

# FREE POLAND

A SEMI-MONTHLY

*The Truth About Poland and Her People*

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WLADYSLAW LASKONOGI (CANE-LEGGED) REIGNED FROM 1203 TO 1207. HE WAS AMONG THE FIRST TO CALL IN THE AID OF THE ORDER OF TEUTONIC KNIGHTS; WHO LATER PROVED A REAL MENACE TO THE INTERESTS OF POLAND.

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# Starving Poland

LONDON, Nov. 1915. — Hundreds of thousands of working class families in Russian Poland are faced with starvation; manufacturers are keeping many persons virtually on charity; 250,000 persons in Lodz are living on \$30,000 to 45,000 dollars a week, says a memorandum that was published in the Times.

The dark picture of conditions in Russian Poland, given with an argument against the necessity of providing food of charity, is by "a leading member of the so-called Polish independence party", which remains in close touch with the supreme Polish national committee of Austrian Poland.

The Times explains that the committee created and is responsible for the Polish legions fighting with the Austro-Hungarian army against Russia, and says that the author of the memorandum therefore cannot be supposed to entertain hostile bias, at least against Germany's Austrian ally.

"One of the main features of the German administration in Poland", says the memorandum, "is the attempt to exploit the occupied territory economically to the utmost. Every new regulation aims at getting as much as possible out of the country, although the German authorities try to disguise this tendency in different ways.

"It is explained by reasons of strategy, of order, policy and even of humanity. The German authorities are especially anxious to give an appearance of humanitarianism to their policy in Russian Poland."

The article says the Germans have established a monopoly on coal, for which they charge exorbitant prices;

inflated the currency, compelled local authorities to pay for repairs to roads and railways, which are used only for military purposes; confiscated government estates, denuded forests, placed incredibly high customs tariffs on the necessaries of life, compelled all persons to carry expensive passports, from which alone they have gained \$5,000,000, and levied high fines on towns and persons for violations of laws.

Asserting that from the first the Germans "condemned the industries of Russian Poland to perdition", the memorandum gives details of alleged destruction or confiscation of property. It says that virtually all the coal mining machinery in the district of Dombrova was destroyed in the autumn of 1914 "for strategical reasons", and that the population, dependent on the mines, were made desperate thereby.

Other alleged incidents cited are the withdrawal of the state bank, the absorption of the country's fuel supply, the requisitioning of many commodities and of quantities of factory machinery necessary for the country's industries, which were taken to Germany, and the seizure of factories and raw material to the value of \$25,000,000.

The memorandum says also that Berlin's relief activity was short-lived. The German press raised an outcry against contributions to Russian Poland, the memorandum asserts, and General von Hindenburg proclaimed his famous reprisal for the Russian destruction of Memel. Then grains and potatoes were seized for the German army, and July 1 last the coming harvest "was confiscated without any pretense of philanthropy or humanitarianism."

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# Historical Half-Truths and Untruths

By CASIMIR GONSKI

## II.

**W**ITH the gruesome humor of an executioner Russia required the diet to "cede" such territory by a treaty of ratification. Although the diet was under the influence of Catherine, honeycombed with Russian corruption and surrounded by Russian troops, one whole year elapsed until, in September 1773, this deep humiliation was forced upon the Polish nation by the treaty of ratification passed by the majority of ONE.

The Polish nation staggered under the terrible blow of the partition, and, with a full realization of the calamity, steps were at once taken with a view of re-adjustment and reform. A "Perpetual Council" was created, composed for the most part of eminently patriotic men who were to act as advisors and intermediaries between the king and the diet. The education of youth was furthered by the "Educational Commission" to which belonged the princes Poniatowski, Czartoryski and Zamoyski. Elementary schools were established by this committee, academies founded and universities revived. The military school at Warsaw was given special attention. Among the pupils were then Thaddeus Kosciuszko and the poet Julian Niemcewicz.

Economic and agricultural problems received the closest attention. In a short time over 300 manufacturing plants were erected the product of which was intended to and did reduce the imports. The yield of agriculture was noticeably increased and the standard of exchange put on a secure basis. Prince Andrew Zamoyski was entrusted with a compilation of all existing civil statutes with a view of reducing the cost and time of legal procedure. Twelve million crowns were appropriated for the increase of the standing army whose peace footing was to be raised to 100,000.

A wave of genuine patriotic fervor had swept the country, but it was an enthusiasm which produced deeds and which was to fructuate in the results of the last Polish diet, called the "quadrennial diet" convoked in October 1788, at a most opportune time, when Russia and Austria were allied and engaged in a war with Turkey and when the king of Prussia, Frederic William, the successor of Frederic II, he of partitional fame, greatly alarmed at an alliance between his powerful neighbors and observing the reconstructionary labors in Poland, made to the Polish diet, through his minister Luchesini, overtures of a defensive alliance resulting in a treaty between Poland and Prussia. In this treaty, ratified April 5, 1790 by the Polish diet, the contracting parties obligated themselves, to defend each other in case of an attack from without, and Prussia waived all claim upon the cities of Dantzic and Thorn.

One year after the signing of this treaty, amid the acclaim of the populace of Warsaw, echoed by the enthusiasm of the whole of Poland, the Constitution of May 3rd 1791 was unanimously passed by the diet, king Stanislaw August Poniatowski being first to take the solemn oath of its observance. Much has been written about this constitution, and all of it in theory only, as Poland never had an opportunity to put it to a practical test.

At a time when France was in the throes of a terrible revolution, when the American colonies had already thrown off the yoke of England by the war of independence, Poland, for years rent assunder by internal dissensions, oppressed, attacked and partitioned by rapacious neighbors, gave to the world a shining example, what height of purpose a nation may attain under the most adverse conditions, when actuated by patriotic motives.

The Constitution is composed of eleven articles, of which the first establishes the Roman Catholic faith as the state religion and then continues..... but because that faith tells us to love our neighbors, therefore, to all people of whatever confession we owe freedom and religion and government protection, and we therefore guarantee the freedom of all confessions and religions within the Polish lands."

The next following three articles define and guarantee the privileges of the nobility or landed class, and of the inhabitants of city and country. The latter were given power to contract, to acquire land by grant or gift; serfdom was abolished.

The following articles dealt with the executive, legislative and judicial functions, abolished the liberum veto, provided for the heredity of the Polish crown in the house of the elector of Saxony after the death of king Stanislaw August Poniatowski. The power of the king is defined as follows:

"not being able to do anything of his own accord, cannot be held responsible to the nation. He shall not be an autocrat, but the father and the head of the nation and as such the law and this constitution declares and acknowledges him."

The tenth article prescribes the method of education of the heir to the throne, placing such education into the hands of a commission, thus assuring a thoroughly Polish character to the bearer of a hereditary Polish crown.

