

FREE POLAND

A SEMI-MONTHLY

The Truth About Poland and Her People

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Opinion of the Press

BOSTON GLOBE:—One of the most significant events in Polish history since “freedom shrieked when Kościuszko fell” is the issue on United States soil of a journal devoted by its title and program to a “Free Poland”. The new periodical comes from the Polish National Council of America, and may be said to represent the views of thoughtful Poles in all parts of the world.

BUFFALO COURIER:—“Free Poland” is the title of a periodical the publication of which has been started by the Polish National Council of America. The current number is replete with interest.

Walter J. Ballard in **LOS ANGELES TIMES:**—“Free Poland” is the proper title for the publication just begun on behalf of Poland and her people because they should aim at nothing less than the highest, even if they resort to arms to realize it at once after they have been accorded the rights and the privileges promised by the Russian Emperor.

ROCHESTER DEMOCRAT AND CHRONICLE:—Of the numerous partisan publications that have appeared since the beginning of the war, quite the most interesting and ably edited is a semi-monthly periodical called **FREE POLAND**. The articles in it are free from bombast, and two or three of them are first-rate literature. **FREE POLAND** presents interesting facts which are probably unknown to, or forgotten by a large number of Americans.

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Bread and Diplomacy

PUBLIC opinion is palpably moved by the tragic conditions in Poland. Matters have gone from bad to worse — for the exigencies of war have consigned a whole people to starvation.

"American public opinion", writes the CHICAGO EXAMINER, "should insist upon our right to come to the relief of the wretched Polish war sufferers.

"The conditions in that country are heart-rending.

"While the Belgian people are clothed and fed by American charity, with the active aid of the German provisional government, the Polish people are dying by thousands of sheer hunger.

"THERE ARE MORE THAN FOUR MILLIONS OF MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN who are suffering from hunger, cold and exposure at the very moment you are reading these words.

"When the Russian armies were being driven from Poland the savage Cossacks were ordered to lay waste the whole country, and they performed their inhuman task with cruel thoroughness. The villages were destroyed, the crops were destroyed, the horses and cattle were destroyed, the farm implements were destroyed and the poor people were driven like herded animals along the roads, or compelled to flee into the woods and swamps.

"The devastation and cruelties committed by the savage Russian soldiery, under the orders of the Grand Duke Nicholas and the personal direction of Russian officers, are unparalleled in the history of all the world's tragedies.

"These inoffensive, helpless creatures are literally starving to death. Thousands of their kin in this country and other thousands of American not their kin are willing and anxious to send to the poor starving Poles the same help we have extended to the poor Belgians.

"But the British government refuses to let clothing and food be sent through the sea blockade to alleviate the awful sufferings of the Polish people.

"The British government will not even permit RED CROSS SUPPLIES for the use of surgeons and nurses in the hospitals to go through the blockade.

"The German government has offered to pay gold for two shiploads of wheat to be taken to Poland by American commissioners and distributed by American agents to the starving Polish women and children, and Mr. Asquith, on behalf of the British government, HAS JUST REFUSED TO PERMIT THIS RELIEF TO BE SENT.

"The excuse for this inhuman refusal to let Americans feed these poor Polish sufferers, as we have been feeding Belgian sufferers, is that the food supplies would relieve Germany of the task of feeding this starving population, and so leave Germans with more food at home.

"We doubt if anything to equal the cold-blooded inhumanity of this action has ever stained the government policy of any nation calling itself Christian and civilized.

"The German people are forced to economize their own food supplies in order to get through from harvest

to harvest. They are feeding a million and a half prisoners of war, among them nearly two hundred thousand British captives.

"The German government CANNOT feed these three million suffering Polish people, DELIBERATELY REDUCED TO STARVATION BY ENGLAND'S ALLY, RUSSIA, and Mr. Asquith knows that THESE PEOPLE MUST PERISH unless American charity is permitted to succor and save them."

Poland, then, is still suffering. The Muscovites, escaping before German onslaught, burned, for "strategic reasons", thousands and thousands of Polish towns, villages and farms, levelled the buildings with the ground, ruthlessly appropriated the live stock of the Polish innocent sufferers, and sent millions of Polish people to the bleak and desolate tundras of Siberia. Thanks to this Russian "strategy" there are now 5,000,000 people less in Poland, while children under seven years of age are all gone "to the bourn whence no traveller returns."

