the King, and concurred in the above motion, provided that one of his Majesty's nephews, and *not* the Elector of Saxony, should be nominated to the succession. To these proposals the King's uniform answer was, " You " know, Gentlemen, that I had no share in the " design of nominating my successor during my " life, notwithstanding which if the nomination " should fall on a Prince of my own blood, it " would give rise to a strong suspicion, that I had " been clandestinely the Author of the project; " moreover my opinion is, that in choosing a " King whose Riches, Rank and Connections " would give a lustre to the choice, added to the " virtues and political Talents which distinguish " the Elector of Saxony, a successor would be " nominated who would greatly contribute to the " Dignity, Power, and Advantage of the Republic."



In consequence of this invariable resolution of the King, all the provincial Assemblies, except that of Volhinia, demanded the Elector of Saxony as successor to the Throne; and though this latter Assembly was less positive than the others in it's declarations, yet every testimony was given of it's esteem for the person and qualities of the Elector. In the *pacta conventa*, it is stipulated that no successor to the Throne shall be named during the life of the reigning King. The first and most important step in opposition to that stipulation was made *not* by his Majesty, but by the Nation. The additional strength given to the power of the reigning King by nominating his successor from his own Family, had always been considered with just and watchful jealousy by the Country. In the present case his Majesty has discarded his own Relations, and has received one who was not even personally known to him as his successor from the hands of the Nation. What, it may be asked, were the motives which induced the Country to this infraction of an ancient Law? what, but a general conviction that every Interregnum was the source of a Civil and a Foreign War; this conviction had operated so strongly on the minds of many, that they extended their cares to future Generations, and various Instructions of the provincial Assemblies were sent to their Representatives to require their support of a decree not confined to the immediate case, but for the establishment

establishment of a perpetual Hereditary Succession. Many writings were addressed to the Public, which daily encreased in number and energy, expressing the general wish of so desirable a decision. These requisitions were made from the Nation to the King, and *not* from the King to the Nation. A majority of the Members of the Diet loudly declared that the dearest Interests, and even the Salvation of their Country depended on his Majesty's concurrence with the general wish. At length the 3d of May arrived, every word, every circumstance that happened on that day are sufficiently known to the Public; all was conducted without force, or restraint. One person in the Assembly, who seemed to challenge an application of violence to Himself, was industriously protected from it's effects. On his demanding the right of speaking, many voices were raised to refuse it him; but the King himself insisted on the privilege being granted Him, and He was permitted to deliver his sentiments with the most perfect freedom, nor was the smallest insult offered either to him or to those who sided with his opinions. It cannot then surely be urged that his Majesty on this day, or indeed on any other, laid a restraint on the freedom of debate; and though called on by so many voices to accept and swear to the new form of Government which had been read in the diet, he was so far from eagerly availing himself of the offer, that after many hours of discussion, he spoke thus



thus: " There is an obstacle to my acceptance of  
 " the proposed plan, which as far as depends on  
 " myself exclusively, I conceive, cannot be over-  
 " come, I have sworn to maintain and abide by  
 " the *pacta conventa*; this oath I have hitherto  
 " religiously observed; I demand now then, if by  
 " the general will of the states in Diet assembled,  
 " I am freed from the obligation of that article  
 " which regulates the succession of the Throne."  
 Upon this a number of Members instantly ex-  
 claimed, " Yes, we free you from the observance  
 " of it, and we likewise bind ourselves not to  
 " break up the sitting till the decision has been  
 " finally adopted." The King then resumed his  
 speech and required of the Marshall of the Diet that  
 he should take the opinion of the Members indivi-  
 dually, in order that the sense of the Nation and  
 the will of the Assemblies might be made a matter  
 of general notoriety. The Marshal immediately  
 on this, directed that those Members who were  
 for adopting the plan of succession should remain  
 silent, and that those on the contrary who were  
 for rejecting it should signify their determination  
 by their voices, to the end that no doubt might  
 remain to which side the Majority inclined. After  
 a silence of a few minutes twelve Members only  
 declared their opposition, some of them by speeches  
 at length, others by a few words to shew that they  
 concurred in opinion with the former speakers.  
 The King listened in silence; at length Zabiello  
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the Nuntio of Livonia, intreated him no longer  
 to oppose himself to the wishes of the majority,  
 which exceeded in the proportion of at least ten  
 to one the number of those who constituted the  
 opposition; at the same time, almost all the  
 Nuntios, Senators, and Ministers quitting their  
 seats, filled the middle of the hall, and surrounding  
 the throne, demanded with loud voices, that the  
 King would swear to the observance of the new  
 Constitution.

