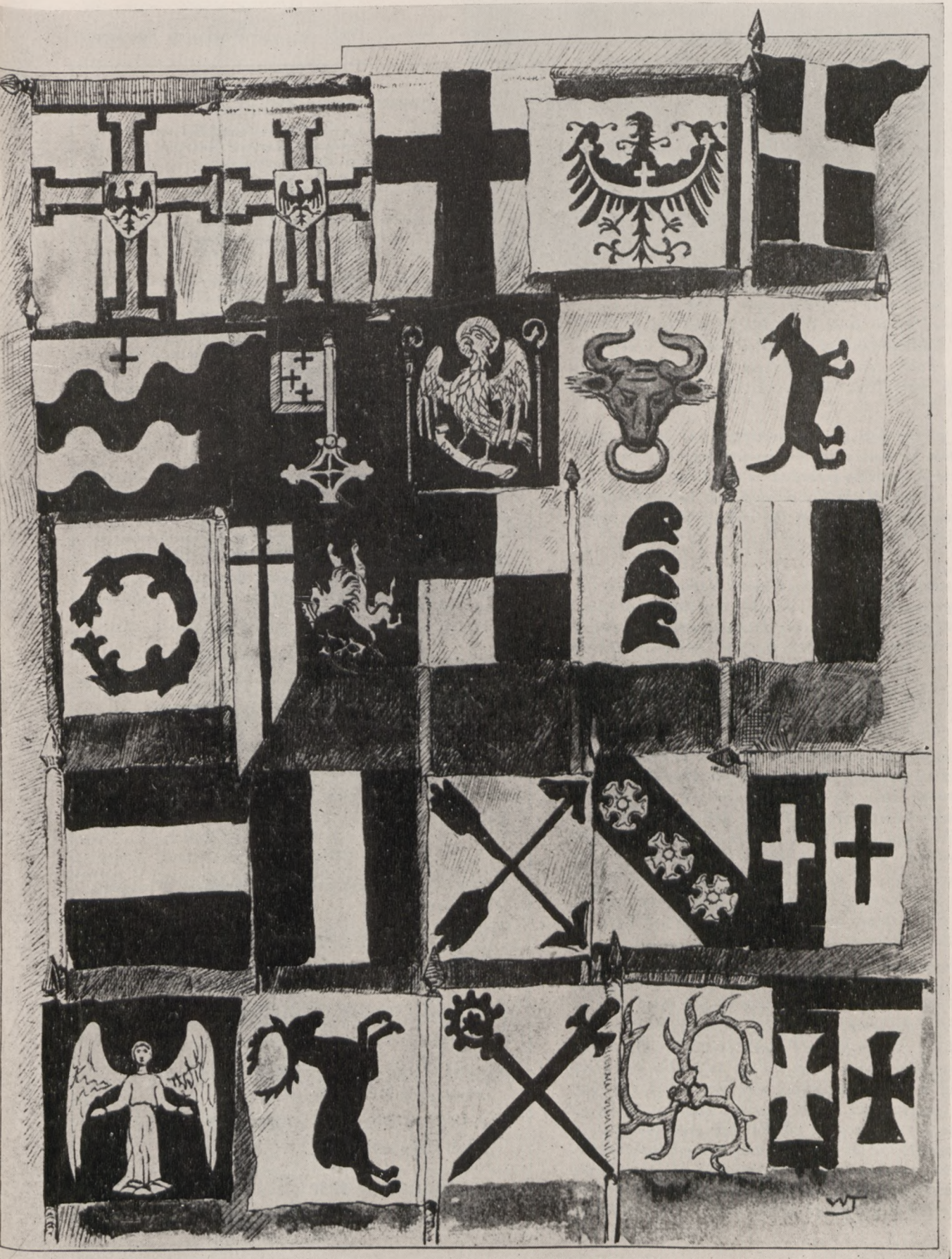


# THE POLISH REVIEW

VOL. V

JULY 15, 1945

No. 23



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# Message to the Polish People by President Wladyslaw Raczkiewicz

"On assuming the office of the President of the Polish Republic, I took a solemn oath that I would 'defend the sovereign rights of the Polish state, guard its dignity, respect its constitution, apply equal justice to all its citizens, protect it from evil and dangers, and consider devoting all of my energies to its well-being as my first and foremost duty.

"During this long war, the most terrible in the annals of history, while Poland fought the German invaders with unparalleled heroism, I have devoted all my strength to fulfilling the duties to which I am pledged by my oath of office. The indomitable fight which the Poles have put up is sufficient proof that they cherish freedom above everything else. This passion for freedom is an age-old tradition of our people, and it is always a living torch which is passed on from one generation to another.

"It was this love of freedom which animated us during the desperate September campaign in 1939, and which after its conclusion led so many Poles to serve in the Polish Armed Forces abroad or to swell the ranks of the heroic Home Army and Underground organization under the cruel German yoke. Polish blood has flowed freely in defense of freedom on every front in this war, on land, at sea, and in the air.

"It was for freedom that we sacrificed our dearest treasures, and that we have made the greatest sacrifices in blood and property ever to be recorded in our history. Freedom is the very essence of the Polish ideal and national will; to defend it and safeguard it was the main goal of the policy of the Polish nation and the main object of its struggle in this war.

"Today when the war of the United Nations against the German aggressor has been victoriously concluded, our country has not, alas, recovered true freedom yet. The Polish nation and state are still in great danger. The great task of reconstruction and of peace in freedom, for which we have fought, has not yet been achieved as far as Poland is concerned. To reach our goal, further sacrifices and further efforts will still be needed.

"The constitution of the Polish Republic imposes on me the duty of transferring the office of the President of the Polish Republic after the conclusion of the war into the hands of my successor chosen by the nation in democratic elections, free from violence and threats of any kind. I shall do it immediately when our nation is in a position to hold such elections. For the time being, I remain at my post in accordance with both provisions of the Constitution now in force, and also, I think, with the will of the immense majority of the Polish people.