That the Constitution was an epochal document, not only for Poland, but for Europe, is attested by the historical fact that the rulers and statesmen of other nations became enthusiastic encomiasts of this new charter of the liberty of people.

Frederic William II, king of Prussia, said to the Polish minister:

"I view with satisfaction this promising step for

Poland, her welfare shall always interest me and she shall always find me a sincere ally."

These sentiments found expression in an official communication through Count Goltz, Prussian minister of foreign affairs.

In the French National Assembly the constitution was acclaimed with enthusiasm. A message of congratulation to the Polish diet and a national holiday were unanimously voted. Baron d'Escars, then at the court of Vienna, said:

"In France, to gain liberty, they began with anarchy, in Poland the nation was given liberty and independence, the respect for the law, for person and property was assured, and all this without violence, without murder, solely through the virtue and courage of a nation, which, realizing her misfortune and her errors, knew how to heal her wounds."

The German emperor Leopold immediately took steps to manifest his pleasure and approval, by congratulating the Polish minister and issuing a proclamation to his Polish subjects in Galicia, guaranteeing them liberties equal to those assured by the Polish constitution.

In September of that year the German emperor and the king of Prussia were signatories to the treaty of Pilnitz of which the main articles provided for a defensive alliance, the support of the Polish constitution and of the Saxon elector as Polish king; the preservation of Polish independence and the integrity of her territory.

Pope Pius VI, Edmund Burke, Ireland, Holland, all of Europe rejoiced and felicitated, all, — except Russia.

While thus the world applauded and assured, Poland had good reason to believe that she would be permitted to work out her own salvation in accordance with the plans and activities she had so prudently and patriotically designed and instituted. Till this time, that is, the end of the year 1791 it must be said in fairness and justice, Emperor Leopold and King Frederic had been actuated by a desire to protect and preserve Poland's integrity, as evinced by the treaty of Pilnitz. In January 1792 Empress Catherine made peace with Turkey and in February, most unfortunately for Poland, Emperor Leopold died, being succeeded by his son, Franz II as German emperor.

Now Catherine was free to act: the war with Turkey ended, the treaty of Pilnitz abrogated by the death of Leopold, whose strength of character would not have permitted a violation of its terms; the defensive alliance between Poland and Prussia rendered nugatory by Catherine's promises to the king of Prussia of more booty and the latter's eagerness to accept.

One year after the acceptance of the constitution, Catherine declared war on the Polish republic, fomenting treason among a few execrable characters who formed the so-called "Confederation of Targowice", which treasonably sought to abolish the new constitution and invoked the aid of Catherine, who using this detestable pretext, of her own making, marched 70,000 troops into Poland. Poland's only hope now rested upon the defensive alliance with Prussia. However, when officially notified of Poland's preparations to resist Russia's invasion and of Poland's expectation that Prussia would adhere to the terms of the treaty, Luchesi, the Prussian minister, gave the astounding answer, that his king would not take cognizance of the military situation in Poland. What even the German historical writers think of the conduct of king Frederic William of Prussia appears from the following

excerpts from F. C. Schlosser's "Weltgeschichte fuer das Deutsche Volk":

"When Stanislaw (Polish king) now demanded of the Prussian minister the assistance contracted for in the treaty, this answer was given: as his king had no participation in the origin of the constitution, therefore he felt no obligation to give assistance in its defense."

"On June 8, Frederic William even himself wrote a letter to the Polish king, in which he not only criticized the constitution formerly approved by him, but even threatened with another partition of Poland."

"The commander of the Prussian army, general von Moellendorf, when marching into Poland, issued a proclamation in which he sought to justify the conduct of his king, but in which was used the same sophistry in favor of military force, as was used by the democrats of France to justify the republican murders. The right of invasion of Poland by Prussia, was based upon the introduction of the very constitution which Frederic William officially approved one and one half years before, and upon which he even congratulated the Polish king. Besides, the hug-bear of Jacobinism was used, to throw sand into the eyes of the world, and especially to quiet the pluto-aristocratic parliament of England and the jealous aristocracy of Austria. In this respect the proclamation says: "The terrible principles of the Parisian democrats are spreading more and more in Poland, too; in order to prevent contamination, Prussia had to occupy some provinces in order to stamp out Jacobinism." All of this was a hypocritical and slippery prattle because no class of people was further removed from Jacobinism than the Polish nobility."

By the end of the year 1792 Russian troops had occupied the larger part of Poland, withdrawing from the westernmost portion, to make room for the Prussian army which invaded Poland immediately after the pact for the second partition of Poland had been entered into between Catherine and Frederic William in January 4, 1793.

There is no need of recounting the subsequent historical events of the revolutions, third partition and further armed uprisings.

Poland had ceased to exist as a political and geographical entity. With the pretexts as herein stated, not even possessing the semblance of truths, with the disregard and violation of treaties and royal pledges solemnly made, the three powers divided among themselves the territory and the people of Poland, like banditti dividing plunder. While these acts of perfidy and rapine cannot be undone by writing tomes of Jeremiads about them, and while any justice meted out to Poland now, will be not extended to her to right the wrongs of the past, but because of present political expediency, it must serve a good purpose to throw the light of truth upon these dark pages of history, so that the reason and responsibility for Poland's misfortunes may be understood and properly placed.

Poland herself was not without contributing causes,

yet, there was not one of them of which a parallel could not be found in the history of other nations which have preserved their geographical and political integrity and are great and strong to-day, because they were left to work out their destiny without concerted foreign opposition and armed interference. If Poland's crown was elective, so was Germany's for a much larger period; if Poland had an interregnum during which two contestants claimed the crown, Germany had an anarchic period during which four contesting rulers were without semblance of authority (1257-72). Germany had the terrible peasant war in 1524; the 30 years' religious war in the forepart of the 17th century; the period of decadence following the peace of Westfalia, during the reign of Leopold I. when Louis XIV of France took Freiburg, Strassburg, and the Duchy of Lorraine, while the German diet was discussing questions of etiquette, and while the Turk was hammering at the gates of Vienna. What an inviting opportunity for the partition of Germany, had it not been for Poland!

Prussia, who owes her origin as a power to Poland's generosity, has felt the mailed fist of Russian interference and after the battle of Kunersford in 1762, when Russia had annexed Pomerania and a number of Prus-

sian cities, when Frederic II contemplated suicide, only the death of Empress Elizabeth of Russia saved Prussia from ruin.

The student and even the casual reader of history knows that France, England and Austria, each in turn, have had their periods of decadence, intestine strife and civil war, when invasion from without would have led to easy conquest of a helpless nation.

At that particular period Poland may have been weaker or stronger than other nations in similar plight, yet this one historical fact stands out pre-eminently, that no other nation has ever achieved such national reforms without violence or bloodshed, as has Poland by the adoption of the constitution in 1791, preceded by the constructionary period of nineteen years subsequent to the great national calamity of the first partition in 1772.