It was not till things came to this pass, that his  
 Majesty complied with their requests, and pro-  
 nounced the oath required of him. The reader  
 must be informed, that at the commencement of  
 this diet, the King in conformity to the will of  
 the States, had signed an act, by which this free  
 diet had changed itself into a diet of confederation,  
 and in doing this, it had bound itself to decide  
 all questions by a plurality of voices. His Majesty,  
 therefore, did nothing on the 3d of May but what  
 his duty obliged him to do; and a stronger proof  
 cannot be adduced of the general good, being his  
 ultimate object, than his refusing his consent to  
 the aggrandisement of his own family. In this  
 place, the following questions may not be inappo-  
 site. First, if independent of every consideration  
 relative to the succession, the form of government  
 was good in *itself*. Secondly, if it met with the  
 general approbation of the Polish Republic? And  
 lastly, if it contained any thing in it's frame me-  
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nancing to the cause of liberty? These questions are fully answered by the warm encomiums, that all the nations and all the courts in Europe (one only excepted) bestowed on the new constitution; and as a proof that the Poles themselves saw in it no cause of alarm for their Liberties, it received the praise and approbation of all the provincial assemblies in the kingdom, without a single exception, and a majority of these assemblies even bound themselves by oaths to its observance, uninfluenced either by gifts, promises, or solicitations; and all unanimously enjoined their Representatives, to shew their gratitude in the most solemn manner to the King, by universally conferring on him the title of the Benevolent Father of his Country.

If it were our object here, to examine the whole system of this Constitution article by article, it would evidently appear, that in the two nations universally allowed to enjoy the freest and most perfect forms of government, I mean the English and the North Americans, the King of England and the officer who without the name discharges the functions of a King in America, both possess an executive power of more force and extent, than that which was conferred on the King of Poland by the Constitutional Act of the 3d of May, 1791. Nay, more, whoever will take the trouble of comparing the power which the Permanent Council possessed from the year 1766 to 1788, with those which were entrusted to the council of super-intendance

dance of 1791, will observe in how many articles the authority of the former, has exceeded that of the latter; and likewise with this additional distinction, that the Nation has reserved to *itself*, the power of altering or correcting the form of government established in 1791; whereas *that* of 1775, was submitted to the controul and protection of a foreign power, under the character of a guarantee. If it should be said, that a King endowed with foresight, should have acted from more extended views; and should have reflected, that remote advantages, which were the objects of the new Constitution, bade fair to be productive of immediate calamities? His Majesty might answer this objection, by referring to his harangue of the 6th of October 1788, (as well as to many subsequent ones) in which he expressed himself as follows. " Let us retain, if possible, the friendship  
" of all our Neighbors; let us pay a due homage to  
" the personal qualities of all the Sovereigns, that  
" at this time throw a lustre on the thrones they  
" occupy. Yet it must be allowed, that every Na-  
" tion has an interest to pursue peculiar to its situ-  
" ation and circumstances. I loudly and unequi-  
" vocally assert, that there is no power whose true  
" interests run less in opposition to ours, than those  
" of Russia. I recall to the remembrance of the  
" Nation, that it is to Russia we owe the recovery,  
" at least, of several districts of our country of which  
" other Powers had assumed the Occupancy. I

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“ remind them, that with respect to commercial ar-  
 “ rangements, Russia presents the most favorable  
 “ prospects. And I can say too, that Russia not only  
 “ makes no opposition to the design, but absolutely  
 “ applauds our intention of augmenting the army.  
 “ It will follow then, that so far from giving any  
 “ cause of provocation to this Power, by shewing  
 “ an ill disposition towards it, the acquisition of it’s  
 “ friendship should be among our most desirable  
 “ objects; and I am convinced, that when the Em-  
 “ press is satisfied of our amicable disposition towards  
 “ her, we shall be enabled to accomplish our interior  
 “ ameliorations, with more certainty and facility; and  
 “ on the contrary, we shall raise obstacles to our views  
 “ in proportion as we may afford to that magnani-  
 “ mous Princess any causes for dissatisfaction.”

If these predictions of the King failed in produ-  
 cing a due effect, and if to that inattention may  
 be ascribed many of the present misfortunes of our  
 country, To whom is the blame imputable? To  
 whom, but to those who strained every nerve to  
 excite the Public as well against the guarantee as  
 against the laws of 1775, so far as to represent the  
 King as having views hostile to his country, and  
 as being a just object of suspicion and distrust. To  
 those, I repeat, who at that diet under the affecta-  
 tion of these suspicions, deprived his Majesty of  
 many of his prerogatives; and for no other reason,  
 but because he had the foresight to resist their  
 violence; and above all, because he exerted him-  
 self

self to counteract those sallies of anger and discon-  
 tent, in which they indulged themselves against  
 that very power, under whose protection they now  
 accuse the King on two points, of which they  
 themselves were the most ardent promoters. One\*  
 man in particular, often and loudly called on the  
 King to undertake an offensive war against Russia,  
 and pledged himself, to *hold his Majesty's stirrup*  
*whenever he should mount his horse to carry that war*  
*into execution.* And yet it is under the protection  
 of the hostile armies of Russia, that this same man  
 has returned again to Poland. The speech above  
 quoted, is a sufficient proof that the King confi-  
 dered a connection with Russia, as most beneficial  
 to his country. His discourse on the 15th of  
 March 1790, is a clear evidence how little he  
 was inclined to enter into new engagements, and  
 how much he exerted himself to retard the deter-  
 mination of the Diet. It is not then to be ascribed  
 to *him*, if the Diet on that day unanimously re-  
 solved to decree a new alliance; but as his Majesty  
 neither could, nor ought to put himself in oppo-  
 sition to the universal will of the Assembly, his  
 regard for the laws, and his strict attention to an  
 upright conduct convinced him, that he was bound  
 not to deviate from the line which had been traced  
 out for his future course. It is necessary to remark