"I am confident that this decision of mine will be understood throughout the world by all those who hold freedom, justice and law in higher esteem and regard than they do brute force, or the temporary victory of violence. It will be the duty of the citizens of the Polish Republic, so grievously suffering under so many blows, to see to it that the great traditions of our national culture will not be lost, that our links with our past will not be severed, that our ideals of freedom are not betrayed; it will be their duty to maintain their allegiance to the lawful authorities of the Polish Republic, and not to weaken in their strivings for the restoration to the Polish Republic of its rights and for the place due to it among the free nations of the world. We are living

through a period of great dangers and difficulties for our nation and our state, but I firmly believe that Almighty God will bless our efforts so that Poland will emerge from this new ordeal, victorious, secure and with her rights undiminished."

LONDON, June 29, 1945.

—Wladyslaw Raczkiewicz

## Present Status of the Polish Armed Forces

Polish Military Headquarters in London published the following declaration concerning the present status of the Polish Forces in Italy, Germany, the British Isles and elsewhere:

"A number of misguided and erroneous statements have been made in recent days concerning the status of the Polish Forces, including the Army, Navy, Air Force and auxiliary services.

"The facts are that the status of the Polish Forces, which total roughly about a quarter of a million men, remains unchanged despite the apparent changing character of the political situation in Poland.

"The morale and discipline of the Polish Forces remain high. The Officer Corps is in full control of the situation. There is no question of the troops not getting their pay. There is no fear of mass desertion as has been maliciously suggested in certain quarters.

"The Second Polish Corps in Italy remains an integral part of the Eighth Army under the supreme command of Field Marshal Alexander, and continues to take orders from him.

"The First Polish Armored Division and Parachute Brigade in Germany continue to accept responsibilities under the supreme command of Field Marshal Montgomery.

"Polish troops quartered in the British Isles continue to perform their required duties under the supreme command of British military authorities.

"The Polish Air Force and Navy are still operating under the direct command of the RAF and the British Admiralty respectively.

"While the Polish Forces individually and collectively have not yet achieved the aims for which they have fought since September 1, 1939, they feel that they have performed their share of the Allied victory in Europe, and that they have not fought, bled and died in vain.

"They remain loyal to the President of the Polish Republic, Wladyslaw Raczkiewicz, constitutional head of the Polish nation and of the Polish Forces."

—LONDON, June 30, 1945.

## THE POLISH REVIEW

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Age-Old Scorn for Germans Reflected in Polish Literature and Proverbs

The Town of "Maczkow" in Germany Becomes a Polish Community.

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# LETTER TO THE CIVILIZED WORLD

On June 20th *DZIENNIK POLSKI*, official Polish Government newspaper in London, published the following open letter from former Polish political prisoners of war appealing to the entire civilized world to hear their stories of the incredible tortures and mass murders that took place in German concentration camps. The letter follows:

“THE Germans shot men, women and children en masse, and hung people in both public and private executions. They forced children to hang their parents and vice versa. They burned down whole villages. In town and city streets and at crossroads they staged manhunts, shooting at victims from machine guns, pistols or throwing hand grenades at them. Those who survived such hunts were sent off to a Gestapo prison where, through torture and starvation, they were forced to reveal the names and addresses of their acquaintances. Those who lived through this sort of inquest, the Germans sent off to concentration camps, first of all to Oswiecim. There the Germans made the prisoners build so-called *Himmlerstadt* or *Lager Birkenau* on marshes. These consisted of 900 barracks without any living accommodations that were supposed to house 1,500,000 persons. This was to be the camp through which the whole Polish nation was to pass, to be tortured and burned in the crematoria. There were to be 36 barracks, but only six were built and several trenches, pits and hearths were dug.

“If the Germans won the war, the Polish nation was to have become a slave nation. And after the Polish nation, all other European nations were to pass through similar camps which were to have been constructed all over Europe as soon as tests were completed for the best technical methods of changing millions of living people into manure for German soil. No nation in Europe would have been able to defend itself against Teutonic fury for a long time hence if the Germans had won the war.

“Furthermore in Oswiecim's Block 10 a most cruel vivisection was practiced on men and women who were political prisoners (a majority of whom were politically quite innocent). These consisted of abortions, artificial impregnation, sterilization and castration. Entering that camp meant sure death. But before death came, every prisoner exhausted himself in inhuman work to increase the might of the German murderers and could die at any moment of starvation, dirt or torture. The civilian workers were forcibly sent to work, while former prisoners of war who had been driven to civilian labor were hanged publicly by the Germans on charges of disgracing the German race. Many were sent off to an SK (Penal Company) or an OK (Educational Company) where they passed through additional tortures and had to die within three weeks. The prisoner who could survive such tortures was called a *Politische Abteilung* and was sent to Block 2 where he was murdered by an *Unterschaftsfuehrer* who shot him through the back of the head. Each such prisoner was tortured beforehand, starved, beaten and suffocated in bunkers especially built for this purpose. Many also died of starvation.

“On September 28, 1942, during a few hours, the Germans reached a peak in their crimes, when in Block 11 they murdered 300 Poles. Underwear was hardly ever changed in the camp and there were no baths, because the Germans wanted to facilitate the spread of disease. Perfidy reached its height when thousands of invalids were burned alive in order to disinfect a camp. The Germans liked best to shoot the Poles in the back of the head. The directors of the political department and the commander of the camp were specialists at



Polish prisoners sit about an indescribably filthy hospital in a German concentration camp recently liberated by the Polish First Armored Division.

this pastime. This took place two or three times weekly, the victims being called out at random. It was enough to have a school certificate to be shot in Block 11. Very often, when some prisoner was ill, he received an injection of poison in the heart. Frenchmen and Jews died mostly of hard work and the bad climate, as well as of disease and in the gas cells. The Poles were mostly shot in the back of the head, but were also beaten to death or killed in the gas cells. Out of 14,000 Russian prisoners of war, only 86 were alive after two years in the camp. Families received notices that an 'invalid died because of heart failure' or some similar ailment.

“A favorite game of the German hangmen was to beat a prisoner over the head until his brains flowed out. Other sports were pouring cold water on naked prisoners in the winter, putting a stick on a prisoner's neck on the ends of which two SS men would stand, etc.

