

FREE POLAND

A SEMI-MONTHLY

The Truth About Poland and Her People

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MARCH 1, 1916

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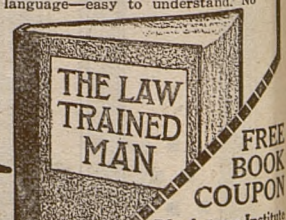
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The Polish Veto

A writer in "Free Poland" last year while discussing the fleeting promises of Poland's restoration as an independent nation from the German viewpoint dropped a sarcastic remark on the Polish Veto — "nie pozwalam" — the meaning of which apparently is quite strange to him since it escaped him as convincingly as it had so many other commentators native and foreign, of the XIX century on the Polish constitution.

Undoubtedly, in no small measure a good deal of the blame for the false conception of the Polish parliamentary veto which still pervades the atmosphere of foreign scholars falls on the shoulders of some Polish historians themselves. Having solely the INDIVIDUAL in mind through whose protest the proceedings of the diet came suddenly to an end, they most unfortunately overlooked the responsible political party, the oligarchy, or coterie, of which he was merely the spokesman and tool.

To be more specific, even such an historian as Michael Bobrzyński (Consult his "History of Poland" — chapters on "The Golden Freedom" and "The Cossacks' Rebellion"), while comparatively a modern, almost a contemporary historian, is rather obscure and far from satisfactory in his exposition of the Polish veto. To quote him: "From by gone times," he says, "there existed a law which claimed that by unanimity alone could the diet pass a bill. Instances were not wanting where a turbulent minority prolonged the sessions for six Sundays until finally the diet was dissolved; other examples can be cited where the refractory minority left the sessions, thereby forcing the majority and the King to close the diet. However, there was not an example on record where a single member of the lower house by his protest — "nie pozwalam" — and his departure from the sessions forced the diet to break up until March 9th, 1652, Siciński, through the instigation of Janus Radziwill, protesting against the legality of the sessions in the name of Golden Freedom and abruptly absenting himself from further participation in the sessions, annulled the diet in view of which the remaining members closed the proceedings." The actual subject under discussion over which he creates so much alarm he dismisses immediately after in this fashion: "The whole LIBERUM VETO, however, must not be taken literally. One member could not cause the dissolution of the diet, for the reason that if the diet was peaceable at all, it continued its deliberations and enacted laws, paying no attention whatever to the protesting member. Instances of this kind in later times occurred often enough."

Dr. Anatol Lewicki (see his "Compendium of Polish History", § 190, p. 307, 4th edition, A. D. 1907, revised by Henry Mościcki) seems to have copied the above verbatim, for speaking of Siciński's action he defines himself of the following: "This was the beginning of liberum veto, a law, by means of which one representative alone could interpose his veto and put an end to the diet. Thus, unanimity was brought to its extremes. This,

while not really a novelty, must have had an evil effect, because of the clashes among the instructed deputies representing their different district conventions in the diet... In consequence, the dissolution of the diet took place for the first time in A. D. 1652. Yet that is not to be taken in the literal sense. Indeed, the interpretation of a deputy by his protest to a measure could in no way bring about the dissolution of the diet, unless the minority supported his efforts and made him responsible for the disgraceful proceeding."

The translations I have made from the original textbooks of the above mentioned authors on the subject of the Polish parliamentary veto are so utterly misleading in their antecedent asseverations, especially to one unfamiliar with Polish history, that they almost inevitably lead one to a false conclusion. Such expressions as "unanimity", "a law", "one representative", Siciński etc., used in reference to the annulment of the diet, most assuredly convey a strong impression that one representative could undo the work of the Polish parliament and disrupt it despite the very brief statement of the authors I cited to the contrary. That such an impression was created on foreign scholars can readily be understood. The foremost American philosopher, Orestes A. Brownson, must have been under the influence of this impression when he wrote in his "American Republic" the following in regard to the Polish veto: "Unanimity is impracticable, for where there are many men there will be differences of opinion. The rule of unanimity gives to each individual a veto on the whole proceeding, which was the grand defect of the Polish constitution. Each member of the Polish diet, which included the whole body of the nobility, had an absolute veto, and could alone arrest the whole action of the government." This solemn assertion, while apparently definitive in its significance, has in reality no foundation, no documentary evidence for it in Polish history. Orestes A. Brownson's misapprehension of the Polish veto along with many other students and scholars rests, without a shred of doubt, on textbooks of Polish history, whose authors in their day, similar to those of our own time, based their judgment on well sounding phrases of a legend rather than on historical proofs and researches.*

According to popular tradition, Siciński immediately

*Rev. James MacCaffrey in his otherwise well written *History of the Catholic Church in the Nineteenth Century* (Vol. I., Second Edition, Revised, 1910), under the influence of some German and French books, which he cites in a preamble to Chapter VI on *The Church in Poland and Russia*, repeats the same tale, attributing to Poland, moreover, a feudal system of government as the cause of its downfall! He says: "While the neighboring countries were adapting themselves to the demands of the age, Poland remains stationary, contenting itself with a feudal organization, which, however, suitable at an earlier period, was hardly in keeping with the requirements of the eighteenth century... In the diet any motion, however pleasing to the majority, might be defeated by the veto of a single member. This provision, the Liberum Veto, deprived the Diet of all possibility of effecting reform." Had he omitted this altogether as so many other things, which, as a partisan, he merely touches in his second volume of the same title on *The Church in America*, he would have given by far a more satisfactory account of the condition of the Church in Poland and Russia during the period he describes.—The Author.

after his return from the diet lost in a short interval his father, mother and sister. He himself perished from a thunderbolt which fell from a clear sky on Christmas day that same year. His palace became a heap of ruins, and his whole family perished with him. But history, on the contrary, attests that Ladislaus Siciński, who represented Upita, his district, in the diet, A. D. 1652 was an able and eloquent hireling of Janus Radziwill, married Helen Sollohub in 1664 and ended his days as a very wealthy and powerful landlord.

The Polish veto was strictly speaking not a law, but a formality sanctioned by custom. The Polish statesmen of that period inveigh not so much against the veto itself as against the manner in which it was executed. What conspired powerfully to the disruption of the diet was ambition, vanity, conceit, jealousy of some selfish faction which usually found its spokesman willing to shoulder the blame and the disgrace by way of filthy lucre. Yet, strange as it may seem, the king continued to govern undisturbed despite the veto.

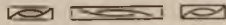
It is also a mistake to regard Siciński as the father of the Polish veto. George Lubomirski used it in 1639, hence 13 years earlier than Siciński, and precisely in the same manner as the latter. In fact from 1536 to the dismemberment of Poland 70 diets were disrupted in all—seldom at first, more frequently in later times. The cry of "nie pozwalam" did not always succeed, the diet removing the opponents and finishing its proceedings even as late as 1703 and again in 1726. Had the veto been always effective the shadow of the House of Brandenburg would never have fallen on Prussia and Berlin. "As long as the Polish commonwealth had good citizens," says Dr. L. Kubala, it grew and developed in spite of the *liberum veto*, but when these failed, the veto then appeared in the form of a boil, a visible sign of an ailment, on which alas, more attention was concentrated than upon its cause.... And even if the veto would be eliminated,

would the diets stand?... There is not a parliament in Europe which could not be legally disrupted by withdrawals and long speeches, once the dread of law and public opinion is set at naught and patriotism is enfeebled."