But there are mutual incriminations. Lord Robert Cecil accuses Germany of "robbing Poland of food." It is only fair to add that the Germans have denied these charges and we cannot but quote — *audiatur et altera pars* — from a communiqué sent by the German government to "The North German Gazette", which reads, in part, as follows:

"The notion that the country, when left alone, has sufficient foodstuffs is not in accordance with the facts. In the Government General of Warsaw there are, besides 5,000,000 peasants, 2,500,000 factory workers and city inhabitants living in the big industrial centres of Warsaw, Lodz, Bendzin and Częstochowa. Even in peace times the bulk of this industrial population is not fed by the country itself, but from the interior parts of Russia. In the present time of war, considering the general reduction of consumption, the country would be able to feed itself if the harvest had not been heavily damaged through months of fighting and through the systematic devastation wrought by the retreating Russian army. As things are, the population of the industrial centres and the cities amounting to 2,500,000 people, has more or less to live on the produce of the northwestern part of the Government General. Since a year, that part of the country is under German administration, and has been properly cultivated. All the remaining portion of the land, where the battles were fought and through which the Russians retreated, is not in a position to contribute to the feeding of the big cities, but itself requires to be supplied with grain. As far as the fields have been tilled at all in the fighting zone, most of the harvest was destroyed as a consequence of the military actions, while in the parts through which the Russian armies retreated fire was set, by order of those in command, to almost all the granaries of the large estates.

"The resulting famine conditions are, therefore, due

to the Russian army, whereas the German administration has done everything in its power, and is still continuing its efforts, to assist the population during these hard times. It is, however, inevitable, owing to the above-described facts, that the city population which has to be provided for till the new harvest can only receive very small rations of flour. While at first these amounted to 145 grammes (47 ounces) of grain flour and 35 grammes (11 ounces) of potato flour, since February 15, the ration of grain flour has been reduced to 115 grammes (37 ounces), while the allowance of potato flour remains unchanged. The total present amount of bread flour, grain and potato flour taken together is 150 grammes (48 ounces). These rations are, of course, insufficient, if compared with what the population is accustomed to, and subject it to considerable hardships, which the German government, however much it regrets them, cannot alter."

In reference to the article in "The London Times", on which Lord Robert Cecil bases his asseverations, and which was also the basis of the charges made by the British Prime Minister, the German communique says:

"The actual foundation for these statements is the grain supply system which the German administration had to adopt in view of the undeveloped railway net and the prevailing milling conditions of the country.

"It is true that the larger part of the Polish grain is exported to Germany from the northwestern districts, where there is a surplus. It is an error, however, to assume that the grain stays in Germany. The exported grain is simply ground in the modern German mills situated near the border, from where the flour, without exception, is returned to the large Polish cities. There are two reasons for this procedure. The only means of communication in most of the districts which produce a surplus of grain are the railway lines which were built from the German side in the rear of the advancing armies. More important still is the fact that the Polish milling industry is not capable of handling the Polish grain under the exceptional war conditions. Hardly any of the mills have any railway connection, while most of them possess only very limited storage facilities, and are lacking in modern contrivances for a proper handling, drying and cleaning of the grain. Such processes are all the more indispensable this year, because the Polish grain, owing to the fact that most of it was harvested in rainy weather, is in a wretched condition. It is evident, furthermore, that the scarcity of the grain necessitated its centralization in a few big mills equipped with all modern facilities.

"Documentary proof can be given at any time that no more grain was taken to the German border mills than was returned as flour to Poland. Since September 1, the beginning of the harvest, approximately 65,000 tons of rye, wheat and barley were exported from Poland, while in the five subsequent months the reimportation amounted to 11,000 tons each month for the feeding of 2,000,000 people, with an additional 5,000 tons as reserve stock for the big cities. Moreover, 5,000 tons were stored as seed for the vast area which in the fall could not be tilled, owing to the scarcity of horses. All these figures are subject to proof. A real exportation by the Germans of grain from Poland has, therefore, not taken place.

"Though in view of the shortage and the bad condition of the grain only the barest necessities are thus secured for the population, even that much could not be effected without the described methods of centralization.

"The necessity of continuing these methods is shown

daily by the great difficulties encountered in handling part of the grain from those surplus districts not in the immediate vicinity of the frontier which is at present being milled in Warsaw. It would be out of the question to handle all of the Polish grain in a similar way."

The above communique aims to prove that "no more grain was taken to the German border mills" than was returned as flour to Poland."

Yet *vae victis!* It is without doubt that the German military forces in Poland are well fed—but woe to the conquered!

"The people of Warsaw", writes Anthony Czarnecki to the Chicago Daily News, "are facing starvation. Only the German military forces in this great city are provided with sufficient food. During my stay in Warsaw public announcements have been made of the prices charged for the slaughter of dogs and horses for food purposes. Business men, professional men, clerks and students are among those standing in the long lines waiting for food at the charity kitchens.

"Children suffer most and each day many of them die for want of proper nourishment. Funerals are so numerous that coffins are carried on the shoulders of men instead of in hearses. The facts in the situation surpass in gravity anything described in fiction or imagined by man. Warsaw is a smileless city."

——*

The above shows that Germany alone cannot be depended upon to feed Poland's starving children. American public opinion has been moved. America has paid an eloquent tribute to Polish ideals and culture, and, what is more, she has hastened generously to satisfy the immediate needs of the sufferers. But at this distance it seems that the one great obstacle to effective relief work is the attitude of Great Britain.

We have repeatedly praised the land where "Freedom broadened out from precedent to precedent." We have often extolled to the skies this cradle of liberty, guarded so jealously with that famous Anglo-Saxon doggedness. Yet now we are compelled to note that that same Anglo-Saxon doggedness refuses to feed a starving nation.