“Long trains of Jews from all over Europe and Poles were brought nightly to the camps. Mothers with children, old and young people, were all taken on the pretense of being sent off for labor in Germany. Those few Jews who were kept alive in order to work in the gas cells, were forced to send letters to their families saying that they were well and doing fine.

“During the winter of 1942-43, more than 300 men, women and children were sent to Oswiecim from the Dabrowa coalfields on charges of belonging to the White Eagle organization. They were all tortured to death. In Block 20 about 500 Polish children all under 10 years of age, were killed by poison injections. If one prisoner tried to escape, the whole camp had to be present at roll-call for many hours, without regard for the weather, while families or acquaintances of the culprit, babies as well as adults were sent for and hanged or disposed of in the gas chambers.

“One of the newest inventions was a type of armored car in which victims were killed by gas during transportation. Smoke and fire from the dead plagued the vicinity of the camp night and day for all the years of German occupancy. The healthiest of people became insane. German soldiers could not tackle the job themselves. That is why they were helped by their countrymen, who were in the camp for years, and who were allowed to live comfortably in return for their killing and murdering. They also took criminal elements from among the prisoners who murdered their comrades for the price of saving their own lives. This happened in all the

(Please turn to page 14)



# "THE PRUSSIAN SPIRIT" SERIES OF PAINTINGS BY WOJCIECH KOSSAK



*Teutonic Knights plunder Polish village.*

*By Wojciech Kossak*



*A Prussian military band plays the forbidden Polish National Anthem, tricking Poles drafted into the German army to charge the French at the battle of Gravelotte, 1870.*

*By Wojciech Kossak*



*Albert, Duke of Prussia, swears fealty to King of Poland in market-square of Cracow, 1525.*

*By Wojciech Kossak*



*Prussian policeman reads German expropriation decree to Polish peasants, 1907.*

*By Wojciech Kossak*



# German Propaganda Around the Battle of Grunwald

by G. I. RALTON

THE crushing defeat administered to the Teutonic Knights and their armies, composed mainly of the German contingents of that time, by the Polish-Lithuanian-Ruthenian federation, is more than a memorable date in Polish history. It is one of those rare events in the life of nations that mark a turning point in the relations of great national groups in Europe. Just as the battle of Liegnitz of 1241 checked the conquest of Europe by the Tatars, and just as the lifting of the siege of Vienna in 1683 several centuries later, saved Europe from the Ottoman wave, so the victory of Grunwald-Tannenberg of 1410 has always been considered as a symbol of the centuries-old struggle between the Slav and the Teutonic worlds. The battle itself and the campaign of 1409-1410 were by no means decisive in a purely military sense; for more than a century after its defeat, the Teutonic Order remained a threat to Poland and the Baltic area. But the battle stopped once and for all the slow but continuous process of German expansion and infiltration toward the East.

July 15, 1410, when Poles, Ruthenians, Lithuanians, and Czechs shed common blood in a fight for survival, was a day of triumph for the peoples of Eastern Europe, led by the Polish King Wladyslaw Jagiello and at the same time a day of shame for the German world . . . The defeat of Grunwald was really a defeat of Germanism because the armies of the Order and their military effort were a collective expression of German might.



Drawing by A. Lesser. Collection of National Museum, Warsaw  
Teutonic Knight of the Cross, stone effigy on a sarcophagus, Weissenburg, Bavaria, (1314).



Medal struck in Cracow in 1910 to commemorate the Grunwald Quinticentennial. Executed by Jan Raszka, its face shows King Jagiello leaning on his sword and shield with the Giedymin coat-of-arms. In the border are four shields bearing the Polish eagle, the Lithuanian coat-of-arms "Pursuit," the crests of Smolensk and Ruthenia, and the inscription "And he crushed the head of the Teutonic hydra." On the reverse is a detail from a battle scene—a Polish foot soldier throwing a Teuton from his horse.

The memory of Grunwald has haunted the Germans for centuries; they have never desisted from their attempt to obscure its importance and to remove the symbols of their defeat. In 1914 they spoke—after Hindenburg's victory at Tannenberg—of "avenging 1410"; on that battlefield they erected a war memorial and near it buried Hindenburg, whose ancestors had been killed on the same battlefield in 1410. And one of their first "cultural measures" after the outbreak of World War II in 1939 was to destroy the Grunwald monument that had been presented to Cracow in 1910 by Ignacy Paderewski.

German propaganda about Grunwald started very early. The official task of the Order was the conversion of the ancient Prussians and other Baltic tribes to Christianity, but this task was performed slowly so as to establish a German secular power based on a rigid military discipline and backed by an unscrupulous diplomacy. The weakness of the Polish Piast dynasty, the internecine feuds of the provincial princelings, and the constant interventions of the German Emperor and other rulers contributed to the development of the Order's power.

In the 14th century the Knights became the protagonists of German policy in the East and their methods were no different from those of today: *Drang nach Osten*, rapacity, mendacity and hypocrisy. The great Lithuanian state comprising the vast provinces of present-day Podolia, Volhynia, the Ukraine and White Ruthenia, was the main area for the Order's activities. Also in the 14th century a series of "crusades" consisting of a calculated "terror propaganda" was initiated. But the method of conversion by the sword was not the happiest way of instilling sincere Christianity into the pagans. What the Knights wanted was not conversion, but power. Christianization of the pagans deprived the Order of its pretext to expand its power, to destroy, to kill, to frighten . . . When the holy fire of the Lithuanians, the *smicz*, was finally extinguished, when the last pagan oak in the "holy woods" disappeared, the crusade no longer held any attraction; no Western Knight would risk his life in the distant forests for a holy cause . . .