In concluding my remarks on this subject I cannot refrain from mentioning that, as a result of the last diet, which was in continuous sessions for a period of four years and which not only regulated the royal succession but the whole social structure of the Polish Commonwealth, the custom of vetoing the proceedings of the diet, as here set forth, was altogether abolished for the majority rule by the adoption of the new constitution, May 3, 1792. Considering the social and political unrest of that time it is remarkable that the important changes which that diet brought about were not accompanied by revolutionary intrigues and bloodshed. No wonder that Bishop Malinowski at the sight of the king, the nobility and the people taking up the oath of allegiance to the new constitution, could have exclaimed in the church of Holy Cross at Warsaw on that glorious day with the Psalmist: *This is the day which the Lord hath made: let us be glad and rejoice therein.* And while Ladislaus Smoleński, the continuator of the inimitable Kalinka (Smoleński's "Last Year of the Great Diet"), says that as the Bishop was concluding his sermon dark clouds appeared and a fierce, though a brief, storm enveloped the city of Warsaw — an omen in which the people saw forebodings of national calamities — the Poles from that day to this, as exponents of Catholic and civil liberty, await, with yearnings born of persecution and sacrifices, with a hope and a love that nothing can extinguish, the glorious May-Day of their complete restoration as an independent nation. Would that the present bloody storm which is now passing over Europe be the last winter of Poland's discontent!

C. SMOGOR.

February 18th, 1916, Steubenville, O.



A Letter From Our Subscriber

Granger, Iowa, Feb. 10th, 1916.

Free Poland,

Chicago, Ill.

Gentlemen: —

Enclosed please find draft for one dollar in payment of subscription to "Free Poland". In connection with this I desire to say that your paper is pretty good and you don't spare Prussia for her persecution of Poles in the past, but you don't give Russia near enough its dues. Russia as a Slav nation should have sympathized with them at least as much as Austria; such treatment as Austria gave the Poles would have checked Russia in her drastic measures.

The Catholic Church has no greater enemy than the Russian government. What Russia has been doing in Eastern Galicia to the Catholic Clergy and laity is proof enough. We should as Catholics have no pity for any government which wants to control Church and State or religion and politics, and that has been the work done by Russia. The German Kaiser leaves religion to the Pope and shows some regard for the Pope. He consults the Pope and Bishops.

The Russian emperor ignores the Pope. He wants

to be both Emperor and Pope. The czar of Russia is like the Pharaoh of Egypt, who oppressed the Israelites. He will let Poland go but only after the 10 plagues will strike him. The same God who struck Pharaoh and Egypt will or is now striking the oppressors of Poland. Only too bad that Poland has to suffer so much. However, nearly all great reforms in the world came through or after bloodshed. Christ redeemed the world by shedding his blood. Christianity was established in the Roman Empire, after 250 years of persecution and bloodshed. United States secured her independence and liberty after bloodshed. The colored people in the United States got their freedom after a bloody war, "Civil War". The slaveholders were tyrants almost like the Pharaohs, like Russia, Prussia and Austria to Poland. The tyrants who robbed Poland of her liberty must like Pharaoh of Egypt feel the plagues before they give up their victim or the ill-gotten goods. Let all Poles now unite to help Poland with alms and prayer and God will do the rest.

Rev. J. J. MORON.

(We thank our subscriber for the numerous words of sympathy to our publication. — The Editor.)

Poland is Bound to Gain



AS victory has not perched upon the banner of either belligerent, the work of granting concessions is still going on.

The Germans, for instance, have opened what were formerly Russificatory educational institutions in Warsaw and made them distinctly Polish. They have granted numerous concessions in the administrations, so much so that the allies are anxious lest Poles be won over by these German manifestations of friendliness. And the Russian Bear, whose promises of a recreated Poland grew the more voluminous the more Polish territory was slipping from his bureaucratic paw under German domination, is scared as the result of these German agitations in the Kingdom of Poland. What if the Germans succeed in gaining the sympathy of Poles in Russian Poland? The possibilities are of momentous importance not only to Russia, but to the cause of the Allies as a whole. Hence they are all bidding for Polish favor.

These are good signs — signs that the people, the lesser nationalities are reckoned with in the play on the bloody chessboard of Europe.

* * *

The Germans, as despatched in the telegrams of a year ago, asserted that Poland must be separated from Russia and formed into a separate state under German protection and ruled by a German prince.

But in this scheme of things there are numerous difficulties which would have to be surmounted in order to place a Polish Pufferstaat on the political map of Europe.

"The main difficulty", writes Frank H. Simonds in the *Chicago Sunday Tribune*, "is found in the unfortunate comingling of German and Slav population in eastern Prussia. Austria could resign Galician Poland; Russia could surrender Russian Poland without in any way affecting the unity of their remaining territories and without in the smallest measure affecting their own military or political unity.

"But if Germany should surrender all the lands which are populated by Poles and possessed by Prussia, she would actually break Prussia into two parts and seriously impair the situation of Silesia in relation to the rest of northern Prussia. In a word, the partition of Poland in the XVIII century gave Austria and Russia some valuable outlying territory of considerable value, but not vital to their unity or safety, while it actually permitted Prussia to achieve her own unity.

"To undo the work of the Congress of Vienna, which only rearranged the divisions made in the three partitions, would mean to break up Prussia, and it would logically lead not to the separation of 2,000,000 Germans in east and west Prussia from the main Germanic mass but to their ultimate absorption into a Slav state, since they would lie between the mass of the Poles and the Baltic.

"Bismarck foresaw this and left behind many words of warning. Buelow and the present kaiser have both labored to Germanize the mass of Poles, between 3,000,000 and 4,000,000 along the eastern marshes. But, despite all sorts of land laws and other brutal and tyrannous methods, the effort of the Prussian state to dispose of the Polish problem has failed, and the Poles have steadily gained ground in eastern Germany.

"It is clear now that if Germany wins she means to deal with the problem as a whole. She has conquered all of Russian Poland, and her armies occupy this region and

much Russian territory beyond the Bug. By her aid Austria has won the victory she hoped for in the Balkans, and Serbia and Montenegro are at her mercy, and the hegemony of the Balkans will be assured to the Habsburgs unless the fortunes of war materially change.

"Germany accordingly plans to ask Austria to cede the Polish districts of Galicia to the new Polish state, she means to take the Polish districts of Russia. So far the problem is simple. But what is she going to do with her own Poles? No one knows, and no answer to the question is at present possible. But it is safe to forecast that a victorious Germany will not consent to restore, even to a protected Poland, the Netze district or any considerable portion of Posen or Silesia.

"Yet the creation of this Polish kingdom will bring its own perils. The real safety for Prussia has lain hitherto in the fact that both her neighbors, who shared in the work of destroying Poland, have had the same reasons as she has had for laboring to prevent the Poles from realizing their aspirations. Russian, Prussian and Austrian armies have more than once co-operated to subdue Polish insurrections, and the three robber states have been united by a common self-interest in thwarting Polish patriotism.

"But once Russia and Austria have lost their Polish provinces neither will be concerned to help Germany retain hers. Russia most certainly will henceforth be prepared to take advantage of any Polish disaffection to intervene, either to replace Germany as the protector of Poland or else to complete the work of Polish liberation by freeing the Prussian Poles and rounding out the Polish kingdom by adding to it the 2,000,000 of Germans in the east, who are an island in the sea of Polish Slavs and a barrier between Poland and her natural expansion to the sea.

"Even if Russia is for a long time unable to take up the fight, there will be a Polish problem. A state of 17,000,000 people, occupying a well defined and homogeneous country, will inevitably tend to seek absolute freedom. They will also look over the German frontiers to the millions of Poles still separated from the mass of their fellow countrymen and find in their wrongs new ground for hatred of the Prussians. Further, the tendency of the Slavs to push west and drive the Germans before them, a thoroughly peaceful form of invasion, will be redoubled when Poland has all become a German protectorate and only imaginary frontiers divide them from the Silesian and Posen districts.

"It is clear, then, that the freeing of Poland will at once bring grave dangers to Germany; it may easily be the first step in the series which will trust back the Germans in the east and raise a new Slav state in the valleys of the Oder, the Vistula, and the Bug and along the Baltic from Pomerania to the Niemen.