And as has been noted before, the illusion that any of the belligerents of Europe are fighting for justice and humanity is quickly dispelled by the situation in Poland. The Polish people are starving because permission to carry food to the dying cannot be obtained from the fighting nations. Slight military advantages demand that a whole people die of hunger. That is the attitude of Great Britain — the loudly advertised champion of all humanity in this war — as it appears in the communication from Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Hoover of the American relief commission.

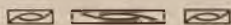
"Sir Edward Grey stipulates", reports the American Press, "that supplies will be permitted to go from the United States to Poland if the German and Austrian governments prohibit the export of all foodstuffs from Russian Poland, if a guarantee is given that native stocks of food will not be drawn on for the maintenance of the occupying armies, if the German and Austrian governments will undertake 'to supply an adequate ration and other necessary articles', and if the American commission be given a free hand in the distribution of supplies. All of these conditions are proper enough but one, and the imposition of that one is tantamount to a refusal to permit the starving Poles to be fed.

"There can be no objection to the demand that Germany and Austria, which have exported foods from Po-

land, give guarantees that the country shall not be stripped further, but does Sir Edward Grey, by the stipulation that the Germans shall furnish an adequate ration, mean that the enemies of Great Britain must also contribute to the aid of Poland from a store which the British hope to so reduce by blockade as to starve Germany into submission? If this is the meaning of the stipulation—and it is difficult to figure any other meaning out of it—it would have been manlier for the British foreign secretary to put a pointblank veto on the whole relief proposition than to propose a condition so manifestly impossible of fulfillment.

“Military necessity’ may require obliteration by starvation of the whole Polish people. But let no nation hypocritically pretend that it is battling for humanity while it strikes back the hand that offers bread to starving neutrals.”

This British attitude is the apex of hypocrisy when



Reminiscences and Reflections from Vienna and Galicia

ALL my letters written from Vienna and Galicia were forwarded to America through the Austrian Foreign Office with the same courier who carried the official mail to the Austrian Embassy in Washington. Before they were sent away, however, they were first read by the Chief of the Press Bureau in the Foreign office Hofrat Dr. von Montlong.

In one of those letters in which I described the great service that Poland rendered to Europe and particularly to Austria when in 1682 under their King John Sobieski the Poles drove the Turks from Vienna, I wrote: “Will Austria now show her gratitude to Poland and lead the other nations of Europe in making Poland free?” Dr. Montlong read that sentence aloud and then suddenly turned to me and said: “And will the Poles show their gratitude to Austria for what she did to them and not be traitors!” Astonished at this outburst, I said that in view of the fact that the Poles were not content that 500,000 of them are fighting in the regular Austrian army they have formed the Polish Legions. Such insinuations sounded very strange to me. It’s true they hope thereby to obtain their independence, nevertheless they were fighting on Austrian side. As to the Poles owing Austria any gratitude, I asked the Doctor—For what? “Because”, he said, “were it not for Austria there would be Poles no more, that of the three powers which partitioned Poland, Austria is the only one under which the Poles are permitted to enjoy freedom.” I admitted that Austria perhaps was entitled to gratitude on the theory that when a person having fallen into the hands of three bandits and after having been robbed of everything he possessed, two of the bandits wanted also to kill him while the third was not quite so heartless, but was willing to spare his life. However, in a Court of Justice the victim of the robbery would not be required by the judge to express his gratitude to the third robber who, undoubtedly, would be adjudged guilty of robbery equally with the other two while the victim, perhaps, would plead with the court to treat the third bandit less harshly than the other two. The Poles under the Austrian rule were not ungrateful to Austria for the freedom which they enjoyed. I believe

we remember that the British prisoners in Germany are supplied not only with the necessities of life, but also with superfluous luxuries by their countrymen at home.

There is, for instance — we read in THE NATION, March 4, 1915 — the Royal Savoy Association, which “urgently appeals for funds in order to continue the purchase and despatch of a weekly supply of necessities and comforts to relieve the sufferings of 500 British Prisoners in Germany.” THE NATION then proceeds to state that “numerous postcards expressing deep gratitude are being received daily, and afford ample proof that the parcels sent out have safely reached those for whom they were intended.”

And thus the English soldier in Germany is getting his cream, tea and muffin, and other delicacies — while the Polish people are denied the indispensable necessities of life.

they have shown more gratitude than Austria was entitled to: for the government in giving the Poles their natural right, to permit the use of their own language, did nothing more than what was just. Had it done differently, it would have been guilty of the same tyranny as the other two bandit nations.

The difficulty with many of the Austrian Germans is that they have an entirely wrong conception of what is right and wrong. Years ago the Austrian government confiscated a lot of property belonging to the Polish Catholic Church and all the property that formerly belonged to the Polish crown and, when now and then, it gives a trifle of it back for necessary needs, they believe that they have done something wonderfully great and they never cease bragging about it. The government having confiscated Wawel, the ancient castle in Cracow, which, for centuries was the residence of Polish Kings, and desecrated that venerable old pile, by turning it into barracks for soldiers, and when later, the government, needing the support of the Poles in the parliament, gave them back the Wawel with a permission to restore it to its ancient glory at their own expense and on condition that in lieu thereof, they furnish the government with new barracks, the Austrian Germans really believed that they had done something wonderfully generous and that the Poles owe them eternal gratitude. I was surprised to find that there are few Poles in Austria, who believe in that nonsense too.