So, it is obvious that the Polish-Lithuanian federative union of 1386 threatened the vital interests of the Order. The peaceful conversion of Lithuania was a hard blow for the Knights; not only were its conquests definitely stopped, thanks to the military cooperation of both endangered countries, but the Order itself lost its *raison d'être*, since there were no pagans left in its neighborhood. For more than one hundred years the annual raids on Lithuania had been the occasion for a rendez-vous of the flower of Western Knighthood,

In order not to lose such invaluable support, the Teutonic Order now started an immense propaganda campaign. It questioned the sincerity of the Lithuanian conversion, it filled the world with noisy accusations of Lithuanian barbarism. The Teutonic Knights really succeeded in convincing public opinion in Europe that the Lithuanians had not really ceased to be heathens, and that the crusades should be  
(Please turn to p. 14)



# Memorial of Wladyslaw Jagiello

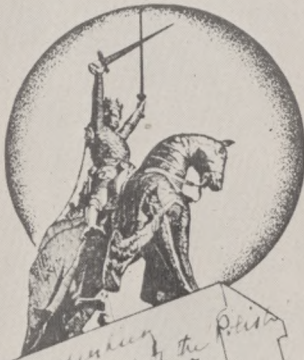
King of Poland Grand Duke of Lithuania

Presented to the People of the City of New York by  
citizens of Polish ancestry and their friends

July 15, 1945

35th Anniversary of the Battle of Grunwald  
Grand Lawn, Central Park, New York City

The Monument proposed by the King Jagiello Monument Com-  
mittee, Inc., New York City



Representing  
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Republic and the  
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**P**HOTOMONTAGE showing the ground-breaking ceremonies on June 2, 1945, in New York's Central Park (east end of the Great Lawn Lake near the Inter-Museum Walk) for Stanislaw Ostrowski's equestrian statue of Polish King Wladyslaw Jagiello, victor over the Germans at Grunwald in the 15th century. Originally, this statue stood in front of the Polish Pavilion at the New York World's Fair, and was later acquired by the City of New York. On June 17, 1945, another ceremony was held in connection with the laying and blessing of the statue's cornerstone. July 15, 1945, 535th anniversary of the crushing German defeat at Grunwald, will see the unveiling of the Jagiello monument by Lieutenant Colonel Francis S. Gabreski, famed Polish-American ace recently liberated from a German prisoner-of-war camp. Addresses by prominent Americans and Poles will be a feature of the occasion.

Mayor Fiorello H. LaGuardia and Park Commissioner Robert Moses are honorary chairman and vice-chairman respectively of the King Jagiello Monument Committee. Joseph Onka, Sr. is the Committee's president. Other Committee officers are the Rt. Rev. J. C. Dworzak, Francis X. Wazeter, Mrs. George Burr, Mrs. Felicia Ross, Mrs. Jane Wegrynski, Gustav Struminski, Ladislaus Robaczynski, Marjan Kilarski, Teofila Jablonska, Mrs. Anna Kazmierczak, Casimir J. Koszarski, Joseph B. Glebocki, and John A. Pateracki.

The official document of erection of the Jagiello monument, forming part of the above photomontage, was immured in the cornerstone on June 17, 1945. It bears, in the upper left-hand corner, the signature of the Hon. Sylwin Strakacz, Minister Plenipotentiary and Consul General of Poland, representing the President of the Polish Republic and the Prime Minister.



# KING JAGIELLO'S MESSAGE OF VICTORY\*



King Wladyslaw Jagiello, from Gwagnin's 16th Century Chronicle.

**F**IVE hundred and thirty-five years ago, on the 15th of July, 1410, there occurred one of the great decisive clashes of history, in the Battle of Grunwald, or Tannenberg, as it is called.

The classic description of that clash, in which Germans fought Poles and Lithuanians for mastery of the Vistula plain, is the one found in Jan Dlugosz's *CHRONICLE OF POLAND*, and it may be read in either Latin or Polish at the New York Public Library.

Dlugosz's father actually participated in the battle of Grunwald, and the son, born only five years after it took place, must often have heard eye-witness accounts of it from him.

In one place in his *CHRONICLE* Dlugosz says, "Now there were at the place of meeting of the two armies, six lofty oak trees, in which many persons, both from the King's side and from the Knights', perched in order to view from above the first charge of hostile forces upon each other, as well as the outcome of the struggle for both."

Dlugosz's description of the battle has all the brilliance and reality of an account by one of those watchers from the oak trees. But it was not actually written by one who took

\*From *The Wayside Willow*: Prose and verse translated from the Polish by members of Klub Polski of Columbia University. Edited by Marion Moore Coleman. 1945. 50 pp. \$2.



Armor of Polish knights and foot-soldiers worn at the Battle of Grunwald.



Grunwald Diorama in Cracow. By Tadeusz Popiel and Rozwadowski.

part in it.

For a description by an actual participant in the struggle, we must go to a famous letter, never before translated into English, in which the King himself, Wladyslaw IV Jagiello, leader with his brother Witold of the Polish-Lithuanian coalition, writes his Queen exactly what happened on that fateful July day.

The Queen, it should be noted, was not King Wladyslaw's famous first wife Jadwiga, but his second wife Anna, whom he married at Jadwiga's own wish, in 1402, three years after Jadwiga's death. Anna was a link, through her father, with the first Polish dynasty, that of Piast.

*Sovereign most excellent! Our Consort illustrious and most dear!*

*From the moment of our taking leave of you, the Creator of heaven and earth has visited us and our men with a continuous succession of proofs of his fatherly kindness and has, up to now, granted us all our desires, in that we are sound of body and mind and also in that, through His protection, during the time we were on our way into the territory of the enemy, we were able to reach what ever state stood in our way and always to make terms with this without any resistance whatsoever.*

*On the third holy day, however, on the Feast Day of the Sending Forth of the Disciples, the Grand Master*

*of the Knights of the Cross approached our armies, with a full display of armed might, and in a warlike spirit.*

*At this, after our men had listened to the sacred rites of the mass, hearkening to the very end with great reverence and devotion, we sallied forth ourselves onto the field of battle and, having drawn up our lines in proper formation, held ourselves in readiness for the conflict.*

*While we were taking stock of each other's armies there, the Grand Master of the Knights and the Marshal of their army, sent to us and to the illustrious Duke Witold, our most beloved brother, two swords, through two heralds, who came bringing us this message:*

*"You will have noticed, O King and Witold, that we are making ready for battle with you at once, and we present you herewith these swords in token of that design. To us, there-*