"But what is the alternative? The eastern frontier of Germany has always been an open frontier. The real menace to the German race in the future has always been recognized by German statesmen to lie in the east. Russia whose population is expanding by millions every decade and is already nearly three times that of Germany, will in the next half century outstrip Germany by leaps and bounds so far as numbers are concerned. Some time there must come that great Russian awakening, signs of which have already been described by many since this war began.

"Already Russia has proclaimed that her mission is to free the Slavs of Europe, the southern Slavs of the Adriatic, the eastern Slavs of Bohemia, and the Carpathian regions of Hungary. Pan-Slavism is on the march, and, despite all the talk about British rivalry and French desire for revenge, every German knows that the real issue of the war lies between the Slav and the Teuton. The world is at war because Russia insisted upon her right to uphold the Serbian Slav against the Austrian German and the Hungarian Magyar.

"If Germany can now detach the Poles from the Slavonic block, if Austria can add the Serb to her other southern Slavs and bind them to the Habsburg throne, as the Poles are to be bound to the Hohenzollern and the Bulgarians are already united to the central powers, then pan-Slavism will cease to be a potent force and a permanent menace to the Teutons. Between the Germans and the main mass of the Slavs will lie the Polish state, bound to the German empire by bonds of economic and political character. On her open frontier Germany will have a buffer state, whose armies will be at her service.

"Such is the German conception; it has its strong points; it has its obvious perils. German efforts in Alsace-Lorraine have not demonstrated that the German possesses any great genius for dealing with subject races; the Poles of Posen have never borne willing testimony on behalf of their Prussian masters. In raising up a semi-independent Poland Germany may raise up a ward whose own ambitions a few years hence will imperil German unity. But this risk the Germans seem prepared to take. They see the Russian menace in the near future and they are content to believe that they will be able to transform Poland into a useful and obedient servant.

"If Russia wins, then we are bound to believe that the czar will in some measure, at least, seek to redeem the promises made to the Poles at the outset of the war. He will unquestionably take from the Austrians not merely Polish Galicia, but all Galicia, which he has once held in his hand already and only lost after many months of occupation. It is reasonable to expect that the Polish districts west of the San will be added to the present Russian Poland. So far Russia will follow the German plans.

"But what of the Poles in Posen, in East and West Prussia, in Silesia? There can be no mistaking the answer. If 3,000,000 Poles are now held under Prussian tyranny — and it is tyranny, quite as severe as the Russian — then is there any reason why, given a Slav victory, the happiness of 2,000,000 Germans should not be subordinated to the unity of the whole Polish race?

"If the central powers are completely beaten, if the allies impose their will upon the German and Austrian nations, then it is a safe guess that East and West Prussia, Posen and considerable districts in Silesia will be added to the present Russian kingdom of Poland, to which there will be also added the Austrian province of West Galicia. This would make a state of nearly 100,000 square miles and having a population of close to 25,000,000, more than four-fifths of whom would be Poles. Such state would face the Baltic from the shores west of Danzig to the mouth of the Niemen, east of Koenigsberg, and both the cities would be included in its boundaries.

"At most some 3,000,000 Germans would be included in this Slav state, if they were not swept out during the Russian advance, as the inhabitants of East Prussia were driven before the Russian invasions of 1914 and 1915. Actually the Germans would be forced back from the Vistula and the work of the Teutonic Knights in the dis-

tricts of East Prussia would be undone. The Slav frontier, whether Poland were Russian or free, would approach Berlin and halt less than 150 miles from the German capital.

"Such a state might for some years remain a Russian protectorate, but it is pretty clear that at some time it would assert its own independence and it might then find support from Germany and from Austria-Hungary, because it would become a real buffer state and a true bulwark against the Russians. Conceivably it might seek an alliance with the Czechs of Bohemia, and two Slav states, independent of Russian influence, whether Hohenzollern or Habsburg, might occupy central Europe.

"What it is essential to note is that the fate of the Poles is now hardly to be settled by this war without a very material change in their estate. It is wholly inconceivable that Poland, after the war, will be the same thing it was before; that the three fragments, separated by the three partition treaties and by the supervening agreement in the congress of Vienna, will still be separated by artificial frontier and by three separate allegiances.

"If Germany wins, if the Germans are able to have their way in the east, while consenting to a restoration of the antebellum conditions in the west, as they seem willing to do now, then Austrian and Russian Polish populations are likely to be united into a state under German control. To this may be added some small districts now Prussian which have a majority of their population Polish. But there can be no actual restoration of Poland under German direction, because this would entail an actual destruction of Prussian unity and undo the work of Frederick the Great.

"But if the allies win and Russia has her way in the west — a way that will not be opposed by any of her allies — then there will be a real Polish restoration under Russian protection, and there will be added to Russian Poland the Galician districts west of the San and the Prussian provinces of Posen, East and West Prussia, and a portion of the province of Silesia. Some 6,500,000 people, considerably more than half Slavs, will be taken from Prussia and added to the new Poland, which will remain a Russian protectorate for the first few years at least.

"But either way the Poles stand to make some progress toward a national reintegration. A Russian victory would, from their point of view, conceivably give them the greatest profit. But it should be recognized that it is the Austrians who have treated the Poles with the greatest consideration. Under the Prussians and the Russians the Polish sufferings have been about the same but the Habsburgs have no more loyal subjects than the Poles of Galicia. These Poles have no desire to exchange Austrian for German or Russian rule. This adds one more complication.

"Terrible as has been the Polish sufferings so far in the war, it is now inconceivable that they should not profit by the conflict. The only thing that they have actually to fear is that the war may end in a complete draw and that the status quo ante is restored in the east. This would but postpone the day of settlement of the Polish question and leave Europe with one of its gravest problems still to be disposed of. A German victory would be preferable to this, but a Russian victory, with the reconstruction of a Polish state including all the districts populated by Poles and some of the German inhabited districts between the Baltic and the present region of Russian Poland, would, perhaps, be the solution most to be desired."

Will There Be An Exodus to Poland?



HERE is no doubt that at the end of the war Poland will be devastated and depopulated. Fear has frequently been expressed that there will not remain enough Poles to sustain national life in Poland.

The question that has agitated the minds of thinkers and historians is whether the Polish people now dwelling in other lands will move in a body to Poland. This question cannot as yet be satisfactorily answered.

The *Chicago Herald*, commenting on Mr. Piotrowski's seven months' tour of investigation in Poland, is point-blank asking the question whether the Poles will return.

"If the Polish people", it continues, "now living in other lands, should be largely moved to return to Poland, then the world would witness such a return to the ancestral seats as it has not seen since the return of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity. From many lands would the forced or voluntary exiles return. Poland has been a fruitful mother of men and women who have contributed to the progress and renown of other countries. Only Mme. Curie in France and Joseph Conrad in England need be mentioned to illustrate the truth.

"The Poles fought for the freedom and unity of other nations all over the world. They came to fight for us in our war of independence. There is a monument in a Chicago cemetery which records with just pride the names of many who fought for the Union in our civil war. The importance of the Polish contribution to the hard work of American industrial development needs no argument. The Polish laborer is everywhere on the firing line.

"Should the outcome of the war be such as to invite and move the Poles largely to return to Poland other nations would be poorer for the exodus. But Poland would gain a new peopling of high capability and widely varied achievement. None who knows them doubts that the Poles are capable of such an enterprise. They have the imagination and a deathless love for Poland."

A contributor to our magazine, Mr. F. Kempczyński, of Newark, N. J., is of the opinion that there will follow from America a large exodus of the Polish people to reconstruct a new Poland from the ashes and ruin brought about by the instruments of war. Poles from America, he avers, will be principally responsible for the phoenixlike resuscitation of Poland. He writes:

"The big war which is now raging all over Europe must eventually come to an end. Then the gigantic task of reconstruction will begin. And as Poland has been the scene of the worst devastation, the hardest task will be there.