There are many Poles in Austria who are honest and sincere in their views and have the courage to express their opinion and to criticise the government for permitting itself to be used as a tool by the Berlin government for Germany’s own aggrandizement. And because of that opinion, which they expressed, some have been interned, some are in exile, some have been hung. But these Poles feel that they are justified in their criticism of the government. Among them there are some who remember the year 1864 when Wilhelm I of Prussia with the shrewd Bismarck induced Austria to join Prussia in a war against Denmark. Of course poor Denmark was defeated and lost Schleswig-Holstein.

But the harmony between Prussia and Austria did not last as anybody could have foreseen it. Prussia did not want a partner in the ownership of the conquered province and two years later she declared war against Austria which ended by Prussia defeating Austria, compelling the latter to renounce all her claim to the conquered province from Denmark and to pay a war indemnity besides. There are many who prophesy worse fate than that for Austria at the end of this war, should it end victoriously for Germany and Austria. They believe that they will quarrel over the spoils, which will result in war between them and in the final desolation of Austria, the latter becoming a part of the German Empire. Thus the dream of Kaiser Wilhelm and the German professors will be realized. But Austria, they say, is blind to see the pit which Germany has prepared for her to fall in.

There are also many Poles who remember that after Germany's victory of 1871 over France the Germans became overbearing, arrogant and domineering, and the German government enacted many oppressive laws directed against the Poles, to more speedily Germanize them. Shortly after that the Polish language in the Polish provinces was thrown out of schools and its use prohibited in public speeches. Since then Germany has done everything to obliterate every vestige of the Polish race. Naturally, the Poles do not take kindly to the idea of being compelled by Austria to help Germany in her ambition of becoming a world power — to subjugate other nations and then to civilize them as she has been "civilizing" the Poles.

But aside of this honest criticism, the Poles are more than loyal to Austria and any insinuation to the contrary, is wicked. It should be borne in mind that the Germans of this conglomerated Austrian Empire, of which they form only about one-seventh part, have always considered themselves as the rulers, while the other nationalities like the Hungarians, the Bohemians, the Poles, the Ruthenians and the other Slavonic races, as subjects for exploitation only. The outrages which were perpetrated in Galicia by the Austro-Hungarian-German army were of such character that Archduke, Joseph Ferdinand, had to issue an appeal to the army in the tenth month of the war, calling the attention of the army that "Galicia was an Austrian territory and not the enemy's country." — Suppose a war in the United States with Mexico, in which the Mexicans have invaded and occupied Texas, but later were driven out of it, and the conduct of the United States soldiers towards the inhabitants of Texas was such that the commanding general of our army would feel impelled to issue an appeal to remind the army that Texas is not the enemy's country.

Here is another illustration of the stepmotherly attitude of the Austrian government towards the Poles. Galicia is the only part of the Austrian Empire, which suffered material loss in property. It would be only just and natural that the whole Empire should share in the loss. Germany indemnified the sufferers in East Prussia from the Imperial Treasury. But Austria thus far did nothing for the inhabitants of Galicia, although her own army is guilty of the greatest devastation.

When the Russians came first into Galicia the population was terror-stricken. It expected wholesale butchery and robbery. But when the people saw that nobody was killed, that the soldiers paid for everything they bought, they were pleasantly surprised. There was some plundering done here and there by Russian soldiers

of course, but those were exceptional cases. The Russians openly avowed that they did not come to make war upon the Poles, but they had to go through their country to make war upon Austria.

When the Russians were driven out of Galicia everybody who was accused of having been friendly with the Russians was hung without any ceremony. There were great many hung, especially Ruthenian peasants. And the grounds on which these poor wretches were put to death were so absurd, that the censor prohibited their publication in the press, although they were posted in the various localities in which the hangings took place. A peasant woman was hung, because she once said that Emperor Franz Joseph would never come back to Galicia. Any accusation, often made out of spite, that such or such a person was friendly to Russia was enough to hang him or her. The number of people who were hung will perhaps never be known, but from the general report it must be very large.

Those Poles who opposed revolution in Russian Poland were regarded by the Austrian government as enemies of Austria and were treated as such. For obvious reasons I cannot mention any names. What would have been the fate of the Poles in Russian Poland, had they made revolution against Russia is too frightful to think about; yet both the Austrian and the German governments wanted it and tried to incite it, as if the unhappy Poles did not have enough to suffer. Everlasting honor and glory be to those noble and courageous patriots who at their own risk of life and liberty thwarted this Satanic plot to plunge the Polish nation to self-destruction.