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\* Suchorzewski.



in this place, that the court of Berlin in testifying it's desire for an alliance with Poland, urged, as a preliminary condition, that a new form of government should be established, whose duration and stability might be relied on. The authentic proofs of this intimation, and of the court of Berlin's approving the plan, are too well known to be here insisted on. As soon as the new system took place, the spirit which actuated it, being that of the support of peace, and of restraining itself within it's own limits, without harbouring the smallest hostile intention towards any foreign power, called on government to declare in the most solemn and prompt manner to the Neighbouring Potentates (and particularly to those whose alliances with Poland were of ancient date) the true object of the law of the 3d of May. And if this notification did not take place, the omission with great reason might have been imputed to the King, if he was not justified by the following fact; that identical *Ally*, who urged his advice and his services with so much importunity, by constantly repeating, that the emancipation of Poland from foreign dependance, was due only to his interposition, that *very Ally*, I say, twice prevented the King from carrying this design into execution. "This is not the time," said this *Ally*, "to notify your plan to the neighbouring Powers; and it was less necessary, as I myself have passed a panegyric on the law of the 3d of May, and have offered my congratulations

gratulations on it, both to the Polish Nation, and to the Elector of Saxony; and from the benefits which I have been the means of conveying to the kingdom, I have a right to expect, that my advice should have it's proper weight."

Impartial judges must determine, how far the King of Poland under these circumstances, had it in his power to act in direct opposition to the mode of conduct prescribed by this ally at a time when the Republic placed implicit confidence in him, intimating at the same time some doubts lest his Polish Majesty from motives of personal inclination and gratitude may not be rather too much biased in favor of ancient connections. It has been often objected to the King, that by the Constitution of the 3d of May, He had in contemplation to annihilate the pre-eminence and splendor of the Polish Nobility, and that from this proceeding He had to expect the general resentment of this order; but can there be a more satisfactory answer to this objection than that all the Provincial Assemblies, (which are uniformly composed of Nobility,) without one exception, expressed their gratitude to the King for the Act; and that this same Nobility in shewing a favourable disposition towards the class of Burghers, have signified their conviction that consequences the most beneficial to the State at large, were the natural result of ameliorating the condition of this latter order of Society. It is neither to be imputed to the King  
nor



nor to the Diet, that precisely at this time the French Revolutionists acted on principles directly opposite to those attempted to be established in Poland. In the latter Country the Nobility in reserving to itself the principal rank and in expressly confining to that Class the Government of the Republic, at the same time, that many privileges were granted to the Burghers, have done nothing more in this, than in some degree lessening the Distance and Distinction that existed between themselves and the order of the third Estate; in France, on the contrary, the third Estate has completely overwhelmed the class of Nobility. In Poland the holy Catholic Religion, honored with every mark of Solemnity, and acknowledged as supreme, received a firm Establishment by the Act of the 3d of May. Nothing more strongly discriminates the features that characterise the two Constitutions, than the different conduct of France on the subject of Religion. It is in vain then to pretend to find a resemblance between the systems of the two Countries; this resemblance has no existence but in the imaginations of those, who have views of their own in making the comparison. It may likewise be observed that the King's plan in favor of the Burghers was far less comprehensive than that unanimously adopted the 18th of April, 1791, the Author of which was the Man who was so prompt to hold the King's stirrup when he should mount His horse to lead the Army of the Republic against the Russian invaders.

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But as I have undertaken to give my opinion in the fullest manner on the mode of conduct adopted by the King, I will now enquire what system He has followed to the present period, and whether any effort, as far as depended on Him, has been neglected. It is clear, that after passing the Law of the 3d of May, it was incumbent on his Majesty to endeavour to make the Law efficacious by augmenting the Forces of the Republic. It became necessary to increase the Army and to provide both Arms and Money, the latter indeed was the grand *desideratum*, as without *that* the others were unattainable. The Taxes were already considerable and the danger of overburthening the Nation, and consequently exciting a disgust to the new Constitution, was a strong obstacle to increasing them. But as Money could not be had without Taxes or by means of a Loan, for which a security was indispensibly necessary, a recourse was had to the latter by the sale of the Starosties\*, yet as this project met not with the approbation of some hundreds of persons of considerable Influence, it's progress became slow and difficult, and a whole year passed before it's accomplishment. In the course of this year, affairs had so materially changed in Sweden and

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\* Starosties are National Domains destined for the King's distribution as a reward for Services.