"And in the task of reconstruction place the Polish-American citizen in the very first rank. Autonomy has been promised Poland by all the warring nations, and if such a thing comes to pass there will be a tremendous exodus of Poles from America to Poland. These people will come to Europe armed with American business ex-

perience, seared into their very soul by their struggle for existence here in America. They will come with a knowledge business methods and efficiency.

"The lesson they received in America will become of tremendous value when applied in that rebuilding of nations. Poland will become a land of new opportunities, and there will be plenty on hand to grasp them. The large interests in Poland have been hitherto in the hands of foreigners. Will the returning emigrants be satisfied with this state of affaire? Assuredly not. Certainly some effort will be made to wrest the big mining and manufacturing interests from foreigners and place them in Polish hands.

"However, the success of a nation does not lie in the hands of a few million dollar corporations. A successful nation is built on small business. The grocer, baker, butcher and small manufacturer are the basis of a successful commercial nation.

"Let me illustrate one case. Joseph Grodecki has been a manufacturer of trunk handles for five years. He sells the business for \$10,000. The war comes to an end. Grodecki realizing that the American dollar is worth so much more in Europe and being lonesome for a sight of his native land goes to Poland. He arrives in the midst of the reconstruction and with opportunities for successful investment on every side. Will Grodecki return to America or maybe return to a farm? Certainly not. He will put those \$10,000 in a place where they will net the most returns, apply his American business experience and then await developments.

"Multiply the case of Grodecki by a thousand, then thousand or even a hundred thousand, though in smaller money amounts, and you will find out why the Poles in America are so optimistic, why they are predicting a new era for Poland, why Poland is destined to become a commercial power in Europe."

Belief in a general exodus is one side of the question. On the other hand, may we rather expect an intensified emigration out of Poland into America? That is another possibility which cannot be overlooked.

Old as the eternal hills is the truism that there are two things you cannot escape: death and taxes. And hideous war harvests a crop of corpses and enforces heavy rates of taxation. And isn't it reasonable to suppose that in order to escape the burden which the exigencies of the present war will doubtless lay upon the shoulders of the inhabitants of Europe, many will leave that war-scarred territory for other happier lands?

Many American social workers are convinced that the latter will be the case. There are already 5,000,000 Poles less in Poland, and for economic reasons, if for no other, they will dread to return to devastated Poland and will prefer to come to America.

It is without doubt that many Poles, guided by their intense love of their fatherland, will leave America for Poland and settle there permanently. The two sides of the question are a serious problem. The Polish organizations of America, which hitherto have shown such an admirable spirit of co-operation, should weigh this matter carefully, discuss it thoroughly and then adopt some effective measures of action.

FREE POLAND

A SEM-MONTHLY

The Truth About Poland and Her PeoplePUBLICATION AUTHORIZED BY
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RememberPoland 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."**The Inalienable Rights of
a Nation**

"Empires are fragile, but nations are indestructible."
This is especially true of the Polish nation, which at one
time extended as a powerful kingdom but now is groaning
under the heel of the enemy.

Yet it has never signed quitclaim to its inviolate rights
to nationhood. It has survived centuries of oppression and
in the process has learned how to hold its own in the
teeth of brutal superiority.

During the various crises the Poles would voice their
just demands, reminding the world that "Poland is not
yet lost." In 1830, in 1861, there was each time raised a
huge protest against foreign tyranny and oppression,
while the world was called on not to forget the inalienable
rights of the Poles as a nation.

And in the present conflict, for which Polish national-
ity is one of the prices to be exacted, the Poles have re-
peatedly pointed out their undying hopes and aspirations.

The resolutions, adopted by the Polish Central Relief
Committee, the Polish National Council and other fore-
most Polish organizations, are an instance in point. The
pronunciamento, which is self-explanatory, follows:

"The Polish Central Relief Committee, com-
prising ten of the foremost Polish organizations

in America and duly representing 4,000,000 cit-
izens of Polish descent and extraction, who have
in a large degree aided in the power and prosper-
ity of this great Republic, in view of the resolu-
tion introduced in Congress by Mr. M. London, as
regards the future Peace Congress which would
aim to terminate the ruthless world war now in
progress, defines the Polish attitude as follows:

"1. We affirm that the basis of a free growth
and progress of mankind is the acknowledgment
of the equal rights of man, and, therefore, of the
independent existence of all nations.

"2. Dedicated to this proposition, we are con-
vinced that one of the principal aims of the future
Peace Congress shall be an equitable adjustment
of the conditions of an independent existence of
all hitherto oppressed nations.

"3. It is an indisputable historic fact that Po-
land is one of the most cruelly and unjustly op-
pressed nations while its dismemberment con-
stitutes a political crime unheard of in the annals
of the world and is undeniably one of the principal
causes of the conflict now raging in Europe.

"Therefore, permanent peace among mankind
is impossible as long as the Polish Question will
not be solved along the lines of justice and fair
play, in the name of the following inalienable
rights of the Polish nation:

"a) We demand the union of all parts of Po-
land under its own independent government, with-
out any alien protectorate.

"b) In view of the infinite sacrifices and ter-
rible losses visited upon Poland, forced to fight
in the interest of foe and oppressor, we demand
a full indemnification.

"4. We firmly believe that the powerful Re-
public of the United States, which has ever cham-
pioned the cause of liberty and independence, will
lend its moral prestige and powerful assistance
to further the realization of the rights and de-
mands of the Polish people."

POLISH CENTRAL RELIEF COMMITTEE.
POLISH NATIONAL COUNCIL.
POLISH NATIONAL ALLIANCE.
POLISH ROMAN CATHOLIC UNION.
POLISH FALCONS' ALLIANCE.
POLISH WOMEN'S ALLIANCE.
POLISH UNION OF WILKES-BARRE, Pa.
POLISH ALMA MATER.
ST. JOSEPH'S POLISH UNION.
POLISH UNIFORMED SOCIETIES.
POLISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION of Milwaukee.

To Feb. 14, 1916, the Polish National Council has col-
lected the sum of \$158,034 for the Polish Victims' Relief
Fund.

Sending Provisions Into Poland

To date the question of safely transporting supplies into Poland has not yet been settled satisfactorily.

The Polish organizations have done their share and Mr. J. F. Smulski is again in Washington, discussing this vital problem with the ambassadors of Germany and Great Britain — the two great powers which could help starving Poland.

"England seems", writes the CHICAGO EVENING POST, "to be very awkward again in refusing to play the role of cruelty toward Poland which Germany has marked out for her.

"All that England had done was to hint that it might be well for Germany, before forcing onto others the job of feeding her conquered province, to give back to that province the food of which she had stripped it in contravention of the law of nations and of humanity.

"That hint England disdains to follow up. Now, apparently, she waives the 'rations' demand, as it was called, and says that she will let food go into Poland upon the sole guaranty that Germany and Austria will stop draining food from Poland. Without this guaranty, feeding Poland, of course, would be pouring supplies into a bottomless pit.

"Mr. John F. Smulski, who has so ably led this victorious fight for his starving people, believes that the guaranty will be given and that food can soon begin to go into Poland.

"We hope so. But the amount of organization work to be done before a system can be established is overwhelming.

"The first thing to do is to get wherewith to send from America the food that will go to Poland. That job, we believe, is within the province of the American government. Indeed, we regret that our government did not move, as it was desired by Polish Americans to do, in order to bring about the concession which England has voluntarily made.

"In the matter of ships Representative Loud has in-

troduced into the House of Representatives a bill providing that for the space of 1 year one-fourth of our naval colliers or transports be devoted to carrying to Europe food for Polish relief.

"If the navy experts believe that such a move is safe, the Loud bill should be speeded up and put to passage at once.

"Every day, every hour counts when men, women and little children are dying of starvation by the hundreds and thousands. If we can do it, we should have the ships ready to carry the food the very hour that Germany and Austria give their guaranties."