This achievement alone, attained under most adverse circumstances, gives irrefutable proof of the capacity of the Polish nation for self-government and it must be a cause near and dear to the heart and conscience of every American, no matter what his nationality, to endorse and actively aid in the efforts of the Polish nation to regain what has been unjustly taken from her: — **Freedom and Independence.**



### THE TRIUMVIRATE OF POLISH POETS.

For particulars see Free Poland Nos. 5, 13, 16, of Vol. I.

# Psychology of the Slavic People

By *PANE R. RADOSA VLJEVICH, Ph. D. Pd. D., Professor at New York University*

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(Concluded from FREE POLAND, Vol. II. No. 5)

The English have done supremely well as a nation, but the inclination of their character and the way of their development are not the same as that of other nations. Indeed it would be difficult to imagine two races more radically divergent from one another than the Teutonic and the Slavonic.... We have to tolerate and understand this new nation which is growing daily more articulate. Then, as the boundary lines become fainter on continental maps and the era of cosmopolitanism dawns, we may ask ourselves as Europeans rather than as Englishmen — 'who are our brothers living away to the East, making food for us; what are they to us, and what is their contribution to the whole.'

"Zadruga" is to the Serbs what mir is to the Russians. In fact zadruga unites in itself the advantages both of small and large properties, safeguarding the people against poverty, tending them in sickness or old age in such a way as no socialistic legislation or Utopian panaceas could ever bring about. Vivian calls Serbia a "paradise of poor men", a land where there are no beggars in the sense of civilized Western Europe, a land where certain minimum of a peasant's property is inalienable and no court of law can authorize, much less enforce, the sale of his house and courtyard, his last six youtara (Serbian acres) of land, his plough and his last pair of heifers. Of course the Zadruga must grow naturally, and must have grown for centuries in order to reach its present state of perfection.

If we destroy it, rightly says Mr. Vivian, workhouses, almshouses, destitution,—in fact all the penalties of that uncivilizing struggle for life which we elect to call civilization — will certainly be engendered. It is interesting to note that Serbo-Croats under the Austro-Hungarian rule (in Slavonia, Croatia, Dalmatia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Istria, Backa, Banat, Baranya) lost their zadruga because the Government tried all possible schemes to destroy this great Serbian institution, on the ground that it was not a "civilized" but a Tartar institution, because "when civilization advances individual competition becomes more developed and marked." But history must have its evolution, political systems their growth, and the development of institutions has never been much hastened or checked by any man's whip or curb. That the Serbs are a civilized nation is shown by the fact that the jury was an ancient Serbian institution before its general use in civilized Europe. The Serbian sovereign himself was never above the law, and could be sued in those courts of justice by the humblest of his subjects. The whole measure of the protection of the individuals and the right of redress insured by the laws and their effective execution in mediæval Serbia was in favor of the common people and had special solicitude for the humbler member of society. The Serbian sovereign did not have the power to decide for war or peace. And the confiscation of property, so common in Western Europe, lay alone in the power of the sovereign of Serbia, and was restricted by the laws to punishment for high treason, robbery, resistance to execution of a judicial order, and the forgery of public documents. Serbia never was feudal. Slavery

was absolutely unknown in all epochs of Serbian States and social organization. Serbian politics and diplomacy were always honest and clean, but the full tide of the Turkish conquest and the short-sighted policy of Serbian neighbors caused fundamentally the fall of the independent Serbian states. During 500 years under Turkish rule the Serbs never gave up their high moral and national ideals, hoping and fighting their enemies. The Prince and Princess Lazarovich, in their book "Serbian People: Their Past Glory and Their Destiny," (Scribner, 1910), point out clearly that the Serbs have always shown the characteristics which are the first conditions of high culture and progress: (1) co-operation or mutual aid, and (2) respect for the rights of the individual. In "The Orient Question" which shows the place of the Serb in the present conflict, Prince Lazarovich says rightly: "Individuals bound together in community by ties of blood, language, and traditions forming a nation, have the inherent right to choose their form of government, the right to mould their own destiny, the right to create guarantees to life, happiness and virtue. The right to live, to be good and to be happy is the inalienable birthright of the individual human being. To guarantee the full exercise of these rights to the individual is the duty of the nation.... It is the right and duty of a subjugated nation to revolt against and overthrow its conqueror. In that militant action lies the proof of its morality as a nation and of the honesty of its component elements... Vice and corruption prepare for and invite conquest, — vice and corruption maintain a nation in subjection."

Bakunin was right when he said that the Slavs "are and always have been socialistic, because they live under the regime of communal property". This Slavic socialism is, however, inspired by a high moral and religious notion, and not only by the economic reasons of the present socialism. Mir and zadruga are not a creation of the day, nor are they as mechanical as the doctrine of the socialists who believe in the economic philosophy of Marx, Lasalle or Engels, according to which everything, even art, science, religion, culture, depends only upon the economic conditions of a nation. Even in war Slavs fight for a higher moral, religious or humanitarian cause, and not so much for land and earthly wealth. Father Wojnowski, the militant Polish father in one of Sienkiewicz's novels, tells the young men leaving for the campaign the following national mission of the Polish people: "War is abhorrent to Heaven, a sin against mercy, a stain on Christian nations." But a war against Turkish barbarism must be excepted, "God put the Polish people on horse-back, and turned their breasts eastward; by that same act He wed them His will and their calling. He knew why He chose us for that position and put others behind our shoulders; hence, if we wish to fulfill His command and our mission with worthiness, we must face that vile sea and break waves with our bosoms." In another place he says: "Now I know why this Polish people was created... It is only when the pagan sea swells, when that vile dragon opens its jaws to devour Christianity and mankind, when the Roman Caesar and all German lands are shiv-

ering in front of this avalanche that I learn why God created us and imposed on us this duty. The Turks themselves know this. Other men may tremble, but we will not, as we have not trembled thus far; so let our blood flow to the very last drop, and let mine be mixed with the rest of it. Amen." Victor Hugo did not make a mistake when he said: "While my own dear France was the missionary of civilization, Poland was its knight."

All Slavs love political and especially individual freedom almost to the point of anarchy. Those who do not gain first-hand information about the Slavs call them "born anarchistic", because they are haters of all cant, convention, and restriction to freedom. Palatine Poznan-ski, father of the Polish King Grand Duke of Lorraine, said: "*Malo periculosam libertatem quam quietum servitium*", i. e. I prefer even a dangerous freedom to a quiet imprisonment. This is just opposite to the ideal of the Greeks, because when Odysseus, meeting Achilles as the leader of dead horses in the nether world, extols his glory among the dead, the latter replies: "Rather would I in the field as daily laborer be toiling slave to the meanest of men, a pauper and lacking possession, than 'mid the infinite hosts of long-vanished mortals be ruler."