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in Turkey, that Poland was deprived of the means of offering a sufficient security for the Loan. As the storm began to gather on the Frontiers, and as the purses of the Lenders were found to close in an exact proportion with the approach of Danger, the main spring of all Military operations was wanting. It was expedient to arm and discipline both the Nobility and Burghers. The King repeatedly urged the necessity of this proceeding, and was as constantly answered: "If we put Arms into the hands of the Nation, we shall experience the same consequences as have happened in France; as soon as the Multitude shall perceive that they are in possession of power, so far from submitting to be governed, They will attempt to give law to the Diet, and throw the whole Country into confusion. If indeed we should be threatened with an attack from any Foreign Power, We will then consent that the whole Nation should be entrusted with Arms." To this the King replied: "In order to be able to furnish the Country with Arms at the hour of Emergency, it will be necessary that We have them ready; but this is not the case; and it is with difficulty that our manufactures newly established afford a supply of one Thousand stand a year; directions should therefore be given for purchasing them in Foreign Countries." This salutary advice however, was tardily executed. Commissioners, it is true, were sent into Foreign States;

States; but in Saxony and Brandenburg the privilege of purchasing was refused them, Austria's own demands precluded Her from the power of supplying those of Her neighbors, and the French Emigrants had bought up all, that the Manufacturers could furnish in the more remote parts of Germany; it became necessary to establish new Fabricks, many months were employed, and when the work was ready, the day for Action was passed. Some Arms were purchased in other Countries, but the King of Prussia seized them on their passage, and to this Hour retains the possession of them. This conduct from an Ally, who had incessantly busied Himself for two years in exciting Poland against Russia, was certainly not to have been expected. What has been said is sufficient to explain the situation of Poland up to the period when the menacing Declaration of Russia was followed close by the appearance of Her Armies. It has been often asked, why the whole Army of the Republic, according to its establishment in the beginning of the Year 1792, was not assembled in full force on the Frontiers of Russia? Why Prince Joseph Poniatowski was not instantly sent to the Ukraine? And why through the whole extent of Lithuania there existed no Military preparations? In answer to these questions, it must be remembered, that the King exerted Himself ineffectually in the Diet for the space of a Year to regulate and reform the State



of the Army, without which regulations it must have been found inadequate to Military operations. Much time was consumed in this work, because as it clashed with a thousand little interests of individuals, many of the Military themselves, (notwithstanding their fervent speeches in the Diet) threw every obstacle in the way of a Reform, and thwarted the measures of the Commissariat, while as long as these measures were impeded, neither Tents, Accoutrements, Powder, Bullets, Cartouches, nor any of the numberless articles of detail could be provided, under the deficiency of which, neither Prince Joseph nor any one else could commence their Military enterprizes. Upon this Prince's asking: "Where are my Magazines? Where all those necessary supplies, the replacing of which, a War even the most fortunate, continually requires? Where throughout the Ukraine am I to be in possession of a place of Security? In what place can my Military Hospital be established with Safety? Where are my Surgeons and my Medicines? From whence am I to be furnished with my Artillery of reserve? With Horses, Harness and spare mountings for the Guns? Who has been appointed my Commissary for provisions? Or has there been any nomination for my Quarter Master General? (And without two persons of this description, it is well known that no Commander takes the charge of an Army.)" To all these questions

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He was answered: "Although none of these requisitions can be at present supplied, the equipment of every thing shall be immediately forwarded, and no time shall be lost in sending them to you as soon as they are ready. Be your own Commissary and Quarter Master General, exert yourself as indefatigably as we have done, who in the space of two years have augmented the Army from eighteen to fifty-five thousand men, and almost half of them Cavalry. It must be confessed that much the greater part of this Cavalry are ignorant of one single manœuvre; that the Saddles, Bridles and Fire Arms of this corps are all without uniformity, and the whole so totally without arrangement, that to form them in order of Battle is impossible. This is no time however for these objections, March directly to the Frontiers, assemble what Troops you can, and defend yourself to the best of your Ability—Courage, Military Talents, and the love of your Country will supply every deficiency." It was thus the King spoke to his Nephew in devoting Him to the service of the Nation. And thus the Prince replied: "I will go, for I love my Country, but I go as to my death; and what is infinitely more distressing, to the probable sacrifice of my reputation." It must be remarked that the length of the Frontiers (the defence of which was entrusted to the Prince,) extended from Mohilow in Podolia as far as Lojow, which makes a distance of

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100 German Miles, for the protection of which, he had the command of about twenty-four thousand Men broke into small Divisions throughout the whole of this long line, some likewise occupied interior posts as far as Polonne—and this is the place, distant fifty miles from both the Dniester and Dnieper, that was assigned to the Prince for his place of Arms—and which they had not even begun to fortify till the Prince quitted Warsaw on the 6th of May. On his arrival at Tulczyn (which was then his Head Quarters,) His muster fell short of 2000 Men. This place was the central point to which it was necessary to assemble Troops that were distant from each other to the amount of 50 German miles, at a time, when on the side of Kijow, Balta and Moldavia three Bodies were marching against Him, each of which was equal to the whole of his Force. It is to be added, that he had received positive orders to prevent the Enemy's cutting off his communication with Warsaw. The compliance with his order was the source of more difficulties to Him than the combination of all the other unfavorable circumstances, but on the strictest attention to it's observance depended the communication of Correspondence, the successive supplies of Artillery, Ammunition, Tents, Money, and in a word whatever was necessary, but above all, reinforcements of Men who were to effect a march of 100 German Miles in coming from Great Poland to their place of Rendezvous. In Lithuania the  
Battalions