* * *

The Chicago Daily Tribune, commenting on the same topic, writes:

"The British government has indicated its willingness to make proper arrangements for relief measures in Poland. If Germany and Austria will remove no more food from Poland — and this is an entirely fair condition — Great Britain will agree to terms under which supplies can be imported into the devastated regions.

"The German and Austrian government can hardly fail to accept this offer, and we hope the necessary formalities will be disposed of with the least possible delay.

"The British government has acted with commendable humanity, and it is to be hoped that Berlin or Vienna will not be behind in this cause. Experienced Americans will be in charge of the relief work, which is guaranty that it will be accomplished conscientiously and without undue red tape.

"The case of the Poles is desperate. No time should be lost in extending them such aid as we can give them. Rich and fortunate America should give lavishly and promptly."

England, therefore, is willing to arrange for effective relief measures in Poland.

And what about Germany and Austria? May they not lag behind and speed up the day when the sending of provisions will save millions and millions on the brink of dire starvation.



Poles in Canada

The position of the Poles in the present war presents one of the greatest tragedies of the century. Yet despite such misfortunes, despite the repeated attempt to extirpate Polish nationality, the Poles have refused to be assimilated, forming a distinct nationality — a fact which we thought has been recognized by the whole thinking world.

To our sincere regret, however, and to our greatest surprise, we learn that the Canadian Government still divides us into three categories, according to our compulsory allegiance, and subjects the Poles of Austrian-

Prussian Poland to unpleasant arrests and limitations.

An instance in point is a letter we received from three Poles in Canada, who were forcibly interned in Canada and prevented from departing for America, where work for them could be found.

The Polish National Council has asked the Chicago British Consul-General, Mr. H. D. Nugent, if anything could be done for these unfortunate, but innocent countrymen of ours. And it has assured His Excellency that the Poles cannot and will not in any way prove dangerous to the sacred interests of Great Britain.

You Cannot Kill a Nation

By *JAN KUCHARZEWSKI*

(Translated from the French by JOHN S. FURROW)

*At genus immortale manet, multosque per annos
Stat fortuna domus, et avi numerantur avorum.*

(Virgil, Georgics, IV, 207-208)



It is to Hamlet that one French author, who some years ago had visited Poland, compared that unfortunate country: "In the great, gloomy drama of Europe Poland is like Hamlet, tormented and uncertain in the midst of feasts given by the enemy. Hamlet has to avenge his father and raves over it with drawn sword cleaving the air to the right and to the left, surrounded by phantoms; the Poles have to avenge their ancestors, their parents and struggle in the intimacy with the numerous torments which had been related for them; their country is fallen and they dream, consumed with chagrin and weakness, disarmed, narrowly surveyed, emaciated, having nothing but cemeteries for their promenades...."

In this comparison, the French writer with remarkable penetration points out the true danger which threatens the soul of the subjugated nation. Plunged in despair, it could therein drown its energy, suffer a resentment which is natural, but sterile and powerless, consume itself finally in anguish without hope. Follow the Calvary of Poland in the impartial book of MM. Leblond; titles of chapters alone will give you an exact idea: *Persecution of the Polish Nationality — Police Terror — Resistance and Massacres — Regime of the State of permanent Siege — The Work of Corruption, etc.*

"Do you believe that we have been able to forget anything?" says a Pole of Lithuania to the author of the book.

"We live all our days with the representation of what was accomplished during the entire century before us. Consider then that our grandfathers and our grandmothers were surrounded in their churches, sometimes even in the cemeteries, days and nights, while those who tried to escape were transfixed with the bayonet.... Often when I see at play one of our pretty children with serene blue eyes or a young girl who walks in the street with the quietude of her age in her figure, I cannot but ask what emotions of bondage they will experience!... You do not know, how all of this dominates the existence of a being and can consume it with grief."

The spirit of rancor, of indignation and of revolt is the inevitable reaction against outrage, torture and injustice.

The hatred which resulted from the latter and its consequences were particularly dreaded by the thinkers and statesmen of Poland as exercising a corrosive and destructive action upon the national soul. They did not hesitate to combat it by an idealistic propaganda, recalling that of the early Christians in its invitation not to hate their oppressor.

Civil and military chiefs of the various Polish insurrections were far from exciting national hatred. On the contrary, in the numerous proclamations, they insisted on the fact that the struggle was directed against the oppressive government and not against the nation, towards whom they did not nourish any hatred. "For our freedom and yours", such was the motto which the Polish insurrection of 1830 had written on its standards.

In the manifesto of the Polish nation, sanctioned by the Diet December 20, 1830, the aim of the revolution was formulated in this manner:

"We have not been influenced by any national hatred against the Russians, who, like us, are of Slavic origin; on the contrary, at the outset it was a great relief for us to think that, although our reunion under a like scepter was harmful to our interests, it could, nevertheless, cause a population of forty millions to share in the enjoyment of constitutional liberties, which, in the civilized world, had become a necessity for the governments as well as for the governed...."

"And if in this last struggle the liberty of Poland should perish in the ruins of the cities and the bodies of the defenders, every good Pole will carry along on his death-bed the consolation that if the heaven has not permitted him to save his own country, it has at least put under cover, for a moment, through this combat to the death, the liberties of menaced Europe."

And these words were not braggadocio; in effect, the Polish Revolution of 1830 caused the miscarriage of a great coalition of three eastern monarchies against France and Belgium.

* * *

The insurrection was quelled. An atrocious period of persecution began. The best Polish patriots were compelled to seek shelter abroad. Among the emigrants who could no more re-enter their fatherland, was found the great poet Mickiewicz. He preached to his compatriots forgetfulness of a just hatred. For, he said, to replace a government, it is not sufficient to hate it. The French government offered him the subject of Slavic literature at the *College de France*. The subject of his lectures was Polish and Russian literatures, as well as a survey of the political history of the two countries. This is the impression conveyed to Michelet from the lectures:

"Under our eyes we have had a miracle of this kind, an occurrence unheard of, prodigious, and my brow per spires to think of it... The *College de France* has witnessed this thing; its chair remains sacred.

"I speak of the day when we came, when he heard ourselves the great poet of Poland, consummating before France the immolation of the most justifiable hatreds and pronouncing over Russia only brotherly words.

"The Russians who were present were thunder-struck. They cast their eyes to the floor.

"As to us Frenchmen, shaken to the bottom of our souls, we scarcely dared look at the unfortunate Polish audience seated before us on the bench. What sorrow, what misery was wanting in this assembly? Ah, not one! The evil of the world was there complete. Exiles, outcasts, condemned, old men broken with age, living ruins of olden times; battles; poor women, elderly, in the dress of the people, princess yesterday — workwomen to-day; everything lost, rank, fortune, blood, life; their husbands, their children interred in the fields of battle, in the mines of Siberia!

"At sight of them one's heart was pierced!... What power was necessary, what enormous sacrifice and what anguish for them to speak so, to force from them forgetfulness of injury and leniency to foe, to deprive them of that which remained, even of their last treasure, hatred.

"It is the mystery of the white eagle that in shedding its blood it saves the black eagle..."

The great poet Krasinski feared whether the soul of the Polish nation, by force of incessant persecution, had not been poisoned with hatred. It is a race which is essentially Christian", writes a French author, stricken with this elevation of sentiment. Thomas Zan, a fervent Polish patriot, intimate friend of Adam Mickiewicz, at the time of his exile in Siberia, believed he well served his country by cultivating virtue in the hearts of Russian children, whom he was teaching. "Let us admire this Slavic altruism", wrote M. A. Leblond: "such, let us admit it, which setting aside some souls a la George Sand and a la Michelet, very few of us would have been able to perform even from the town-prisons of Saxony and Pomerania in 1870-71. Injustice with us means injury, our hearts so readily harden; it dilates the Polish sensibility which is more soul than heart.... The Pole is gentle—he pities the Russians while he lives martyred by the Russians — he invites them to Slavic brotherhood."