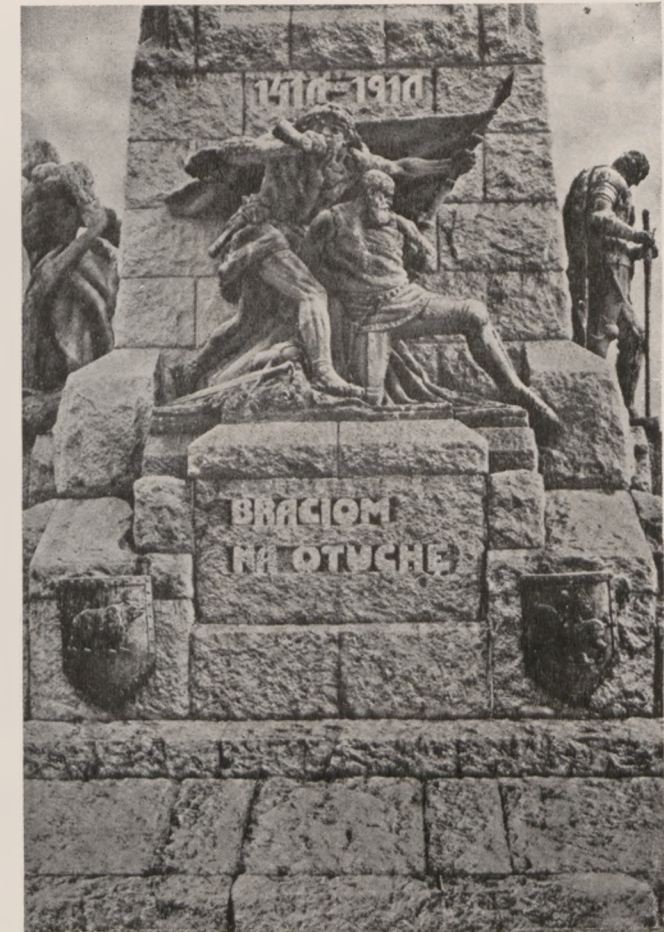
*fore, grant the naming of the place of battle, or else do you yourselves choose the place!"*

*Unto them, with mildness matching their own, we replied:*

*"The swords you have sent us we have received, and in the name of the Lord Christ, who humbles the heads of the proud, we accept the gauge of battle. But the place of battle and of conflict we are not willing to let you choose, nor shall we ourselves do so either. Whatsoever place Omnipotent God deems worthy to vouchsafe us, let that be the one (Please turn to p. 14)*



Collection of Matejko House, Cracow  
German prisoners pay homage to King Wladyslaw Jagiello following their defeat at Grunwald. Watercolor by Jan Matejko.



*"The achievement before us is not a product of hate. It was born of deep love for the Fatherland—not only love for her past greatness and present weakness, but for her strong and brilliant future. This monument was born of love and gratitude for those of our forebears who went to battle not for pillage or loot, but raised their victorious arms in defense of a just and rightful cause.*

*"The creator of the monument and those who helped him in this work, pay this tribute to the sacred memory of their forefathers. They place it on the altar of their country, like a religious votum, beseeching those exalted and luminous spirits long since joined with God to pray for strength of faith, calm of hope, thoughtfulness, patience and that good will without which there can be neither humble virtue nor famous deeds.*

*"Let the nation, in the person of the highest representative of our Polish land, receive this offering of our hearts.*

*"We fervently desire that every Pole, every Lithuanian, from the olden part of the Fatherland or from across the ocean, consider this monument a symbol of our common past, a proof of common fame, a presage of a better future and as embodying his own soul, strong in faith . . .*

*"To our ancient and beloved capital we give this work of art for eternal safe keeping."*

*—Ignacy Jan Paderewski when unveiling the Grunwald Monument in Cracow, July 15, 1910.*



# Age-Old Scorn for Germans Reflected in Polish Literature and Proverbs

by ZYGMUNT WOLSKI

HAVING had Germans as neighbors for more than a thousand years, it was only natural that the Poles should get to know the Teutonic character. And German possibilities being what they are, it is not surprising that Polish opinion of the Germans has not been very favorable. Polish literature is replete with evidence of how Poles feel toward their two-faced, warlike German "friends."

As early as the 13th century, an anonymous document declared that "natural hatred exists between Poles and Germans" (*naturale odium est inter Polonos et Teutonicos*). In his *Chronicle* (1223) Wincenty Kadlubek left no doubt that he could not suffer the Germans.

In the song about Bailiff Albert (1223), we read this about the Germans: "Wherever they appear, they wish to be first and subordinate to no one and gradually through cunning they gain the highest distinctions in a country."

Jan Ostrorog, 15th century Polish historian and statesman, in his anti-German Memorial on the improvement of the Republic declared that "nature itself created an eternal disharmony and hatred between the two languages (Polish and German) and in several other matters."

In the 16th century, during which the majority of medieval German colonists became polonized, such opinions multiplied. Already at that time everyone knew the proverb which Wacław Potocki incorporated in a poem in the 17th century: "One thing is sure, until the world ends, Germans toward Poles will never be friends."

The Kings of Old Poland were sometimes elected from among foreign candidates. On one occasion a Frenchman and a Hapsburg were both eager to sit on the Polish throne. In connection with the campaigning, a leaflet appeared in 1573 called *Conversation at Kruszwica* which proclaimed: "Between Poles and Germans there can never be concord. German customs do not agree with Polish customs, nor does the black eagle agree with the white eagle." An unknown publicist wrote that the German nation "is vindictive toward Poles from birth itself and forever contrary," another that the German people "differs from the Polish people in customs and dress, war and peace, all in all, in everything."

Words in this vein are also typical of Poland's poets of the Golden Age, 16th century Mikolaj Rej and Jan Kochanowski. The latter admonished his countrymen: "I don't know whether you can rely on the Germans as on friends and how far you have mutual confidence in each other. I know only this, they observe you watchfully and year after year encroach upon you."

Bishop Pawel Piasecki states in his chronicle: "To the Poles the name of Germans is suspect, because innately the latter nourish in their hearts a merciless hatred for the Slav tribe."