In the Russian part of Poland which was taken by Austria, all the men of military age were told to join the Polish Legions in the Austrian army; if they refused they were interned. Of course, this is contrary to military and international laws because those Poles were subjects of Russia and by joining the Polish Legions they were treated as traitors by Russia, and, if caught, were hung. Austria and Germany treated the Poles who were their subjects in the same manner.

In a place called Allentsteig, about 50 miles from Vienna, I met many Polish peasants who were held their in confinement. These poor men were forced by the Austrian officers with their wagons and horses, during the first invasion of Russian Poland at the very beginning of the war to carry their supplies and were forcibly taken along with them from their homes and their families when the Austrians were forced to retreat. They have been held there over a year now without having been able to communicate with their families. They have practically no clothes except the few rags — which they had on when they were forced to go, and the food which they get is poor potatoes or cabbage soup.

In conclusion I desire to emphasize that in making these few observations of the conduct of the Austrian army and government towards the Polish subjects I have not been actuated by any prejudices against Austria. On the contrary, I have always entertained the most friendly feeling towards that nation and especially towards its venerable Ruler. I have no grounds to complain of my treatment in Austria. In fact I have been treated very courteously. These observations are absolutely honest and truthful.

N. L. PIOTROWSKI.

Bethmann-Hollweg's Speech

 HE German chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg delivered an address which is of interest not only to the German people, but concerns the other belligerents as well. In general and not too distinct terms he sets forth in his address German conditions which may be used as a basis for the coming peace negotiations:

"Germany had been threatened," the chancellor said, "with annihilation, with partition of her realm, with destruction of her essential political and economic forces and the answer to any suggestion of peace on the basis of destruction of Prussian military power was — the German sword.

"Germany had no aggressive aims against the American continent and she was not fighting for new territory. The new Europe which would arise out of the war, — he said — cannot resemble the past. Whatever it might be, it must be for the nations that inhabit it— a land of peaceful labor.

One of the most important of the imperial chancellor's utterances had to do with Belgium. Germany would never consent that Belgium should serve as a military or economic fortification against her, or that she could be a vassal of France and Great Britain. He gave assurances that the Belgians would be permitted to work out their destiny corresponding to their natural gifts, based on their mother tongue and following the national character. Though the remembrance of the war would still echo in Belgium, Germany would not allow this to be a new source of war.

"The latest offspring of the calumniating campaign directed against us is a report that we, after the end of this war, shall rush against the American continent and that we shall attempt to conquer Canada", the chancellor added.

"This is the silliest of all the imputations invented against us. Equally silly are the reports that we contemplate the acquisition of any territory on American soil, as in Brazil or in any American country whatsoever."

The chancellor outlined what Germany wished that Europe should be in the future.

"This new Europe", he said, "in many respects cannot resemble the past. The blood which has been shed will never be repaid, and the wealth which has been destroyed can only slowly be replaced. But howsoever this Europe may be, it must be for the nations that inhabit it a land of peaceful labor. The peace which shall end this war shall be a lasting peace. It must not bear the germ of new wars, but must provide for all peaceful arrangement of European questions."

The chancellor declared that England wished an end to the war after peace, but wanted then to continue the commercial war with double violence, adding:

"First the British endeavor to destroy our military and then our economic policy. Everywhere there is brutal lust of destruction and of annihilation and impious will, in an unbounded lust of domination, to cripple a nation of 70,000,000 people."

As to colonial questions, the chancellor quoted Bismarck to the effect that the fate of colonies was decided on the continent. He asserted that Germany's enemies were now actively engaged in inventing new formulas in order to maintain the spell of illusion, hatred and deception which binds them.

"Of all the nations in the war", he continued, "only Germany has been threatened by her enemies and by their responsible spokesmen with annihilation, with partition of her realm, with destruction of her essential political and economic forces, no matter whether they call them Prussianism or militarism or barbarism. The forces which before the war bound together the anti-German coalition were lust of conquest, lust of revenge and jealousy against German competition in the world's markets. During the war they have remained powerful with the governments of our enemies in spite of all defeats.

"This still is the object and aim of the war alike in Petrograd, Paris and London."

"To this we oppose that Germany in this war had only one aim, namely, to defend herself, to maintain her existence, to hold her enemies back from the German frontiers, and, whenever their lust of destruction had shown itself, to drive them back as quickly as possible.

"We did not want this war. We felt no desire to change our frontiers when the war began against our will. We threatened no nation, with annihilation of her existence or with destruction of her national life."

The chancellor pointed out the roots of Germany's present strength, saying:

"And what gives us this force to conquer and overcome the difficulties caused by the interruption of our oversea trade, and, on the front, numerically superior enemies? Who can readily believe that greed of land inspires our columns at Verdun and makes them accomplish every day new deeds of heroism? Or shall a nation which gave to the world so many valuable intellectual and useful gifts, which during forty-four years loved peace more than all the others—shall this nation overnight be transformed into barbarians and huns?"

"No, gentlemen. These are the inventions of the evil conscience of those who are guilty of the war and are now fearing for their power and influence in their own countries."