* *

In his sublime vision of the future brotherhood of peoples, Michelet sees Poland marching at the head of the nations. Each should offer a sacrifice on the altar of humanity, "Who will precede everybody in the preliminary sacrifice, the eve of the battle, in the evening? Poland as always.

"She has not tarried. The first, such of her children have placed on the altar an offering unheard of, immense... the hatred of Russia!

"What remains is easier. It will call for less effort... For the latter sacrifices, for this great opening of heart which the situation commands, it is no less needed, Poles, than this native valor which causes you ever to go to the fore. In this new road, you will also be the vanguard; you will be the first to pass the narrow path and the sharp bridge which so many others hesitate to pass...

"May France have Poland with her in this new road... May she have Poland for her companion and sister. And should she be surpassed a step, she should not be jealous... She says to her: "Thy glory is my glory... Let us go together to the sacrifice and to us attract the world. May it follow the vanguard of the Brotherhood of Man!"

The form and exaltation are of another epoch: the epoch of Romanticism, with such profound affinities to the Polish soul. The foundation of chivalrous and Christian romanticism was always one of the dominant traits of the Polish character.

Some years ago, a French author, after a sojourn in the Kingdom of Poland, wrote: "We conversed with representatives of different classes and professions: we were continually astonished at their show of relative indulgence to the crimes of the government..."

And has not the world only recently seen "the consummation of the sacrifice of the most justifiable hatreds"? The dominant people was itself astonished by this phenomenon and one of the eminent publicists of the Russian nationalistic party considered this attitude of the Polish nation in the light of a miracle.

* *

But it was not necessary to mistake the nature and motives of this forgetfulness and of this indulgence. He who would draw the conclusion that the Polish nation finally submitted itself — of its own accord — to foreign domination, that it was about to replace the time-honored and inextinguishable sentiment of its distinct nationality by some vague and fallacious idea of affinity of race, would risk committing a grave error.

If the Polish nation seemed occasionally to nourish sentiments in apparent contradiction to the sad experiences of its past and present, it is because its genius anticipated the sombre actuality, anticipated its future liberty and made known to the world that Poland, its liberty once regained, would be capable of extending a fraternal hand even to its oppressors of yesterday.

It should not be believed that a great nation could ever lose consciousness of its misfortunes and rights. The abyss dug between Poland and its oppressors cannot be gulfed by half-measures, but solely by an equitable and complete solution of the Polish problem. If the nation momentarily throws a veil on its past, it is because its thoughts are directed to the future, it is because its genius recalls it to a creative role, to activity. The words of Talleyrand, that to be a statesman is "to have the future in mind", applies to nations still more than to individuals. A French author, who has thoroughly studied the Polish people wrote: "Submitted to most violent trials, the Polish nation is one of the best tempered of Europe for the great international struggle."

If any one desires to be convinced, let him study the Polish question in the province of Posen, as represented by the German publications of the last years; let him read these volumes, already numerous, where the enemy render an involuntary homage to the firm resistance with which the Poles opposed the formidable machinery of Germanization. One will see that the nation, hounded from public life, and even, not so long ago, from its native soil, knows how to create an effective organization of defense.

"In the last twenty years", says Ludwig Bernhard in his *Polenfrage*, "there has been formed, among the Polish population of Prussia, an organization which has permitted them, despite all sort of prohibitive measures, to develop energetically and which, probably, will assure them in the future a single existence... Just as the Polish State once perished for lack of political organization, so now the Polish element in Prussia draws its power of resistance in an organization which, through its structure and its action, is akin to self-government."

So many invectives have been directed against the indiscretion of the Poles, cited as one of the causes of their political incapacity. Bernhard is of an entirely different opinion, for according to him: "The Poles are virtuous in secretiveness."

And as to the lack of union so often set forth? "The Germans who count on a profound and lasting division among the Poles will undergo a deception..."

* *

These examples can be multiplied *ad infinitum*. They all prove that in Prussia ironical criticism of Polish disorder (*Polnische Wirtschaft*) and of Polish anarchy is succeeded by a more just conception of the actual state of things. They now consider the Poles as a formidable and persevering adversary and the ill-will toward the Pole is doubled by a respect inspired by force. It is still an homage paid to the qualities of the Polish nation, an homage which is involuntary but all the more valuable, as it proceeds from an adversary. May it serve as a warning and lesson to other powers.

They can prolong the sufferings of the Polish nation by dragging it again through a series of iniquitous treaties. They can postpone the hour of its deliverance, but a captivity of a century and a half has proved that there is no force extant capable of killing Poland. . . .

Genus immortale manet.

Lausanne, May 1915.

Peasants in Poland



HOSE who study the history of Poland should remember that from time immemorial up to the first quarter of the 18th century Poland was an armed camp.

There were the repeated wars with the Germans in the west, with the Lithuanians and the Ruthenians to the east, from 1240 on with the Tartars to the south, with the Teutonic Order to the north, later with the formidable Turk and the threatening power of Muscovy.

* * *

The first king of Poland, Piast, was a peasant. In his time there was only one class of men — the tillers of the soil. Subsequent wars and Norman influences introduced the knighthood into Poland, and since the reign of King Boleslaus I, surnamed the Brave, that class was permanently established, its power ever growing in prestige and importance.

The king of Poland was the supreme judge as well for the most powerful noble as for the most obscure peasant.

Wars and German influences were responsible for peasant abuse. The Diet of Łęczyca, 1180, which established the upper house in Poland, the senate, among others passed a series of laws for the protection of the peasant and abolished the title. Owing to Tartar invasion and incessant warring, King Casimir, surnamed the "Peasant King", was again obliged to suppress abuse against the peasantry. But neither then nor before his times was there anything like that in Germany or in France. There were no vassals in Poland. There were no feudal laws or customs. The Code of Wislica (*Statut Wiślicki*), issued in 1347, the first written code in Europe since that of Justinian in Rome, had granted the peasants the privilege to own land. They were subject to the jurisdiction of the same courts as the nobility. The peasants could move as they pleased, could ask redress for any injury received from the hands of the nobility.

It is true that there was no capital punishment for killing a peasant, just as there was no such punishment for the murder of a nobleman.

At the convention of Kaschau (Koszyce) in 1374 the Polish nobility was able to extract from King Louis of Hungary, also king of Poland, many privileges, which up to that time had been enjoyed by the Crown, and from that time the power of the nobility was in the ascendant.

The year of 1496 was ill-fated for the Polish peasant, as then at the Diet of Piotrkow the law passed attached them to the soil and spelled the beginning of their misfortune.

But even after that year their position was much better than in Germany or in France. The same Diet of Piotrkow promulgated a law that from the same peasant family only one could go to school. The laws against the peasantry were passed under the influence of a large number of poor nobles — the proletariat of the nobility — who at most had an acre of land and some of whom had no land at all. These were jealous of the well-to-do peasantry and their education.

The prosperity of the peasant was so great that King John Albert was obliged to forbid the peasants their rich garments. Sons of peasants rose to offices of high distinction. Kromer, prince-bishop of Cracow, was of peasant parentage, as well as the poet Dantyszczek (*Dantiscus*),

who later was also prince-bishop of Cracow, the famous student of the humanities, Erasmus Ciolek, Cardinal Hosius, etc.

The Diet of Piotrkow marks a period of ill treatment of the peasant and can be regarded as the beginning of serfdom, which a century and a half later became general in Poland. It marks the ascendancy of the petty nobility and the breaking down of the landed nobility, the magnates and the "bene nati", that is, those possessed of one or more estates, who usually stood for progress and true liberty, whereas the petty nobility was too vain and ignorant to understand them.

The growing power of the small nobility — the real proletariat — was to a great degree responsible, under the elective system of Poland, for depriving the kings of power at times when conditions demanded powerful statesmanship and energetic action. Yet bad as later was the fate of the peasant in Poland, it was comparatively worse elsewhere in Europe.