It is a well known historical fact that in Poland (she was the leading power of Eastern Europe from 1400 to 1600, and now "the Mary Stuart of Nations") each delegate had the right of *liberum veto* (Nie pozwalam; I forbid), i. e. the right to forbid, by his single vote, any measure in the Diet.

When foes of John Sobieski tried to crush the unanimous election of Sobieski as the national Polish King, and the people did not accept the adjournment of his election, he himself rises to his feet and shouts: "To this I am opposed. Remember the nation for which you are about to choose a head — the freest on the face of the earth. Such haste would ill accord with liberty. God forbid that I should accept a crown conferred at the expense of a single infringement of the public right, or by constraint or suppression of a single vote. I would rather remain a subject all my life, a thousand times rather, than the ruler over one of my fellow-citizens against his will. It would, indeed, be unworthy of me to ascend the throne in this furtive manner, at night-fall, and before any time had been granted for the reconsideration of so sudden a resolution. I demand that no further action be taken to-

night, and in demanding this I declare that should there be no other dissenting voice, I will oppose it with my Veto." It is interesting to note that the present ruler of Serbia, King Peter, is translator of Mill's "Liberty", and the Turkish word for liberty is "Serbeshtz", derived from Serb, and coined by the ceaseless strife of Serbs for freedom, or as they call it — "*borba za krst chasny i slobodu zlatnu*" (strife for the cross of honor and for golden freedom.) The Balkan French, this little people of Slavic birth has given many men of fighting Serbian stock, as were also the Magyars Lajos Kossuth, Francis Deak, and the greatest of Hungarian poets, Sandor Petoffyi, whose real name was Alexa Petrovich. That the Slavs are not without political instinct is indicated by a story which Louis Leger tells of a curious old custom among the Slovenes at the installation of a new prince in Carinthia (the ceremony took place near the town of Klagenfurt or Celovac). This story says that a peasant mounted on a rock to await the coming of the new prince, who advanced, clothed in rustic garments. The peasant asked, "Who is this who approaches?" The peasant then asked, "Is he a good judge? Is he a friend of truth? and, on receiving a reply in the affirmative, the peasant yielded his place to the new-comer, who mounted the rock and, brandishing his sword, swore to defend the country of the Slovenians. Leger says that the people who had imagined it deserve a great destiny.

Slavic history shows many notable instances of the rise of persons from the lowest to the highest estate, ability being placed above birth, and talent preferred to noble descent. Slavs do not care very much for church customs, as it is beautifully expressed in the words of a Serbian poet, Njegus, Prince and Bishop of Montenegro:

"Do not ask how a man crosses himself,  
But whose blood that warm his heart,  
And whose the milk that nourished him".

The martyrdom of John Hus, the valor and zeal of his Bohemian brother, Ziska, appeared to have been in vain. Yet they were not so, for the seeds of liberal thought had been sown far and wide during the struggle, and in the century to come they would grow into a great religious reformation, a permanent triumph of freedom of human thought.

THE END.

## Great Britain to Poland Fund

(With which is affiliated the British Moscow Relief Committee)

We have received the following notice:

The devastation of Poland is one of the greatest tragedies of the war. People who once were well-to-do stand in silent, anxious crowds waiting their turn while the soup kitchens pass along. Thousands are living in trucks, and sleeping on the stone floors of railway stations. Women with children in their arms, have walked hundreds of miles to escape the horrors.

EVELEIGH NASH, Esq. Hon. Treas.,  
Great Britain to Poland Fund,  
Berkeley Hotel, Piccadilly, London.

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# FREE POLAND

A SEMI-MONTHLY

*The Truth About Poland and Her People*

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## Remember

Poland asks to be reconstituted along the lines of justice and fair play to all.

Poland demands peace with freedom.

Poland, as a buffer State, will be one of the greatest guardians for the future peace of Europe.

In fact, Poland "asks nothing for herself but what she has a right to ask for humanity itself."

## Our Demands

FREE POLAND, published under the auspices of the Polish National Council, has entered its second year of existence as a magazine devoted to telling the truth about Poland and her people.

\* \*

FREE POLAND, in this second year of appearance, has set out for itself a lofty goal; it aims to present Polish thought and culture and to be an impartial reviewer of Polish hopes and aspirations.

\* \*

Begun on behalf of Poland and her people, FREE POLAND fundamentally serves the purpose of creating opinion favorable to the cause of Poland, which needs the aid and assistance, sympathy and fair play, and the tremendous moral force of the endorsement of free and powerful nations.

\* \*

We desire a whole, free and independent Poland, and for the furtherance of this aim we labor to the best of our power and ability.

A free and independent Poland is the only worthy postulate of a people which possessed of a long-standing culture, has rendered highly compelling services to mankind.

Among the various Polish organizations the Polish National Council was the first to preach the gospel of independence for Poland. Immediately in the beginning of the war the Council had rejected the various "orientations", favoring this or that foreign potentate and considered them unworthy of a free and liberty-loving man.

The Poles should aim at nothing less than the highest, and that is a free and independent Poland.

\* \*

In Europe and in the cultural world there must be room for discussing the Polish Cause.

Europe and the whole world will never know the blessings of permanent peace as long as that question shall remain in oblivion and never be effectively solved.

\* \*

The Poles are a peace-loving people; hence we demand peace, inasmuch as Poland, battle-scarred, is devastated and ruined by the instruments of a war which was undertaken also for the liberation of the oppressed and easement of the lot of lesser nationalities.

The Poles, as well as others, demand their dues—they desire to work out their own salvation in preference to the autocratic interference of a stronger power.

\* \*

The present war is an historical Nemesis — for the partition of Poland. The violation of her independence had sown the seed of the present terrible conflict, which, however, must right the wrong committed and reach at a satisfactory solution of the problem.

\* \*

We repeat — we desire the termination of the war — we demand peace, but **NOT peace at any price.**

We want peace, but it must make the oppressed free and express itself in the democratization and nationalization of the peoples of Europe.

\* \*

We want peace, but it must overthrow the theory that states should feel the constant physical or moral obligation to expand at each other's cost.

We want peace, but it must be such as to do away with the belief that force is the only arbiter to recognize in the relations of mankind.

We want peace, but it must mean a greater democracy, a greater power to the people and the machinery for expressing their will.



# A Strategic View of the Great War

**M**EN ARE WEARY. Men are eager for peace. War brutalizes humanity, while peace aids its development. But the present war, with its countless, unbelievable sacrifices, both moral and political, has so shaken the whole foundation of human life, that men are now eager not only for peace, but for a peace that shall be eternal, or at least prolonged. And so the present war brings out more and more clearly the thought that the only means of establishing genuine peace upon earth is the foundation, against the will of feudal Germany and autocratic Russia, of a federation of free and politically independent peoples, not only in Europe but over the whole globe. But the peoples are still dumb. The peoples have not yet spoken. Now only governments are speaking, and the governments, above all those of Germany and Russia, are hurling against one another, for their mutual destruction, millions of young lives, in the name of other watchwords.