Battalions wanting for the compliment of the Regiments of this District were at this period but just begun to be enrolled. The District in other respects was wholly unprovided with Artillery and equipments necessary to make a Campaign. Every thing was to be sent from Warsaw, and every thing to be manufactured in that Capital. A Commander was wanting in Lithuania who had acquired experience in Foreign service, and who could inspire the Natives with confidence. If the King of Prussia (the Ally of Poland) should have objected to any other of his Generals being employed in this Capacity, it was presumed that Lithuania would have found a Defender in Prince Louis of Wirtemberg\*. The King invited Him to this command. The Public is perfectly well informed *why* and *how* He quitted it. In this state of things the Russian Troops had possessed themselves of the half of Lithuania, when the Diet conferred on His Majesty the sole Command during the war. The King was but too sensible of the weight of this responsibility. Had He consulted only His personal interest, He would certainly have refused so dangerous an Honor, but the possibility of his incurring the reproach of having abandoned the Helm in the midst of the

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\* He had married the Princess Czartorisky, and on his marriage was naturalized in Poland.



Tempest, determined Him not to reject the offer. At that time indeed it could have entered no Man's imagination that the King of Prussia's conduct would have been such as we have since witnessed it. Of the 55 thousand Men which constituted the whole Force of the Republic, a deduction must be made of 7 thousand for the Garrisons of Kaminiec, Cracow, Czestochow, Posen and Warsaw. The remaining 48 thousand, were to make head against 100 thousand Russians, 60 thousand of which, had entered the Polish Ukraine and 40 thousand into Lithuania. For the defence of the latter it was necessary to send from Warsaw the Artillery, and several Regiments from Cracow and other distant places. Almost all these Corps marched without Tents, and did not arrive at the general Rendezvous at Grodno, till the Russians (already masters of Vilna and Niefwith) had approached near to that Town. It must be remarked here, that in the first year of the late Diet, the Regiments of Guards were so wholly unequipped that there appeared an inclination of excluding them from all Military service. In this incapacity for Action they were kept, till the Diet decreed the reform of the Army, a reform so long required by the King, and which took place in the middle of June 1792. The providing these Troops with Tents and other necessaries for a Campaign was delayed to this period, and in spite of all his Majesty's exertions, the four Regiments were

were not in condition to march till towards the middle of July, and then the Russians had passed Ostrog in Volhinia, and Vilna and Niefwiez in Lithuania. It has been asked why the Battle of Zieleuce on the 18<sup>th</sup> of June (which was so honorable to Prince Joseph, to many who commanded under Him and to the Nation in general,) was productive of no beneficial consequences? Why notwithstanding the orders given from Warsaw, the Magazines were not established in time, nor in the necessary places? The Authors of these obstructions are too well known to require any mention of their names, but to *them* is imputable, the sole cause that Prince Joseph did not march forward after the advantage gained at Zieleuce. The division of the Russian army which he fought at this place composed only a third of their Troops under the orders of General Kockowski the Commander in chief, and this Corps was reinforced immediately after the battle, by the two other divisions, so that the Prince saw in his Front an Enemy of three times His strength when he arrived at Ostrog. Notwithstanding which, He would have maintained his ground at this place, if those whose department it was to have furnished the Army with provisions, had not failed in their duty to such a degree, that neither Man nor Horse, not even the General Himself, had any thing to eat for the space of 36 Hours. In addition to this, there remained after the Battle of Zieleuce only twelve rounds



rounds for the twelve and six pounders, Guns of a size the best adapted to act against the Russians, as they make use of none scarcely of a smaller Calibre, and of which though they had three times the number the Poles were in possession of, yet the latter defended themselves two days at Ostrog. The last Cannon of the above size which remained in the Arsenal at Warsaw, although forwarded to the Prince by relays, did not, together with the Ammunition, reach him till some days after the Action, when he had already retreated to Dubno, and at this place his supply of provisions could be only for a few days. The King of Prussia \* had openly declared that Poland must expect no succour from Him, and there were certain indications that

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\* Article Sixth, of the Treaty of Defensive Alliance between his Majesty the King, and the Republic of Poland, and his Majesty the King of Prussia. Dated March 29th, 1790.

“ If any Foreign power whatever shall, by virtue of any preceding Acts or stipulations, or any interpretation of them, assume the right of interfering in the internal Affairs of the Republic of Poland, or its dependencies, at any time, or in any Manner, his Majesty the King of Prussia, will first employ his most efficacious good Offices to prevent Hostilities arising out of such a pretension; but if all his good Offices should fail of effect, and hostilities against Poland should be the consequence, his Majesty the King of Prussia considering this as a case falling within the meaning of the Alliance, will assist the Republic according to the tenor of the fourth Article of the present Treaty.”