The chancellor covered every conceivable angle of the military and diplomatic situations. Among his most striking declarations were these:

Germany will continue to carry on her submarine warfare, meeting England's attempts to starve her out, though with consideration for the legitimate rights of neutrals.

Germany will never willingly consent to the return of Poland and conquered Russian provinces to the czar at the conclusion of peace.

It is folly, in view of promising forecasts for the coming crop, for the allies any longer to hold out hope of starving Germany into submission.

This pronouncement is quite characteristic in that the chancellor denies any German aims on America, branding them as silly, while he points out that Poland will never be returned to Russia.

The chancellor does not explicitly state that the Polish Question will be an internal one of Germany. He simply says that Poland will never be in Russia's power.

This determination on the part of each belligerent to dispose of Polish territory will doubtless end in a serious quarrel which will tend to make the Polish Question an international concern — much to the chagrin of those diplomats both of Russia and Germany who would make it "an internal" one.

FREE POLAND

A SEMI-MONTHLY

The Truth About Poland and Her People

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Edited under the supervision of the Press Committee of the
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N. L. PIOTROWSKI, Chairman.
IZA POBOG, Secretary.

K. WACHTEL

W. PAPARA

JOHN S. SKIBINSKI, Editor.

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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."

Helping Poland

The Jews set us an admirable example of how to care for their unfortunate coreligionists. At the annual meeting of the Hebrew Benevolent Association of Berlin Chairman Nathan paid a tribute to the work of American Hebrews in supporting the Jewish sufferers in Poland.

"The generosity of our American coreligionists," he said, "is splendid and demands the warmest appreciation."

But whatever the Jewish relief agencies in America collect for the war victims' fund, goes to the Jewish sufferers of Poland. How much more should our Polish organizations strive to relieve the dire situation of Polish victims in the terrain of war!

American public opinion is being moved in this direction, and we herewith note another instance of effective relief work for Poland. Archbishop Mundelein, contributor of \$1000 to the Relief Fund, wrote in connection the following letter to the Rev. Ladislaus Zapala, president of St. Stanislaus' College:

"March 11th, 1916.

Very Rev. Dear L. Zapala:

I have appointed a day and I have written an appeal for the collection to be taken in this diocese for the war-sufferers in Poland. I am sending you a copy of the letter to be translated into the Polish language. But I realize how pressing is the need, and how help is needed

as soon as possible. In order to co-operate with this worthy charity and to show my deep sympathy with this work of relief, I am enclosing a personal donation from my own slender savings in the East. I wish I were able to make it ten times as large for I know no charity, that is more deserving or people, who more appreciate this assistance than the poor suffering people in Poland. I hope — you may find many in Chicago more able, and for that reason more generous for your people.

Sincerely yours in Christo,

GEORGE W. MUNDELEIN,
Archbishop of Chicago."

*_*_*

The appeal mentioned in the letter presents an eloquent picture of the tragic plight of Poland. It describes the appalling condition that confronts this hapless land. It emphasizes that perhaps never in the world's history has anything so frightful and so far-reaching occurred. It points out that the country is devastated, children dying or dead, and the brave sons of Poland are obliged to fight against one another, and for causes in which they have no interest; that if Europe is steeped in misery and blood, Poland stands out as the most wretched of all. In conclusion it observes that the heart of the people of Chicago will go out to this martyred land, and that they will do what is in their power for this famishing people who out of their misery cry for assistance. The archbishop, finally, requests the clergy to co-operate in this most worthy endeavor.

As a result, the Catholics of Chicago responded readily to this most commendable cause. On April 2, special collections were taken at all the masses in all the churches of the archdiocese. Archbishop Mundelein's plea for Poland netted a large sum, the Polish parishes alone having contributed over \$20,000.

A Russian Nobleman's Opinion

We have repeatedly stated that Poland will be the gainer if a widespread democratization will sweep over Russia. Russian bureaucracy makes promises — to break them.

But according to Prince Troubetzkoï, the Russia of today is not altogether hopeless and will work for a free Poland. He admits the Russian press is now less concerned with the Polish-Russian question than formerly. This he explains by the fact that strategical events have somewhat thrown the solution of this question into the background.

"But", adds the Prince, "as much can be said about our Russian national duties. It is convenient to point out clearly that our national interests are to-day, as they were yesterday, closely bound up with Polish interests. To-day, as formerly, we cannot allow Poland to perish, or—which comes to the same thing—that she be absorbed by Germany. A Poland politically free, and independent of Germany, is a necessity for us; it is the condition of the power and independence of Russia herself.

"The temporary reverses of the Russian armies have not weakened but on the contrary strengthened the consciousness of this bond. We have clearly discerned that the subjection of Poland by Germany is only the first step towards the dismemberment of Russia. Indeed, that subjection is but a beginning in the execution of a gigantic scheme of conquest in which is comprised the annexation

of Lithuania, the Baltic Provinces, Ruthenia, and even of a portion of the littoral of the Black Sea. To permit the realization, even in part, of such a plan — not to speak of its total accomplishment—would be to say good-bye to Russia. And that is why the Polish question continues to be for us a living question, one that moves us considerably. We cannot abandon it, any more than we can give up the hope of the anticipated Russian offensive. And when our hopes for the Spring begin to take shape, be sure that the sounding and powerful voice of Russian

society will then be lifted in favor of the Polish question.