Each in the name of a governmental ideology.

To be sure, the Government of England has more or less truly appreciated the present position of affairs. It has tried to bring forward, as a watchword of the war, a more up to date ideology. But this, partly owing to considerations of internal politics, and still more owing to a "gentlemanly loyalty" to the Russian government, as an ally of the English, has been done so feebly, in the shape of more hints, that such a mighty watchword as the foundation of a federation of free, politically independent nations in Europe, has not yet played on the side of the Allies the strategic part that is its due. Mr. Asquith's words, that the colossal sacrifices of the present war will be vain and useless unless they lead to a complete liberation of the nations, could not serve as a bond between the English and the Russian government. The governments of England and France understand this well. In time of peace they would not or could not contend with the influence of Berlin in St. Petersburg, and since the declaration of war they have been unable or unwilling to make Petrograd join in a broader and more powerful watchword of the war. The result of this political blunder was quickly seen. Russia, the ally that they needed at this fateful historic moment, was not equal to her mission.

The present European war is a struggle between mighty economic and political interests of governments contending with one another, behind which, whether unconsciously or more or less consciously, stand the peoples of the different nations. On the one side is Germany, on the other England and Russia. The rest of the governments and peoples of Europe were drawn into the general maelstrom of the war either as allies marching under the guidance of the Berlin policy (*pour le roi de Prusse*) — Austria and Turkey; or as allies through the necessity of defending their country and their political

independence — Serbia, Belgium, and France; or finally as accidental allies, owing to purely temporary political considerations — Japan and Italy. Let us now try to consider from the point of view exclusively of political strategy the history of the first year of the war on its main front, in the east, in Poland.

Military science or strategy teaches us that in order to contend successfully with an enemy we must first of all establish a strategic superiority over him, and then re-inforce this by a tactical superiority.

Therefore, a great, active ideology of war must be created, one that will accord with contemporary human ideals, as a mighty watchword to raise the spirit of the nation and the army; that is, an active and conscious popularity of the war must be aroused in one's own nation and its neighbors; and then this watchword must be skilfully brought into action by tactical forces. Although each one of the warring nations has its strategy, with his watchwords and tactics, yet no one of them has such a strategy as is required by the present war, which marks a new era in the development of humanity. Therefore, it is not surprising that this is one of the most tiresome wars that have overtaken place on earth. Men perish by millions, suffer by millions, they weep and curse, but they bless no one and strive for nothing. They hate all men and love no man. They destroy all things, but bring nothing into being. This is because in the war itself there is no creative spirit, no foundation of ideas; because the great war lacks what is most essential, a genuine strategic force, an all-embracing and all-uniting watchword. Notwithstanding immense sacrifices men have no time and no strength to understand what is going on about them and what they should do. Why and wherefore is this horrible, grandiose tableau being unfolded before us?

And yet the war goes on. Let us glance at the strategic and tactical plans for the conduct of the war on the part of each of the combatants. Let us try to explain why the war has taken just its present turn, and whether its course can be altered in the future.

The German government has been more far-sighted than its enemies. In time of peace for years it inculcated in its people an ideology as a future watchword for war. By a well-planned system of education and training the German government managed to impress on its people their great historic calling in the work of spreading over the earth the organization of "cultured" life; in each of its subjects it developed a conception of the lofty dignity and great honor of being German. By means of a certain "minimum" of education and training it secures that each man shall be a model subject, consciously doing his duty for church, Vaterland, and emperor, on the other hand the German government tries to secure for its subjects a "minimum" of elementary human wants, never

permitting them to reach the point of actual starvation. Finally it tries to impress on each man the idea of the necessity for the existence of authority, ordained from on high for the object of watching over each single subject from the day of his birth until that of his death.

Therefore it is not surprising that the average German, wherever he may be, always preserves warm memories of his Vaterland and is nowhere fully assimilated; that he is ever loyal to his government and maintains his solidarity with it in its larger activities in world politics. Therefore it is not surprising that with such a mental and moral training the whole nation, including even the Social-Democrats, rallied around its government, when proclamation was made from the throne that a war, forced on Germany by other powers, was being waged in defense of the native land and the family hearth. Nothing more was needed. An ideology of war, developed and perfected by the government in time of peace, was ready. "Our enemies", says the German government "have provoked the war. They have created that historic isolation of Germany made famous by Edward VII. They are the cause of the provocative attitude of Serbia and the Balkan Slavs to our ally Austria. England and, inspired by her, France and Russia, have begun to create difficulties for our "missionaries of Culture" — and for our commercial travelers — on the Balkan Peninsula and everywhere. We take up the glove that they have cast down. To battle for the right! God is with us!"

And only since the opening of the war there has emerged more and more clearly the cherished governmental idea of the politicians and strategists of enemy, to create a Great German Empire, under the guise of a federation of the small states of central Europe, from the North sea and the Baltic to the Black Sea, the Aegean and the Adriatic, under the hegemony of Prussia and with the Hohenzollerns at its head; that is to say, to establish the indispensable—and the broken—bond of union between the great Charle Magne's Great German Empire of the Middle Ages and the Great German Empire of our own time, under William II, the Great.

That is the true ideology of the war put forward by the German government, and in particular by the Prussian. Germany will become still more threatening than it has been, not only for the neighbors and for genuine peace on earth, but for the economic, political, and cultural existence and independence of the states that are to enter into the proposed Great German Empire.

This ideology of the German government, as a watchword for the war, though it is far from perfect, and in fact quite feudal, with a principle of action that is completely out-of-date, is still an ideology. When imposed on a nation that has received the requisite mental and moral training, it proves to be a watchword not of the first order, but one of sufficient force to arouse men's minds, and to create in a portion of the population a certain active popularity for the war. Hereby we may explain the marked strategic superiority of Germany in comparison with Russia.

Strategy further teaches that in order to contend successfully with an adversary and establish one's strategic superiority, one must know how to gain the sympathies of the population of the country which is the theater of war, in the present case of Poland. It is interesting to inquire what the German government has done in this respect.

But first we must speak briefly of the political and economic life of the Polish people and of Polish society on the eve of the war, and of the evolution of public opinion in various ranks of society and in all three parts of Poland while the war was already in progress.

Poland was divided between Prussia, Russia, and Austria. The leading spirits in the partition were the autocratic and military states of Prussia and Russia, then under the German-Russian government of Catherine II.