Before any reformer started in Europe to defend the rights of man, there were such defenders in Poland; there was, for instance, the famous preacher Peter Skarga, whose seventh sermon before the Polish Diet is one of the most beautiful examples of oratory; there was Starowolski (1645), with his "Reform of Polish Habits"; there was Paul Piasecki, with his "Chronicle" (1645); Christopher Opalinski, with his "Satires" (1650); Alexander Olszarowski, professor of the University of Vilna, who in 1651 published in Danzig his work "De Politica Hominum Societate", in which he calls the peasants *ingenui cives*, using the language of Jean Jacques Rousseau a hundred years before the latter's advent.

From those times until the partition the social question had a large and numerous literature and many adherents; and to understand why the question had not previously been solved, it is necessary to study the then conditions not only in Poland, but in the adjoining countries.

Those so called students of history who so deplore the fate of Polish peasants should look into the fate of the French, the German or the Irish peasants, and then compare them with the Polish conditions to ascertain which fared the better.

For instance, it was not the peasants from Poland who went to fight for England during the American war for independence, but those from Hessen-Cassel (16,992), Brunswick (5723), Hanan (2442) and Anspach (1644). They were sold like so much cattle — the German rulers were paid from 15 to 23 pounds sterling per head by England.

In June 1794 the Russian minister and statesman Bezborodko wrote to Prince Repnin, Russian minister in Warsaw, that "the Poles have ideas which are to be feared as they might prove contagious"; that "the abolition of serfdom and similar reforms will spread to our rural distincts"; that "such things were the motives which decided the fate of Poland."

Bezborodko knew the true facts and frankly wrote about them to his subaltern; without thinking to turn the partition of Poland into an act of humanity, he simply regarded it as a precaution necessary to stop, for a time at least, the much needed economic reforms not only in Poland alone but in Russia and Austria as well. Poland's partition was necessary to stop the world's progress.

ALEXANDER M. JASIENSKI.

An Offering

By WACLAW SIEROSZEWSKI

(Concluded)

"Go, my boy, and call the people together."

Miore did not move.

"Did you hear?"

Only after this second harsh command did the boy move, he rose, began to button the cassock but instead of going out he suddenly fell at his father's feet.

"You have decided! You have decided! Oh, Father, do not leave us! The heads of our families will never consent... I spoke last night with our young men, they said: 'Let all our reindeer perish, we will live by industry...' And if they must have some one...let them cut the throat of the fat 'kniaz'!"

"You are stupid, my child," the old man smiled. "I do not know yet what I shall do... I want to see my people." I tell you — go!"

"Oh, our master, why do you deceive us with idle hopes?"

"Do not talk idly. It will be as I said."

"They will not let us go later... let us depart at once... in secret..."

"It must be as I said..." — repeated the old man with force.

"Oh, father, father, let us escape!" They all beseeched him with outstretched arms. At last the old man thrust back Miore, the most insistent, with a strong push of his leg and cried:

"Accursed ravens, stop tearing at my heart!"

"Truly", said "The Gleam of the Snows", heretofore absorbed in gloomy silence, "why doesn't Miore obey when father commands?"

The lad who lay and wept where he had fallen arose at once and left the tent without another word.

The people were again gathered at the pole. They all came from the smallest child to the oldest hoary head. They were sitting in groups according to tribes; they are armed and dressed in their best garments; the metal adornments glittered in the sun; the furs displayed their rich textures, the fringes waved. The people amused themselves, raced, wrestled; nothing betrayed the ultimate purpose of the meeting.

The tribe of Seltichan excelled all the others in the assortment of weapons, the richness of garments, strength and skill of their youth as also in the proud independence of their bearing. He himself sat at the head of his people watching the sports with attentive approval.

"The nation is growing weaker... it degenerates," he spoke up from time to time. "Are these heirs of the tribe of Tumara? Where is Lelyel whose tribe rivaled our own? Where is Milken?"

"If you forsake us we will also weaken and disappear", his followers answered mournfully.

"The Gleam of the Snows' will come after me... not my son but my comrade."

Heartfelt pain benumbed their face, Seltichan looked around and wavered in this purpose, weighed it and delayed.

Meanwhile an emotional unrest passed from group to group, deep murmuring spread. Suddenly the tribe of Seltichan found itself isolated; nobody approached them and if one of their group came near the others conversa-

tions ceased. Miore and few other lads of his tribe were not disheartened, they mingled with the people and heard much of what was said.

The evening fell and all separated but the unrest did not subside; it broke into small eddies and leapt into new life under each tent. At each camp firemen sat late into the night and discussed possible events; they were careful not to be overheard by outsiders. Some sharpened their poleaxes.

"Such a man does not die without a stir", they said.

On the third day all came armed to their very teeth. Many young warriors stood around the circle of the elders leaning on their spears. The meeting was not yet opened formally, but the crowd was sizzling with passionate, suppressed excitement. All glances sought Seltichan who sat amidst his aroused kin fully self-possessed and calm.

"Will we allow the old man to deceive himself?", some whispered.

"Will we allow the old man to deceive us?" asked 'kniaz' passing from one tribe to another.

"How is that?" they asked him in one group. "Do you hope to get the girl more easily when the old man is no more? You are all wrong. 'The Gleam of the Snows' will never give her to you. He will never forget you this trick."

"What trick? Let the plague take all my reindeer. Let me rot here on one spot to the end of my days, like the Russian in his wooden house, if that's true...!" swore the "kniaz". "Oltungaba is not that kind of man."

"Oltungaba drinks?"

"Kniaz" grew confused, had no words for an immediate retort, finally he shouted.

"You are stupid!" And caressing his ears with both hands he ran to the others to complain.

The pitch of general excitement rose, expectation grew tense almost to the breaking point, conversation grew louder and came to the ears of the Seltichan group.

"Father, you are being deceived!" Miore called out passionately rushing to the old man. "You are ready to die, all this is the underhanded work of 'kniaz'! He paid Oltungaba! He thinks that after you are gone he will have no equal among us. Father, rise calmly and let us rush away...! Our tents are raised, our boys are ready, the reindeer are saddled. Before the others get ready we shall cross the mountains... And should they pursue us — are we not your children ready to die for you?"

The face of Seltichan grew tense with restrained wrath.

"Call Oltungaba! Let there be justice!" He appealed to the crowd, rising.

"Oltungaba! Oltungaba!" Many voices of the Seltichan family caught up the word.

"Oltungaba! Oltungaba!" All shouted.

He came, gloomy, dark like the moss of the forest, white like the snow and entered the circle of the councilors.

"Is it true that you accepted presents from 'kniaz'? That you deceived us for the love of him?" all cried.

"Wait, let one speak. Don't you see that I have only two ears and a hundred voices can not enter..."

"Let one speak!"

A noted leader of one of the mightiest tribes stepped out, seated himself and began to investigate.

"Did you accept presents from 'kniaz'?"

"Why shouldn't I accept? Don't I live on the goodness of people's hearts? Didn't Seltichan give them to me? Didn't you? 'Kniaz' gave me also, but he did not ask me anything in return nor did I make him any promises... Is it not a sin to suspect? Is it possible to say such a things?... Every man must die! Shame upon you! Investigate!"

Witnesses were called; "kniaz" was brought out; all stood somewhat frightened in the middle of the formidable circle. But the investigation proved nothing; it was only ascertained that Oltungaba visited the tent of the "kniaz", like of many others and was the recipient of some of his gifts.

"Kniaz" swore, caressed both ears with both hands and with great eagerness and volubility spoke about his disinterestedness, his merits, his zeal in the public affairs of the tribes, especially in their relations with the government... about his self-sacrifice when it came to the paying of the taxes.

Oltungaba answered in monosyllables and with contempt.