“We firmly believe that the world will once more witness this unshaken force. Then will Poland share in the realization of those national dreams the proclamation of the Generalissimo speaks of. In the same way, Russia will witness the solution of the Polish question in such a manner as will guarantee her own independence and national integrity. That solution is possible only on the condition of a wide autonomy, or even perhaps of an absolute independence of the Polish State.”



From Plainfield, N. J.

Vivid accounts of the terrible sufferings of Polish refugees in Russia, and of the new units for their relief being organized by the Constitutional suffragists of England, under the leadership of Mrs. Henry Fawcett, was the main thread of the lecture given in the parish house of the Congregational church of Plainfield, N. J., March 20, when the Hon. Mrs. Bertrand Russel, of London, England pleaded for contributions for these stricken peoples. Mrs. Russell came to this country at her own expense, occupying second class steamer accommodations in order to save the further expense for the cause which is nearest her heart. At the conclusion of her talk, a collection was taken at the door which will immediately be forwarded to the proper channel for transmission to the needy. Mrs. F. C. Ard, of 604 Park avenue, is willing to receive still further contributions at her home and will see that all are sent to the cause.

In part, Mrs. Russell said: “It is hard for us to realize the hideous misery that has overtaken whole populations of the peasant folk of Poland and Galicia, forced to flee from the battle zone between the opposing armies on the long line of the German-Austrian and Russian front. We have known the martyrdom of the Belgians, and the exodus of helpless thousands, driven from their homes and their country, to take refuge in England. But from Poland, the exodus has been infinitely greater. These refugees had no ships to convey them to a friendly port, but were forced into flight over sparsely populated fields at the beginning of the awful severity of a Russian winter. The railways being requisitioned for military purposes, thousands, even millions of them, went on foot over the rough tracks which do duty for roads in Poland, east and ever further east, looking for shelter, even as far as Siberia. Though thousands have died on the road, the towns and cities are overcrowded with refugees, and in Petrograd alone there are a million additional inhabitants this winter. Great efforts have been made in Russia, but the country does not exist that could deal adequately in war-time with such an invasion of destitute people. Shelter and food has been provided, but adequate aid for the suffering women and dying children has not yet been organized and their plight is terrible.

“The National Union of Suffrage Societies felt that it must do what it could to meet a need so desperate, and it sent, therefore, through the Joint War Committee of the Red Cross and Order of St. John, a Maternity Unit for Petrograd, consisting of two doctors, matron, nurses

and sanitary officer, to be in charge of an administrator, with secretary and almoner. The Unit, which is recognized by the Empress Alexandra, and the patronage of the Grand Duchess Kyrii and of the English Ambassadors, the Lady Georgiana Buchanan. It co-operates with the Tatiana Committee, which devotes itself to work for the refugees, and is named after the Grand Duchess Tatiana, the Emperor's eldest daughter. They telegraphed that the ‘need is urgent’, and the letters received from our advance party, confirmed the urgency with stories that wring our hearts, of the huge dark ‘baraks’ where women and children are crowded together in insanitary quarters, and where babies are born only to die. In connection with a group of such ‘baraks’ is a feeding station, to which the refugees go for their three daily meals, and next to this feeding station is our hospital of twelve beds, with operating theatre, kitchen and doctors’ room. Thither the members of our Unit have gone, and though few in number, their long training and experience in organized work will enable them to cope with difficult conditions, and even to become a centre training for others.

“All the reports received from our administrator emphasize the need of trained workers, and small bodies of experienced women sent now will save an incalculable amount of suffering, and do a service out of all proportion to their actual numbers. It is for this nucleus of help that an appeal is made, and in order that our pioneer workers in Petrograd may have the assurance that at least there are funds enough to keep their hospital going; money is needed for equipment and stores to pay adequate salaries to our workers, to keep up the hospital, and above all for the power to extend our work, since crying needs everywhere are for organization and personnel.

“English women are contributing all they can, and they are now appealing to their American sister to help in this work for suffering women and children and to American men to give a thank offering that their country has been preserved from the supreme misery of invasion.”

The lecture given was under the patronage of Mrs. C. T. Lincoln, Mrs. Charles A. Eaton, Mrs. J. Sheridan Zelig, Mrs. E. Vickers Stevenson, Mrs. D. H. Rowland, Mrs. H. Murray, Mrs. Bond Thomas, Mrs. Leighton Calkins, Mrs. J. M. Charles, Mrs. Allan Cowperthwaite, Mrs. F. C. Ard, Mrs. L. H. Van Buren, Mrs. George L. Babcock, Mrs. U. L. Conrad, Mrs. M. B. Mellor, Mrs. Story Rowland.