The three neighbors who shared in the partition took advantage of the fact that just at that time Poland was passing through a violent internal crisis. Its ancient forms of life no longer corresponded to the demands of actual conditions. The foundation of public morality were violently shaken. A general decline of the morality of leading classes of the nation was perceptible. A general upheaval was in progress. With all this Poland never, even in the last days of its existence, became an autocratic military state, but always remained a republic. In 1793 Poland ceased to exist as a state. But the land and the people remained. The partition of Poland and the political subjection of the people to the yoke of three different governmental systems violently crippled and demoralized the spirit and individuality of the Polish nation, and its once high culture declined more and more. All conditions for the further natural and cultural development of the nation were systematically and violently set aside. The desperate situation — and the love of country — three times placed in the hands of the Polish nation a sword for an unequal, hopeless conflict, for an insurrection to throw off the shameful, triple foreign yoke—but in vain. The rising of Kosciuszko, the rising of the years 1831 and 1863, ended in still severer repression, in still more cruel violence and persecution from the enemies of Poland, and in complete dejection owing to the hopeless situation in the minds of the population. It became the general view that only some such historic cataclysm in Europe as had never yet been seen could relieve the woes of Poland. The situation is laughable. The Polish nation of more than twenty millions of people, in the center of Europe, with a past that is rich in culture, and which to-day contributes forces of the first order to the general culture of humanity, which furnishes one and one-half million of soldiers to the armies of its enemies, is now, in the twentieth century, still in the fetters of complete political and economical slavery. A certain amelioration of the political life of the Poles in Austria is not enough to brighten the general tone of the gloomy and joyless life of the Polish nation.

And now.... Although every Pole, in the holy of holies of his soul cherishes the thought of the complete independence of Poland, yet even on the eve of the war the Poles were too terrified to express that thought even as a dream. An unobservant foreigner might have thought that the Poles were reconciled to the present state of affairs. Only in 1905, at the time of the Russian revolution, the hopes of the Polish nation temporarily revived. But there came a sad and gloomy awakening after a short-lived though beautiful dream. Then the Polish nation learned yet once that the famous friendship of the Prussian and the Russian governments is based on the Polish question. Their share in the historic crime of the partition of Poland unites the enemies in a common friendship. The Polish question could never be raised if that friendship were to be of long continuance.

(Continued)

# The German Press and the Polish Problem

The Ostmarken-Verein (Society of East March) had a meeting in Berlin of its general committee, at which it was decided:

That the German nation ought not to change her aim, but ought to conscientiously persevere in her right policy towards the Polish problem.

That in organizing future relations in the East—the vital interest of the German empire only ought to be taken into account.

The "Deutsche Tageszeitung" of Berlin, organ of the conservative Agrarians, says that the attitude of Poles in Posen and what happened in Russian Poland which forced the German governor-general to dissolve the Polish committee, should cure the Germans from their sentimental feeling towards Poland.

According to that paper the German governor-general has many sympathies for the Poles; but that good will ought to look beforehand for the security of the German empire and conservation of Germanism. (Probably the paper meant the introducing of Germanism into Poland—as it is impossible to conserve something which never existed there before).

In "Taegliche Rundschau", a Berlin paper, Prof. Schaefer, Councillor of State, writes that to decide the Polish problem the government ought to take account only of the interest of the German nation. Autonomy of Poland outside of the German boundary would be out of question, if the German government would not have the conviction that the Polish nation once forever renounced the Prusso-German provinces of the East.

Mr. Radschau, in "Der Tag", a prominent member of the Ostmarken-Verein, declares that the "Central Empires at great cost delivered Poland from the hand of Czarism, and in future combinations they will think of their own interests only."

The writer reproaches the Poles that they do not wish to leave to Germany that part of Poland which was occupied by Prussia. He says that when certain Poles in Prussian Silesia expressed the opinion "that future Poland cannot think of reconquering that part of Poland which was under Prussian rule", certain Polish papers from Posen wrote in vehement terms against the limitation of the Polish problem to that part of Poland which is only outside of German borders.

Radschau thinks that for Germany the Polish problem is rather the Russian problem.

The influential (in industrial centers) paper Reinisch Westfalische Zeitung speaks to Poles in very plain language:

"The Poles are mistaken if they imagine that in this war they will realize their national aspirations. There is no reason that there should be shown to Poles any special mark of gratitude for having done their military duty. They did not come to Warsaw as Poles fighting for their liberty, but simply as good Germans."

No less promising for Poles are other German papers. For instance, Leipziger Tageblatt wants a new partition of Poland—of course, of Russian Poland.

"If we compare" it says, "the results which we have obtained in Prussian Poland and Galicia, we can not have any doubt on what should be done with Russian Poland. To start with, it is impossible to leave to one partner all that immense territory, which through mutual effort of the Central Empire was delivered from the Russian yoke. It is necessary to divide Poland among the Central Empires... each of the Empires will be allowed to do with it what it think best."

A.M. J.



## From the General Committee for War Victims of Poland, Vevey, Switzerland

Continued

For Poles, Emigrants in Russia, Alexander Lenicki in Moscow, for war victims, emigrants from the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania ..... Fr. 50,300 —

Aug. 26. — To Roman Strassburger, Treas. of the Kieff Aid Society for War Victims emigrants from the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania ..... " 50,300 —

Fr. 100.600 —

For Parts of Galicia occupied by the Russians.

Mar. 23. — To Prince Z. Lubomirski in Warsaw, for the most needy war victims. . . " 100,000 —

May 1. — To Prince Z. Lubomirski (from that sum 4.620 Fr. for the Counties of Dąbrowski, Mielecki, Stryjowski, and Tarnowski,) according to advice of contributors ..... " 45,111 —

May 22. — To T. Rutkowski, president of the studio of Lemberg, for the most needy war victims of Lemberg and vicinity " 24,000 —

Fr. 169.111 60

For Parts of the Kingdom of Poland occupied by Austria.

March 29. — To Prince Bishop Sapieha in Cracow, for the most needy war victims ..... " 50,000 —

April 8. — To Prince Bishop Sapieha .... " 22,000 —

" 16. — To Prince Bishop Sapieha .... " 100,000 —

May 3. — To Prince Bishop Sapieha, (for Olkusz) ..... " 50,000 —

May 29. — To Prince Bishop Sapieha .... " 25,642 —

June 21. — To Prince Bishop Sapieha (particularly for the cities of Będzin, Czestadz, Kielce, Olkusz, Piotrkow, Sandomierz, Wolbromia i Zawiercia ..... " 180,000 —

July 20. — To the same destination .... " 25,000 —

" 20. — To Committee at Piotrkow, for

Piotrkow and vicinity, through the agency of Prince Bishop Sapieha .....	"	25.000	—
July 20. — To Bishop Ryxa in Sandomierz, for the district of Sandomierz through Prince Bishop Sapieha .....	"	25.000	—
July 20. — To Bishop Łosinski, in Kielce, for the province of Kielce, through Prince Bishop Sapieha in Cracow .....	"	25.000	—
May 3. — To Prince Bishop Sapieha in Cracow, for Zagłębie Dąbrowskie ...	"	25.000	—
July 20. — To same .....	"	25.000	—
			<b>Fr. 542.642 95</b>

#### For Eastern Prussia.

July 10. — To Posen Relief Committee for war victims in East Prussia, for distribution by Dr. Rzepikowski and Lubawa, and dr. Gąsowski in Szczytno .....	"	4.000	—
			<b>Fr. 4.000 —</b>

(At first 15.000 francs was intended to be sent to East Prussia. The local committee considered the sum of 4.000 francs sufficient for its purposes) while the rest was sent for the war sufferers for the gov't of Suwalki, as stated above.