"You do not believe me, Seltichan", he turned at last to the old man himself. "You have forgotten how I loved and taught you when you were a boy? How I helped you in trouble, told you of other lands, of olden times... Was I not you father's playmate, his friend even, when you were still crawling on the ground? And later, when you grew up, did you not follow eagerly my advice? Who among us was the first hunter and warrior? Whose thoughts were farsighted, whose speech was wise? You, Seltichan, you were always a true Tungus, we all know that... and in the olden times did the worst submit to the death offering? I swear to you, old man, to you and to the whole nation. I spoke the truth. I spoke what the heavenly voices bade me speak. Would that my face should twist towards my back, that my body should dry like a tobacco leaf... would that my eyes should fall out, my veins should weaken, like poorly dried threads, and would that my hand should burn like my heart burns now at this indignity...". With a sudden movement he

put his hand in the flames. All stirred and Seltichan pushed the conjurer violently away.

"Oltungaba, forgive! And all of you here present, forgive." He began deeply moved. "It is a sin to suspect the evil... I will go away! I have decided my nation! I shall depart, because I was called. If I remained you would have to go... would that be any better? One egg can always rot... Can a man be a man without reindeer? Can a Tungus be a Tungus without other Tunguses? I will depart but my memory shall abide with you. Fare you well! Would that your herds increased, that your children grew up to be strong men and women. Would that joy should never leave your tents; that your kettles were always filled with food, your horns with powder and your hearts with goodness!

"I depart and my thoughts are as mild as the rays of the departing sun! I go!"

"My nation, my people, Farewell! Farewell!"

With a quick movement he dashed to the ground his manycolored "dalys" and plunged a knife into his heart.

He stood awhile, his waning glances passed from face to face, he staggered, reeled and fell.

The crowd heaved a deep sigh.

Oltungaba knelt at the side of the dying, bared his breast and placing the palm of his right hand on the body close to the wound, he raised the left to the sun, crying out:

"Oh, thou, one God above all other gods! Help us! Protect us! We are not yet the smallest and the meanest since we have raised such a heart!"

"Such a heart!" groaned the crowd.

At this moment it seemed to all of them, even to the fat "kniaz" that their hearts beat with equal readiness for offering like the one that was slowly cooling under the palm of Oltungaba.

The conjurer raised the "days" from the ground, threw it upon the face convulsed with agony and whispered:

"He was a true warrior!"

Irkutsk, March 2, 1893.

Translated from W. Sieroszewski
By Mrs. HELENA PIOTROWSKA.

The Seattle Times for Poland

The following editorial appeared in the Seattle Times:

The letter from Sir Edward Grey to Herbert C. Hoover, chairman of the American commission for relief in Belgium, apparently settles the fate of the unfortunate people, for the present, at least. It imposes on the commission the responsibility for obtaining two important concessions from Germany. These may be reasonable enough, in themselves, and ultimately may be conceded by the Teutons, but negotiations to that end will cause a delay of many bitter weeks.

Poland's time of greatest need is now. If it could be assisted to tide over the remainder of the winter and the coming spring, it probably would be able to care for itself. However, with supplies from America shut off, there is no place to which its people can turn for aid. Russia certainly will not furnish them, and Germany, as certainly cannot do so. Once again, the Pole is forced to shoulder the heaviest, bitterest burdens of Old World war.

Terms of Peace?

This war must determine the status of all oppressed nationalities. Half-measures would only spell an armistice, not a permanent solution of the intricate problems of Europe.

All right thinking people agree that Poland should be restored—Russian Poland, Austrian Poland, Prussian Poland. East Prussia should be divided up between Russia and Poland, Russia to have the port of Koenigsberg and all East Prussia east of that port; Poland to have the territory between Koenigsberg and the Vistula, giving Poland a window on the Baltic; all of the Province of Posen and that part of Silesia east of the Oder, and Galicia. This would make Poland all Slavic in race, Catholic in religion and Polish in language.

Bohemia and Moravia to form one country and to have all of Silesia west of the Oder and south of the city of Breslau. This would make Bohemia one in race, one in religion and one in language. — Elliot Lynch.

Ruthless War Furrowing Poland

One of the war ruined estates of Poland is Pruszkow. One of the war ruined villages of Poland bears the same name and is of the estate. Another of the ruined estates is Pecice, which doesn't sound at all the way it is spelled. And it is in this vicinity.

These two estates have seen war in its most crimson form and they show it. Peasants who formerly lived in the village of Pruszkow and had their cottages and their gardens and all the little happinesses that suited and satisfied them are living to-day in sheds and shacks and caves — or in Warsaw on charity. They are all destitute — their means of subsistence gone and their prospects of future happiness clouded to the darkness of midnight.

Pruszkow the estate is or was presided over by the charming Countess Potulicka, a woman typically Polish in grace, culture and loyalty to Poland.

It was in October—on the 11th of that month, 1914, to be exact—that “the Germans came.” Those of the Pruszkow mansion had been notified that here was a prospect of invasion but, like many others, they did not heed the warning in time. They rather felt that they would not be unduly disturbed even if the Germans did appear. They were innocent non-combatants and why should they be hurt?

The Germans were coming with a rush and the Russian resistance was not very strong, but it was only when the artillery got into action that Countess Potulicka and these about her realized that Pruszkow was on the very lip of a crater of bubbling hell. The first real warning was the bursting of a shell in the flower garden to the right of the stately mansion. This shell came from the German side. To the rear — with the house almost in the direct path between the two lines — the Russian artillery answered. The duel of shell and bomb was on! And for six days Countess Potulicka, her mother and two children, together with seventy-six servants and estate employees of all degrees, dared not leave. Furthermore they dared not remain upstairs in the house.

The peasant dependents, mostly from the village, had gathered at the home of the heads of the little community, as children would run to their parents in a storm, and they were

taken under wing just as a mother would gather in her frightened brood. But they had to go below, mistress & maid, butler and hestler, chick and child. Eighty in all crowded into the cellar and lived there six long days, while shells screamed and windows crashed and trees were shattered all about; while children moaned in helpless terror and the deafening explosion of every bomb seemed to preface the end of the world. Few can have gone through more terrifying experiences. But every one of the eighty survived.

They were so crowded in the cellar that there was no room to lie down comfortably to sleep. The ventilation was not good naturally. Bed, clothing had been taken from the rooms above in the first few hours. Some food had been brought down. On the evening of the second day the firing ceased at about 6 o'clock and the Countess went upstairs determined to secure some warm food. She started a fire and cooked tea. Those of her immediate family and a few of the peasants ventured forth also.

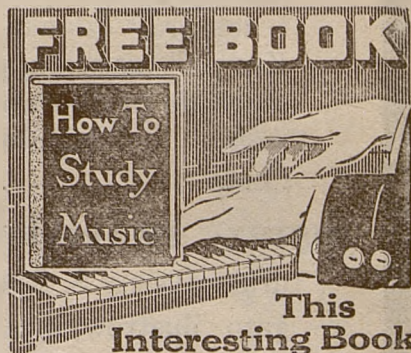
An hour passed and there was no more firing. Two hours passed and then—a crash. The artillery duel recommenced.

“From that day on,” said the Countess in relating her experiences, “we could almost tell time by the cessation and renewal of the fighting every evening. Promptly at 6 o'clock, as though by some prearranged signal, the shelling would cease and our ears would get a rest. We would go about getting supper quite in a leisurely way. We knew instinctively that we had two hours of safety. At 8 o'clock we would all listen for the first shot, and when it came, as it

always did within a few minutes, we would rush for the cellar and listen to the din.”

For the last three days of the battle Countess Potulicka and her mother, unable longer to bear the horrors of the crowded cellar, openly defied death by sleeping in their own apartments while the artillery roaring went on and the shells were still bursting at regular intervals in the gardens and the adjacent fields. — Strangely, the Pruszkow mansion was not seriously damaged, although in the very centre of the battlefield.

— Sloane Gordon.



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