Wacław Potocki wrote in 1688:

"To swim against the current and fly without wings,  
To use a fisherman's net in snaring a bird that sings,  
To plough land with a wolf—all these are hard to do.  
But Germans and Poles together—that is a thing to rue."



Cartoon from 1806 picturing a victory of the Polish Uprising in Poznania over the Germans. The devil dressed in German clothing symbolizes crushed Teutonic force.

An interesting illustration of how Polish gentry reacted toward the Germans in the 17th century is the following occurrence. Traveling French actors were giving an *al fresco* performance for Polish gentry, some of whom were on horseback. In one part of the play, French soldiers were supposed to have taken a German emperor prisoner after a victorious battle. The gentry, many of whom were beholding a theatre play for the first time, were so impressed by the realistic acting that one of them cried out: "Kill him, if you've already caught him; don't give him anything to eat, because if you release him, he will seek vengeance; he will wage perpetual war and spill human blood and the world will never experience peace. If you kill him, the French King will get the empire, and God willing, he will be our Emperor too." The excited Pole concluded his harangue with the promise, "If you don't kill him, I will." When he realized that the actors had no intention of heeding his demand, the literal minded Polish gentleman aimed an arrow between the "Emperor's" ribs. The shaft's sharp-pointed head pierced the poor comedian's body. In that moment others also seized their bows and arrows

and shot their darts into the crowd of French artists, striking the "French King" in the head. The remaining actors precipitously fled the stage.

That saying about the age-old Polish-German hostility appeared in even greater number after the partition of Poland in the 18th century, is to be expected.

Formulations by Poland's greatest poet, Adam Mickiewicz, have become proverbial expressions:

"The Teutonic Python none can pacify  
By prayer, presents or hospitality." or  
"Better to hold a hot iron in one's palm



An illustration by Wojciech Kossak for the tale, *Pan Twardowski*. According to the legend, Squire Twardowski, in Polish dress, rides a rooster while Kusy, the devil, is traditionally depicted as a ridiculous figure in German costume.

Than to grasp the right hand of a Teuton."

Litawor, the hero of *Mindowe*, a play by another Polish Romantic poet, Slowacki, declares that compelled to live among Germans, he feels such hatred and contempt for them that his heart is ready to burst in his breast.

"A German must first be knocked down, only then can one talk to him as one would to a human being," says Maciej Wierzbinski in his contemporary novel *The Shackles Burst*. He expressed this thought even more sharply in a 1935 novel dedicated to the Polish Navy, *Attack of the Vultures*: Harmony with the Germans is impossible. "Such a brutally egotistic and passionately greedy nation is incapable of achieving understanding either with the weak whom it scorns, or with the strong, whom it envies. When a German offers me wine, I know it is poisoned."

Polish literature was not alone in expressing distrust of the Germans. Polish proverbs—those pithy kernels of wisdom coined by the common people—voice only too eloquently what the Poles feel about Germany. Here are a few:

"Peace with Germans like between  
wolves and sheep."  
"The young oak creaks, the German  
shrieks."  
"Sooner will you swallow a sunray  
Than get anywhere with the Germans."  
"Since the beginning of man  
The German drives nails into the Pole."  
"German protection burns even in the  
winter time."  
"Talk with a German, but keep a stone  
in your pocket."  
"Just as winter will never be summer,  
So a German will never be a brother."  
"Germans and Poles, cats and dogs."  
"A Prussian gift: he gave it and took it  
back."  
"He who trusts a German, will get a  
cudgel blow."  
"Never approach a German without a  
stick!"  
"He who serves a German, is paid by  
the devil."  
"Germans are good only when they  
sleep."  
"German men and German women  
Are he-devils and she-devils."  
"The German is a brother to the devil."  
"German faith is like an old cow."

Literally scores of such anti-German proverbs exist in all parts of Poland. They reflect the deep-seated Polish hostility toward everything German. Indeed, there are many ways in which this antagonism has found expression in popular tradition. For one thing, the Polish word for a German is *Niemiec*, which means a mute person and suggests that Poles did not think very highly of the German language. This is confirmed by a popular proverb:

"He put his tongue in the kneading-trough  
And now speaks German well enough."

Polish roaches boast the distinction of having been named for the Prussians and *Prusak* is what they are called. One proverb even mentions the two- and multi-footed "Prussians" in one breath:

"The cockroach and the German  
Both have a fat abdomen."

Blessed with a vivid imagination, the Poles have a rich folklore. The devil plays an important part in the tales passed on from generation to generation. There is Boruta, the gentleman devil who lives in a castle in Western Poland; Rokita, a peasant devil whose home is in the reeds; and Kusy, the little German devil who does all the dirty work and is so stupid he always gets tricked.

Stupid, is how the Poles characterize the Germans. Cunning, but stupid. Another proverb declares:

"The German is tall as a poplar green,  
But stupid withal as a lima bean."

The storehouse of Polish folk songs and ditties teems with references to the German problem—none of them flattering. Here is an irreverent little piece:

"In Cracow's royal castle  
The gods were having a bout.  
Our Lord Jesus trounced the German,  
And knocked his two feet out."

And the problem of mixed marriages is dismissed thus:

"She is Polish, he is German,  
She fell into a foreigner's snare.  
What strange misfits will result from  
Such an ill-assorted pair!"

One of the earliest Polish legends is that of Wanda, Queen of Poland, who threw herself into the swirling waters of the Vistula rather than marry her German suitor, who threatened war if she rejected him and who would make her people suffer if he ruled over them.

A nation that has legends of this kind rooted in its history must speak from sad experience. Its words deserve to be heeded so that Germany may never rise again.

*The Teutons' eyes are closed forever,  
Their silenced tongues no more can roil;  
For death quenched their eternal hunger,  
For "lebensraum" and conquered soil.*

—From *Grunwald*, by M. Hemar.



*Flagellation*, painting by Jan Styka. The theme of the painting is inspired by the beating of Polish children in German schools for refusing to pray in the German language. The flagellated Christ appears to the martyred Polish children.

## One of the Oldest Proofs of German Cruelty

"... For whoever heard of torturing Christian prisoners of war—as you are doing with our people; killing them with the sword and putting them to all kinds of torture, in this way straining our Christian faith.