#### For Polish Emigrants in Austria.

March 11. — To the Committee at Olomuniec through Count Starzeński .....	"	5.000	—
June 30. — To same .....	"	2.000	—
March 23. — To the Committee in Prague, through T. Grabowski .....	"	1.000	—
April 22. — To same .....	"	405	95
April 22. — To same .....	"	409	—
May 6. — To same .....	"	2.000	—
May 6. — To same .....	"	1.000	—
June 23. — To same (for artists) .....	"	3.000	—
March 29. — X. Tyszkiewicz in Insbruck, for war victims .....	"	1.000	—
March 22. — To Committee in Grac, to Very Rev. Ramulta .....	"	1.642	40
June 23. — To same .....	"	5.000	—
			<b>Fr. 22.436 35</b>

April 22. — To Com. in Vienna, through the president Prof. Gorski .....	"	811	20
May 6. — To same .....	"	5.000	—
June 22. — To same .....	"	8.000	—
April 22. — To Prof. Twardowski, for school youth war victims .....	"	4.094	85
June 23. — To same .....	"	10.000	—
August 12. — To same .....	"	5.000	—
June 7. — To Com. in Bogumin, through the president X. F. Gryła .....	"	1.606	—
June 7. — Com. in Salzburg, through Princess Lubomirska .....	"	2.409	—
June 22. — To same .....	"	2.000	—
June 10. — To Com. in Chocen, through Bishop Sapieha in Cracow (one wagon load of condensed milk) .....	"	10.489	90
June 22. — To same — in Chocen through			

Bishop Sapieha .....	"	8.000	—
June 22. — To Com. in Libnica through Bishop Sapieha .....	"	6.000	—
June 26. — To Com. in Cieszyn, through X. Londzin .....	"	6.000	—
June 26. — To different persons, war victims from the founding of a committee to August 31, 1915 .....	"	481	75
			<b>Fr. 92.329 05</b>

#### To Poles, War Victims in Switzerland.

To various private persons, war victims and to different associations of Polish youth in Geneva, Freiburg, Lausanne, and Zurich, from the founding of the committee to August 31, 1915 .....	"	10.528	80
<b>Miscellaneous Aid.</b>			
June 14. — Publication of illustrated cards, depicting the devastation of Poland. ....	"	500	—
June 30. — Publication proposed by Mr. Paderewski (initial cost) .....	"	50	30
July 19. — To Countess Zamoyska, in Paris for most needy war victims, staying in France .....	"	2.910	—
August 1. — To Baron Taube, in Paris, for war victims in France, to be distributed by Mrs. Marya Mickiewicz, Baron G. Taube, Dereziński and Kozakiewicz ..	"	10.800	—
July 28. — To Countess Tyszkiewicz in Montreux, for provisions for Polish war prisoners, Russian subjects interned in Germany .....	"	420	—
Aug. 1. — To Wladyslaw Mickiewicz in Paris, for expenses connected with care of Polish war prisoners in France ....	"	184	—
To various persons, Poles, war victims in Germany, from the founding of the committee to August 31, 1915 .....	"	327	40

#### GENERAL REPORT.

1. For parts of Kingdom of Poland under Russian domination .....	Fr.	752.286	25
2. For Lithuania .....	"	76.000	—
3. For Polish emigrants in Russia ....	"	100.600	—
4. For parts of Galicia occupied by Russia .....	"	169.111	60
5. For parts of the Kingdom of Poland, occupied by Austria .....	"	542.642	95
6. For Galicia under Austrian rule ....	"	608.996	40
7. For parts of the Kingdom of Poland occupied by the Germans .....	"	485.556	25
8. For East Prussia (Mk. 3,627) .....	"	4.000	—
9. For Polish emigrants in Austria ...	"	92.329	05
10. For Polish war victims in Switzerland	"	10.528	80
11. Miscellaneous aid .....	"	15.611	70
			<b>Fr. 2,830,663.—</b>

VEVEY, Aug. 31, 1915.  
Pres. of the Executive Committee  
ANTON OSUCHOWSKI.

Pres. General Committee  
HENRY SIENKIEWICZ.

# An Offering

*Bp WACLAW SIEROSZEWSKI*

**H**ERE where Broad River leaves the rocky canyon of her course and spreads over a wide valley, near her waters, upon a plot of vivid green, stands a totem pole heavily carved. The nomadic Tungus, roaming over the surrounding mountains gather at its foot every year. In this yearly pilgrimage they join in numerous caravans and form picturesque processions composed of hundreds of reindeer, intermingled with groups of men. They enter the valley in merry throngs whose noisy and joyous clamors drown the swishing of the waves.

In the falling twilight the camp fires at the foot of the mountains stand out like a diadem of flashing jewels; the tender green of the spring grass spreads like terraces of malachite; the background is the transparent gray of slender trunks and youthful branches.

This in the highland valleys is the pleasantest season of the year: mosquitoes and other insects do not yet infect the air, that is voluptuously cool; everything around grows and blossoms and the winter snows gleam on the mountain-tops, untouched by the heat of the summer. No night comes to darken the uniformly pale crystal of the sky; no stars to play upon its expanses; it glows with a continual dawn that spans night and day.

For a whole week the tribes gather around the totem pole; the elders arrive; the heads of the families make their appearance; they are all dignified graybeards; they confer upon the communal needs; they receive the taxes in hides and furs and distributed the burdens for the year.

Meanwhile the youth rejoices: courting, dancing, racing add zest to life. The valley resounds with laughter and shouts; broadaxes strike in unison; the songs re-echo in manifold snatches; the hoofs of stampeding reindeer make the earth tremble with their thuds; the long straps of "momoks" (leather straps attached to the horns of the reindeer about to be killed) whiz through the air; and the glass and silver ornaments on the breasts of women jingle merrily, pervading alike the sound of work and merrymaking.

It was thus from times immemorial.

But one year everything was different.

In the valley as usually there were masses of people, but the murmur of words did not even drown the ripple of the river; the youth did not make merry of the pole; there were no herds of racing reindeer; no laughter, no singing. The conferences led nowhere; the people separated into small groups around their tents. The faces were sad; the glances troubled, the conversations lagged. Jokes and fun, life's breath to a Tungus, were wanting: cold restrain froze every outburst.