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his intention was to unite himself with Russia, and consequently take a Hostile part against his ancient Ally. In compliance with the advice of those whom the Diet had nominated Counsellors to the King, His Majesty wrote to the Empress to request a cessation of Arms. The letter contained proposals which had for object the connecting the Dignity and Welfare of Poland with the Honor and Advantage of Russia; four weeks elapsed before an answer was returned, during which time there was no remission of Hostilities; the Russian General Kockowski persevered always in the same plan of Operations, by opposing only a part of his Army to the Prince in Front and threatening his Flanks with the two other Divisions; which put the Prince under the necessity of making continually retrograde motions to avoid being surrounded or cut off; and finding no position tenable from Ostrog to Dubienska, He retreated to this latter place to be within reach of provisions from the Territory of Chelm and the Palatinate of Lublin. A question here presents itself, To what was it owing that the King did not quit Warsaw, and shew Himself in the Camp? It must be observed that all those persons to whose opinions His Majesty could owe any deference, however differing in Employments, interests or sentiments, concurred universally in *this*, that it was incumbent on the King to wait the Empress's answer (which had been promised from day to day) in his capital

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of Warsaw. The Council of superintendence, the Ministers of Russia, Austria and Prussia were all unanimous on this point—if the King, said they, should present Himself in the Camp and not wait the answer of her Imperial Majesty, nothing can be more likely, than that it will provoke on her part an absolute rejection of his proposals, and exclusive of this Reason, the Events of the campaign in Lithuania had been so unfortunate, that Warsaw and the whole of Great Poland must necessarily have fallen a prey to the Russians the moment the King had quitted his Capital. On the other hand the equipment of the Guards (without which, if His Majesty had marched He must have marched alone) was not completed till the 23<sup>d</sup> of July, the time of the arrival of the Empress's answer. It contained a requisition in the strongest terms for the King's acceding without delay to the confederation of Targowica, in failure of which, She gave intimations of Dethronement and of involving the whole of Poland in the calamities of War. The Russian Minister, who conveyed the answer to the King, expressed himself in these terms: " The Empress has hitherto been the sole cause of preventing the Prussians from entering into Poland: but if the war continues between Poland and Russia, She will prevent them no longer; and if they once enter your Country they will not retire with empty hands." The King had now to resolve on a decision infinitely important  
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to Himself. Was he to give way to the demand of the Empress, or repair to the camp and continue the War? In case of his adopting the latter alternative, it was necessary to examine the state of the Polish Army relative to that of Russia. After the retreat of Prince Joseph from Ostrog to Dubienska the sole object for the rest of the Campaign was the defence of the River Bug. Prince Joseph had to defend the Banks of this river from Dubienska to Brzese in Lithuania, a space of nearly ten German leagues; and General Zabiello, who commanded the Army of Lithuania, was relied upon for the defence of the passage of the river from Brzese to the Vistula. The Army of the Prince consisted of about nineteen, and that of Zabiello of fifteen thousand Men. The former was opposed in front, by an Army of sixty thousand strong, under the command of General Kockowski; and Zabiello was pursued by a Body of forty thousand more, under Kreczetnikoff. The Poles were under the necessity of either defending or destroying all the Bridges, Ferries and Fords, without having it in their power to concentrate their Strength in any one position, while the Russians were at liberty to assemble in full force wherever they meditated their Attacks. It was owing to this cause that General Kosceuszkow (entrusted with the defence of the passage at Dubienska) had but five thousand men to oppose to eighteen thousand Russians on the same day that Prince Joseph, and under him the Generals



Welporski and Mokronoski, divided amongst them the defence of the Fords lower down the River, all of which were either menaced or seriously attacked by different Russian Corps. No blame can be imputed either to Kosceuzzkow, or the Prince, if during the Battle at Dubienska the Russians were permitted to enter the Territory of Gallicia, and by that means to force the former to retreat in face of an Enemy who was endeavouring to attack his rear. On the same day Major Kraficki with one twelve pounder and five small pieces maintained Himself against a division of the Russians of ten times his Force, and did not give up the defence of the passage of the Bug till a grenade from the Enemy blew up his ammunition. The post at Brzese was carried at the same time, so that nothing remained but to dispute the passage of the Vistula—to provide for this Prince Joseph established and fortified Himself at Kurow, and General Zabiello after the affair of Granne retired to Wegrow in total want of Provisions. It was at this Juncture that the following propositions were made: “ That the King should advance  
 “ to Kurow, and hazard another Battle; and  
 “ in case of losing it, to retire by the Palatinate  
 “ of Sandomir towards Cracow, and endeavour  
 “ in this mountainous Country to possess himself  
 “ of strong passes (which if He should find it  
 “ impossible to hold,) then to provide for his  
 “ safety by retiring into Gallicia.” To these propositions

positions were opposed the following reasons:  
 “ That even if the King should succeed in repulsing  
 “ the Russians at Kurow, it would be still in  
 “ their power to renew their attacks (and considering the great superiority of their numbers) to  
 “ harass Prince Joseph so on the right and left as  
 “ to make it necessary for the Polish Army to have  
 “ recourse to a retrograde motion in order to  
 “ communicate with and protect Warsaw; and  
 “ further, if the King was to pursue the route of  
 “ Sandomir and Cracow, He could receive no  
 “ supplies but from two small Magazines on the  
 “ banks of the Vistula, which could ensure only a  
 “ sufficiency for a few days; and a retreat in the  
 “ face of an Enemy of three times his strength  
 “ could not be made without very considerable  
 “ loss.” But the most stubborn obstacle to the continuation of the War was the state of the Treasury of the Republic, the funds of which were barely sufficient for four weeks pay of the Army, even by diverting to this purpose what had been appropriated for the various demands of the Civil List. The Army without pay must of course have disbanded, and would have been reduced by extreme necessity to have plundered their own Country, particularly those districts which had already suffered from scarcity in consequence of the summer's drowth. To those who cited the example of John Casimir, who in quitting his own Country found an Asylum in the Austrian Territory, it  
 was