"At the same time, you know full well that though we have more of your prisoners of war than you have of ours, we do not wish to torture them, unless forced to do so by the inconceivable tyranny you vent upon our people.

"Now therefore, still trusting your honor, we request you to treat our people as we treat your prisoners of war, and spare them. However, you never did like to spare human blood..."

—Jagiello, King of Poland, presenting a grievance to Commander Henry von Plauen against atrocities perpetrated by the Teutonic Order on Polish prisoners of war (1410).



# THE TOWN OF "MACZKOW" IN GER MANY BECOMES A POLISH COMMUNITY



Some of the 1,700 Polish women captured fighting with the Polish Home Army in Warsaw last year, who were liberated by the Polish First Armored Division. They had been held under strong guard at a camp near Haren, Germany, now called "Maczkow." Once the Allies freed them, these women took over complete management of the camp, posted their own guards and held drills.



Three of the many babies born to Polish women during their internment as prisoners of war at the Haren camp, now "Maczkow." At present, they are receiving all the nourishment they need as well as careful attention from Polish doctors and nurses in the camp. The Allies have supplied the necessary food, clothing, baby carriages, etc.



A Polish classroom for recently liberated Polish children in Germany established by Lieutenant Colonel E. T. Hayes of Paducah, Kentucky, in an effort to give the children much needed education. Many had never before been in a classroom.

NOW that hostilities have ceased in Europe, the First Polish Armored Division, that played so important a part in the conquest of northwestern Germany, and in the liberation of The Netherlands, has taken over the equally important task of caring for the countless numbers of freed Polish "slave workers" and former inmates of the notorious concentration camps, some of whom now enjoy their first moments of freedom in six years.

The Division's newspaper, *The First Armored Division Daily* recently reviewed the situation:

"Our contribution to victory over Germany is well-known to the whole world. Many towns in northwestern Germany were captured by the First Armored Division. It is not by chance that we are on this territory, where we have liberated many thousands of our fellow countrymen. At present we are caring for them—in a way that no one else but we could."

A Polish war correspondent supplemented this statement in a recent cable from Germany:

"Our Armored Division has begun a new phase of work. After the victorious ending of the battles on the Western Front and after occupying the port of Wilhelmshaven and the surrounding area, Polish troops are now beginning to care for Polish deportees and refugees who had been brought to Germany for forced labor, as well as Polish civilians and Polish soldiers liberated from German prison camps.

"Brigadier General Bronislaw Noel of the Division's artillery is in charge of our fellow countrymen. Two special headquarters have been set up by the Division, the first commanded by Colonel Antoni Grudzinski, in charge of Polish civilians, and the second, under Colonel Szydlowski, looking after liberated Polish prisoners of war. Both headquarters work in closest collaboration with Allied organizations.

"At the moment there are some 15,000 civilian Poles of both sexes and all ages on the Division's sector. The two headquarters are trying to move deported families to a special settlement. In the future there will be about 3,000 Polish civilians in the territory occupied by our Division."

The special settlement of which the correspondent spoke, was established in the former German town of Haren, that was renamed "Maczkow" by the liberated Poles settled there, in honor of General Stanislaw Maczek, Commander-in-Chief of the First Armored Division. Since the General's family comes from Lwow, the town's new inhabitants, most of them deportees from Lodz, Warsaw, Kielce, Radom and Lwow, have renamed many of its streets after those in Lwow.

The German population of the town was evacuated on May 22nd by the Allied military administration. At present its new Polish residents number more than 4,000 persons whose number steadily increases.

An artillery officer, veteran of the 1944-45 campaigns and formerly a lawyer in Warsaw, was appointed mayor of the town. Maczkow has been divided into four quarters and those in turn have been subdivided into groups under the supervision of prefects. Each of these prefects is in charge of a group of some 70 to 100 inhabitants.

Food for the recently liberated Poles now living in Maczkow is provided by the Allied military administration that sends it to a central storage place from where it is shipped to auxiliary storage depots in the various quarters of the town. Each inhabitant must personally call for his food ration. The food is plentiful; the only shortages are of chocolate, cigarettes and tobacco.

Maczkow also has a hospital, housed in a large one-story building that at present has 75 beds. A

divisional medical officer is in charge. Polish nurses who previously worked at the Oberlangen camp now care for the hospital's patients. The hospital already has out-patients, dental and medical departments as well as one for the treatment of venereal diseases.

Schools were scheduled to open June 11, while one nursery was functioning even earlier. Besides schools and nurseries, evening courses are to be offered to adults working during the day.

The organization of work is supervised by a captain of the Horse Artillery who spent five years as a prisoner of war in Germany. His greatest concern at present is the industrialization of the town. A number of mechanical and electro-technical workshops have been set up along with several tailoring and shoemaking shops, four bakeries and two hair-dressing establishments.

Years spent as slaves deprived of all rights and privileges and reduced to living almost like animals have not destroyed the deep faith of the Poles. Some 60 to 70 attend confession daily. On June 12, 75 weddings took place in Maczkow. Church services are always heavily attended.

Maczkow already has its own daily newspaper, *Dziennik Informacyjny* (*Daily Information Bulletin*). Some 400 stenciled copies are distributed every day. In addition, two loud-speakers have been installed in the community.

Visitors are surprised at the cleanliness and order evident in the little town. Nearly all of the neat houses now occupied by Polish families are decorated with the red and white flags of Poland.

One hundred policemen have been trained by the Polish Army to maintain order and regulate traffic in Maczkow. A fire department is being organized. Courts of law are planned. As the town's civilian organization develops, it will be allowed to take over more and more civic functions, until, if all goes well, it will be, in a few months' time, self-governing.

The liberated Poles, so short a time ago men and women forced to work and live in sub-human conditions, deprived of all rights, beaten, kicked, starved and worse, have proven their worth as good Poles by the way in which they have put all this behind them and have courageously begun to rebuild their shattered lives.



Liberated Polish slave laborers in Germany. One still wears the inscription *Pole* on the back of his jacket. All Polish workers held in the Reich were required to wear such marks of discrimination on their clothing.