But they did not depart; they all hoped, though with misgiving, for the coming of the old Seltichan, without whom they did not dare to touch upon the important affairs of these hard times. So far he could not be sighted.

"He is not coming, the good old man — and he will not come", grumbled one of the crowd gathered in a sociable circle around a camp fire. He was a man about 50 years old and did not look like a Tungus; he was stout, dressed like a Yakut and girded with a Yakut belt of silver; he had a proud face of a rich man that knows his worth.

"Who is anxious to see those that perish——", he added, pursing up his lips malevolently.

"You can not escape your fate", replied darkly an old man, sitting opposite, on the other side of the fire. He was poorly clad, tawned like copper and wrinkled like the lichens of his land.

"Isn't that the truth", assented a third one.

"You will not avoid, you will not escape."

"Didn't I try to run away, to hide myself? What good did it do me? — Everybody knows." And moved by his recollections he began, may be for the hundredth time, the story of his misfortunes, to which everybody listened always with the same absorption.

"When the news of the plague reached me I was on the top of "Bur-Yang and was getting ready to descend to the valleys again, but now I tarried, I delayed. And for a long time God was merciful to me — I grew conceited. — But one night I woke in terror, my heart beat violently — I strained my ears... I heard... Was it a shout or a call? I stuck my head from under coverings and heard again something like a distant rattle in the forest. Like rapid firing. The dogs whined and howled as when surprised by a bear. I ran out of the tent, looked around. The moon shone, and in the depth of the valley an enormous shadow crept across the hills into the forest. The dogs crouched at my feet... I put my hand to my eyes... I could not look. My heart fluttered like a frightened bird; my legs stiffened in terror.

"Oh!" — resounded the chorus of sighs.

"No help! Hundred reindeer fell at one stroke. Without waiting for the dawn, this very night, we left the herds melted at every step. Then I divided them into place. We ran away without stopping anywhere... our three parties and sent them out in different directions; several days later my son returned, then my daughter, both empty-handed. Then I resolved to go to the edge of the world — where nobody has ever been before. But is there such a place where no human foot has ever trod? Nothing was taken from the fallen carcasses, not even the bridles... I left everything behind... And when the leader of my herds fell I did not take off his forehead the many-colored, embroidered band inherited from my forefathers."

"Ah!" — intoned the chorus.

"... the women shed hot tears", — proceeded the man enlivened by the sympathy of those around him," — but all merchants advise: 'Do not take anything, brother, from his victims; 'he' will search for his property everywhere and will find it.' I obeyed — I dropped everything and ran. At last I went so far that the desolation struck fear into my own heart... May be no one before me was ever there... Not a tree... no shrubs... only stones, snow over everything and... wind. I could not pitch my tent because not a stick could be found and I was afraid to send to the woods for timber. We dug out a hole in the snow under the crag of a rock and in its shelter we nestled. We felt comfortable; slowly joy began to fill our hearts. The plague ceased. One day passed, another, and not a deer sickened. In deep silence, terrified, we waited. We avoided talking about "him", even thinking... thus may be "he" would forget us! Our eyes did not wander once from our resting herds. We

went where our herds went, spending nights, like Chookche, amidst our animals. Some time passed that way. My wife began to smile... I myself began to think that the worst was over... that in time our cattle will increase and with it our riches.

"But one night I again awoke tossing in terror. The moon shone like before. The reindeer slept on the snow in a closely packed mass and there in the air hung a shadow; it did not come from the stones... it was detached.

"Oh!"

"Carefully I slipped from under my bedclothes, I loathed my rifle and without stopping to dress, naked I began to stalk through the night to surprise "him". "He" did not notice me... he stood on a stone and watched my possessions. But when it has I made a slight noise while fixing the supports of my gun, he turned and pierced me with his burning eyes. I fired between them... What happened next? I do not know. Did he strike me... or was it simply his breath? I don't know. Something passed over me like a whirlwind. When I came to my senses I had no reindeer. Tumara was a pauper."

The narrator stopped, waved his hand, and jumping to his feet, stood still, with his head low down and an expression of suffering on his face.

The younger man in the crowd rose also, but the old ones did not stir; they fixed their eyes upon the unfortunate man and seemed to be still listening.

"Well, what next...?"

Tumara raised his head, opened his lips, but as his eyes glanced beyond the circle, his face expressed surprise, the lips trembled and the tears trickled down his cheeks. Everybody turned in the same direction.

At some distance from the fire stood a venerable Tungus, grayhaired and in ancient national custom; he was leaning against the back of a milkwhite reindeer. Behind him, holding the bridle of another reindeer a young man pushed forward; in dress and face he wore a striking resemblance to the graybeard.

"Seltichan!" all shouted. "At last you have come... you, our father! And we have thought already that you have forsaken us, us, who have to perish. What news? What did you see and hear on the other side on the mountains? How does the tribe of Memel fare? Do they still live?... Or, may be, like ourselves they breathe their last? And you, our master, what are your plans? Do

you come alone or with all your people? Do you return to the mountains? Or will you go towards the safe?" Thus they quizzed the new arrivals.

Seltichan threw the reins to his son and came among those around the fire; he greeted everybody with a hearty hand-shake and took his seat besides the "kniaz", dressed in Yakut fashion, who quickly made room for him. He took out of his tobacco-pouch a small Chinese pipe and began filling it slowly.

The crowd kept silent but the circle grew more compact every moment.

"It is already two months since the plague crossed the mountains", he began in grave voice. "The tribe of Memel, terrified has scattered; they all rushed to the sea, but taking different roads to avoid contaminated localities. You need not expect them here. As to my people they shall arrive to-night."

"Ah! Seltichan, who could doubt that you would come. You are wise, you are brave; we know, you are not afraid of anything;" "kniaz" said stoutly, reaching out for the smoking pipe of his neighbor. A shadow crossed the face of the old man.

"Nobody can escape his fate." He spoke coldly.

"But you, Seltichan, you are born to good fortune only. You are beloved by Hod... Is it not so? Did you lose one little kid... while all around the herds are perishing?"

Again the face of the old man clouded.

"God loves you, Seltichan!" Repeated the "kniaz", sighing.

"He loves me because I keep the old commandments, live according to the old traditions. My possessions did not arise from the tears of my fellow-beings; all that is mine comes from the mountains, rocks, forest and the water", — replied the old man dryly.

"That is true!... And your hand is ever open..." the others supported him. "In the hours of misery you helped the nation, you shared what you had."

"And who can help more easily than you? What can I give for instance? I, who have only merchandise and debts. Shall I, in these hard times, pass my debts to others?... All right... I have nothing against it... I am a Tungus, like yourself... But how can my stinking debts help anybody? They don't produce reindeer..." concluded the "kniaz" with laughter.

(To be continued)



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