was answered: " That Casimir a son of a Princess  
 " of the House of Austria, and in alliance likewise  
 " with that power, demanded and received from  
 " it an armed support; but that Stanislaus Augustus  
 " had no grounds to cherish such hopes; and  
 " that what followed after the affair at Dubienska  
 " sufficiently evinced the servile disposition of this  
 " Court to the inclinations of Russia." Under such  
 considerations the present King had nothing to  
 look for on his retreat to Galicia but all the humili-  
 ating mortifications of wandering indigence, and  
 perhaps even the refusal of an Asylum.—Nor was  
 this apprehension without just grounds, as a Printer  
 at Vienna had been forbidden to publish the answer  
 of the Diet to Monsieur de Bulhakoff, the Russian  
 Minister at Warsaw, at the same time that the  
 publication of the declaration itself had been per-  
 mitted. On the other side a Prussian General had  
 visited a Polish Village on the Frontiers, and given  
 directions for building a bridge for the purpose  
 of conveying Artillery. It was clear that the Army  
 which pursued Zabiello would reach Warsaw in  
 eight days at the utmost, and that nothing could  
 prevent them taking entire possession of Great  
 Poland, and of all which the Country might be  
 most anxious to preserve. The Declaration of the  
 Empress promised the maintenance of the Unity  
 of Poland, and it's exemption from entire devastation,  
 on condition that the King should immediately  
 accede to the confederation of Targowica, which  
 compliance

compliance was nothing less than a total dereliction  
 of all that had been enacted the 3<sup>d</sup> of May 1791.  
 The regret and the shame of abandoning all (that  
 through thorough conviction) He had done for  
 the Advantage, the Independence and the Honor  
 of the Nation, prompted the King to go to Kurow,  
 and there devote himself as a sacrifice for his People.  
 But in objection to this it was urged, that though  
 by such a proceeding He might satisfy his own  
 personal feelings on a point of Honor, yet his first  
 duties were due to his Country, the utter ruin of  
 which would probably be the result of this deter-  
 mination. For in the first place, a defeat appeared  
 more likely than a victory; and secondly, the  
 consequence even of success would be, the accele-  
 ration of the entry of the Prussians into the Kingdom,  
 and a second dismemberment of the Country,  
 after a total devastation of that part of it (which  
 by the condescension and forbearance of it's neigh-  
 bours) would still retain the name of Poland. One  
 of the most cruel of all sacrifices, (that of his feel-  
 ings for his personal Honor,) the King at length  
 resolved to make to the sacred duties of his  
 function, and He signed his first accession to the  
 conditions proposed to him on the 24<sup>th</sup> of July.  
 It has been objected to him since, that some  
 weeks after this transaction He signed a second  
 Act of accession, in which he seemed to have had  
 in view either Despotism or a Democratic Govern-  
 ment, and in which He appears to have laid the  
 blame



blame on those who co-operated with him in the Diet.

The King's conduct in this business is too generally known to render a detail of circumstances on this subject necessary. It will be sufficient to mention, that on the arrival of a second Courier from Petersburg. He was required to sign this second Act, without permission to change one single word in the Formulary demanded by the Generality, if He wished not to expose his person and his Country to the same dangers with which He had been threatened a month before. At the same time His Majesty pressed with great earnestness that the proceedings should be dropped against the Marshals Potocki, and Sapieha, and the Vice Chancellor Kollaty : but he was answered, " The interest which you take in behalf of these Gentlemen, at present operates to their disadvantage. If you sign the second accession, your interposition in their cause, as well as your desire relative to future arrangements might then be more favourably attended to." These were the motives which induced the King to comply with this second signature ; and if all the mortifications which He Himself as well as all those who are most dear to Him, have experienced since that date, are considered, no other secret motives will certainly be imputed to Him. Nor can any of those acts which since that date have served to afflict and humble the Nation, be ascribed to the King ; as the Generality (in conformity with the Empress's pleasure)

pleasure) have from that time reduced Him to a state of total inactivity. It must likewise be remembered, that in the first act of accession, the cessation of hostilities on the part of Russia was to depend on the Polish troops being dispersed in small Bodies throughout the country, and on the artillery being all deposited at Warsaw, it became then next to impossible either to assemble or to arm the troops—and could this difficulty have been surmounted, no means existed for their pay. It is further to be remarked, that when the emergency of circumstances forced the King to separate the troops at the camp of Kozienice, a considerable part of them were sent into Great Poland—if however they had remained there, and retained possession of their Artillery, The Prussians would have experienced a more obstinate resistance in this Province than they met with in their invasion in January 1793 ; but the moment the Confederation of Targowica had appropriated to itself the Military Authority, they issued an order to deprive all the Regiments of their Cannon, and to deposit them in the Arsenal at Warsaw, as well as to draw off a great part of the Army then in Great Poland, and to send it into the interior parts of the Country. As soon as the Prussians had made their entry into Poland, in January 1793, writings were circulated, the Authors of which did not content themselves with attributing the cause of this Irruption to the law of the 3d May, but have considered things retrospectively, with a view of war-