## KING JAGIELLO'S MESSAGE OF VICTORY

*(Continued from page 9)*  
*on which battle is joined by us with you."*

*When these words had been spoken, both armies were moved forward, and ours, as it advanced, came into clash with theirs.*

*Terrible slaughter was inflicted, and we laid low their leaders, not through military might, nor through the great numbers of armed men possessed by us, but through the grace of God, who deems us worthy of the victory because of our prestige and knightly valor.*

*Their Grand Master and Marshal we laid low, and Swartzborg, Helbigens and many other leaders of the Knights, while others we put to flight, each man on our side pursuing one of*

*the enemy for a distance of at least two miles, as they fled amid swamps and streams. In fleeing an uncounted number were drowned and the rest slain, so that only a few escaped.*

*In the struggle with these same Prussians, who found themselves conquered and defeated through divine might, we took captive Conrad of Olzno and Stettin, the Younger, Christopher of Hungary, and an uncounted number of other hostages, and held these as prisoners of war.*

*Written back of Dabrowno, on the field of battle, the fourth holy day on the morrow of the Sending Forth of the Disciples.*

Note: The Latin text of the letter of Jagiello was copied from a volume borrowed from the University of California Library and translated by Anne Kruczek.

## LETTER TO THE CIVILIZED WORLD

*(Continued from page 3)*

camps in the Reich. In Buchenwald, there was not a single underfed German prisoner. They were all well-dressed, because they murdered others for that price. The prisoners feared that they would all be murdered when the war ended, but the rapid advance of the Allies prevented the Germans from carrying out this plan.

"These few facts can be confirmed, by other prisoners now liberated, and have been brought to the attention of the delegates of the British Parliament, Poles in the United States and the whole world, as well as our families in Poland by former political prisoners from that hell on earth: Auschwitz (Oswiecim), Birkenau (Rajsko), Buchenwald, Majdanek (Lublin), Tremblinka, Matthesen, Sachsenhausen, Grossrosen, Stuhof, Dachau, Flossenbürg, Nougammor and hundreds of other camps for Poles, Jews, French, Russians,

Czechs, Yugoslavs, Greeks, Belgians, Dutch, Lithuanians and other nationalities. The German civilian population spat at the prisoners, threw stones at them and cursed them.

"We write this open letter to the whole civilized world and the Governments of friendly powers, Great Britain, the United States and France, demanding:

"1. Punishment of all criminals

"2. That such things may never again happen in the world's history. We want, once and for all, to be safeguarded against murders, robbery and German bestiality. The Germans could become a nation of 70,000,000 by committing crimes for centuries only because their victims always forgave them. We are entitled to this demand by the biggest sacrifices, greatest efforts and the longest period of struggle with the barbarian. We ask to be taken out of this country as quickly as possible and that a detailed inquest be held based on our evidence."

## GERMAN PROPAGANDA AROUND THE BATTLE OF GRUNWALD

*(Continued from page 6)*

continued against them and even against the Poles who were accused of aiding a pagan country. Only in this way can we understand why after the Union of 1386, after the foundation of the Catholic bishopric in Wilno in 1387, the Knights could obtain the support of Western Europe for the campaign of 1410; a large section of public opinion in Western Europe regarded the battle of Grunwald as a struggle "with the Saracens . . ."

German propaganda of that time employed the same slogans and tricks recently utilized by Dr. Goebbels: the enemies are always "beasts," "uncivilized hordes"; Poles are called "traitors of Christianity and of civilization," "helpers of schismatics" (i.e., the Greek Orthodox Ruthenians, subjects of Lithuania). The Order's charge that King Wladyslaw Jagiello was forming an anti-Christian League to destroy civilization was a heavy blow for the pious King and the Polish ruling class. The tremendous sacrifices of Poland as a bastion of Western culture were ridiculed; the accusation of helping infidels could deprive the Polish-Lithuanian state of Europe's assistance in a future crisis and even forge a European coalition against the Jagiellonian state.

The influence of the Order, master of the Baltic and of maritime trade, and having spiritual and economic ties with Western Christendom, was very considerable. Therefore, Polish diplomacy started a strong counter-propaganda. Envoys and messengers were dispatched to European courts to present the true picture. And it is very characteristic that while the Order spoke of the peoples of Eastern Europe only in words of hatred and contempt, reminding us of contemporary diatribes of the "master race," the Poles and Lithuanians avoided any harsh words, any glorification of war and force; their language was couched in humility and their letters are imbued with the true spirit of Christianity

and at the same time reflect a consciousness of their civilizing mission.

But the voice of the Polish King remained unheeded. Requested to refuse help to the Order, Henry IV, King of England, answered that he would himself gladly fight in the ranks of the Order, were he not prevented from doing so by his conflict with France (One Hundred Years War).

Another Teutonic weapon was the familiar "divide and rule" strategy. At all cost, the Germans tried to prevent a coalition between Witold, Grand Duke of Lithuania, and his cousin, King Jagiello. Even when the two men reconciled their differences, the Teutonic Knights continued their futile attempts to drive a wedge between them.

A third method of German diplomacy was the use of money. King Wenzel of Bohemia, King Sigismund of Hungary and several minor sovereigns were won over by outright bribes or skillfully concealed financial or territorial advantages.

To this day German propaganda has been spreading an "official" version of the Grunwald battle of 1410. It consists of the following points:

1. The battle was neither decisive nor important.

2. The huge losses of the Order's armies are minimized, while the losses of the Polish-Lithuanian armies are exaggerated.

3. The atrocities of the Order are denied, while atrocities allegedly committed by the Lithuanians, Tatars and Hussites are invented or magnified.

4. The revenge of 1914 and 1939 is an eternal German motto.

Despite German efforts, however, the truth about the battle of Grunwald is now common knowledge. No amount of ranting and doctoring of facts can obscure the reality of German defeat five hundred and thirty-five years ago.



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Fragment of the statue of King Wladyslaw Jagiello by Stanislaw Ostrowski that has been moved to Central Park, New York, N. Y., from its former site guarding the entrance to the Polish Pavilion at the 1939-40 New York World's Fair.