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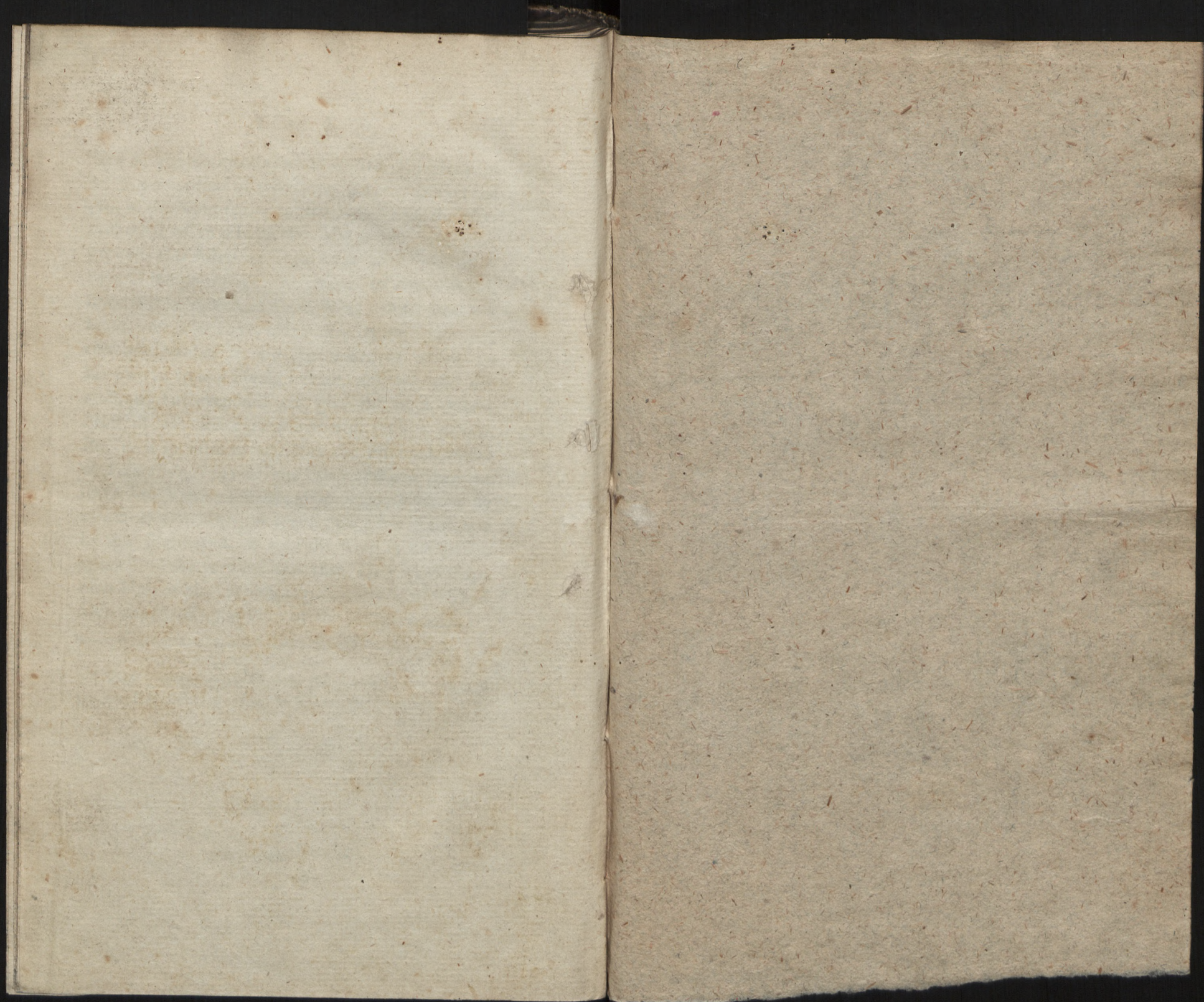
ranting the dismemberment of the Kingdom in 1773, on account of some supposed attempts on the part of the King (prior to that Epoch) for the establishment of an Hereditary Monarchy. On what grounds this Assertion could have been founded is beyond the power of imagination to comprehend, since it is notorious, that the King neither then nor before the year 1791, either directly or indirectly, through himself or by the means of others, in his own or in any Foreign State, not only did not attempt, but even did not give the most distant Hint of his desire to accomplish such a design. But it is in vain to attribute the dismemberment of Poland in 1793 to any other motives than the interested Views of its Neighbours, glossed over by official Declarations, in which one great object was by this imputation to ruin the King in the public opinion, at the very moment that They were stripping Him of his \* principal prerogatives, which had been conferred upon Him by the *pacta Conventa*.

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\* These prerogatives consisted in the power of nominating to the Starosties and to the places of Senators and Ministers.

FINIS.







West. Polign.

C. spec.