Law of Blood and Law of Will

By STEPHANIE LAUDYN

WE are witnesses of the most dreadful bloodshed the human race has ever known. An unceasing stream of blood flows indeed throughout human history from its very outset, but such an ocean of blood spilled in so mad a frenzy in the entanglement of so many national struggles — we have never seen before.

Everything that has been done and accomplished by the human race — her every step forward—every victory of new truths—every triumph of the spirit—has been redeemed by blood. This law of blood, therefore, is as old as the world itself in its history. It derives its genesis from this precept of the old covenant: "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth"—and it has been embodied later on in the Italian "Vendetta" which relentlessly demanded blood for blood. This law of hatred and violence has ruled the pagan world until there came the new and loving doctrine of Christ which replaced hatred by love, and violence by law and justice. Thus the Gospel teaches us to erect as a new foundation of human relations, the free, loving will of man, instead of compulsion, slavery and force.

We have, therefore, this antithesis: blood and hatred on one side — love and free will on the other; two opposite poles around which turn the moral life of humanity and the mournful events of the world. Europe at the head of civilization became Christian centuries ago when it imbibed the divine doctrine of love, which she redeemed by martyrdom and love in the powerful struggle with the new spiritual array of the world.

However, has Christianity really entered not only into the life of individuals, but also into the mutual relations of the Christian nations of Europe? In the face of the well known events of human history, the answer is superfluous, it seems—for here unquestionably the root of the tragedy is revealed as it progresses slowly through the centuries into what to-day is perhaps the final outcome.

Let us have a deeper insight into this fact. The material world offers us an indomitable physical law which governs material life; but there are also other moral laws, ruling with the same logic and iron consequence the life of the spirit—laws invisible to the eye, yet real and powerful. Both these laws cannot be violated under threats of ruinous cataclysms.

Was not, perhaps, the moral law of the new covenant adopted by the nations of the world as a foundation of life according to Christ's teachings, incessantly and shamefully downtrodden in the history of European Nations? — Was not the law of love and free will of individuals dragged into the bloody quagmire of horrible relation on the surface of which were drifting the tattered rags of truth and precepts agreed upon in Christ's teachings and ideals?

There was among the mighty nations of Europe, in its very centre, a nation that has taken up Christ's teachings with an ardent loving spirit, inscribing loftily on her own red-white banner the precepts of love and free will. This was Poland. Her history is unstained by robbery, violence and conquest; she experienced no injustice, persecution, breach of law and of the right to life of others, no destruction of cherished ideals and noble "Yearnings

of the Soul". Loving—peaceful and free—she approached with her gifts the nations of the world offering them brotherhood, laws and the high dignity of citizenship—converting only by means of love, uniting only in the bonds of the free brotherhood of nations. She shed her blood indeed on many battlefields, not however in the name of might to suppress right — but in the name of the rights of the spirit to curb the violence of power. Basing herself on her lofty ideals, on the whole Christian essence of her loving soul, she walked toward the future with freedom and hope, always ready to fight injustice and to shed her blood in the defense of all the endangered treasures of humanity. We behold the Polish knights ever ready to help and support a good cause on so many fields of battle, in so many national uprisings. This took place in plain daylight on the great arena of the world where Poland was always present with her great unique banner, bearing this inscriptions: "For our liberty and yours."

And at home, with what care and solicitude did she guard the liberty and safety of her citizens! It is Poland indeed that we behold in the unique spectacle, which seems almost Utopian, of safeguarding the rights of the minority—nay, of even one single will against the overwhelming majority of the Polish diets. I speak of our glorious and haughty "Liberum Veto". We can easily imagine what would happen to-day with parliamentary deliberations, were such laws observed—and yet, Poland had lived and developed under laws for centuries, because the unlimited rights of free citizenship had been restrained and shocked by the severe virtues of family life. This same virtue and character of Poland's citizenry made it possible for them to accomplish the biggest political upheavals without shedding one drop of blood. Thus was brought about the peaceful revolution of the Four Years' Diet which abolished the famous "Liberum Veto", the free election of kings—the ancient privileges of the nobility, while the right of citizenship it granted to the commoners, and liberated the peasantry. The very citizens of the republic decided on these issues of utmost importance, sacrificing their rights and liberties on the altar of the fatherland, for they saw that it could not subsist any longer such as it was among its rapacious neighbors. The Constitution of the Third of May, enacted by the free will of the citizens, accomplished a political revolution—but alas, it did not save Poland from the criminal conspiracy of her neighbors. Nevertheless, it stands forth as a heroic testament of the nation, shining through the dark ages of the bloody field of execution in which she was cast by violence. Alas, it is a fact, a murderous crime has been perpetrated on the most Christian nation in the world while Europe gazed on in silence....

And we see how a page of history was turned over, and immediately the face of Europe became darkened. The custody around the grave of the awe-stricken nation grows and increases, for the guards are afraid of each other, their jealous vigilance changing slowly into the powerful militarism of the world, with its new ethics of "Might above Right", sanctioned by the iniquitous partition of Poland. This new code of ethics is propagated largely and pre-eminently by a state aggrandized through abuse, violence and conquest and injustice on the ruins of murdered nations. Lo, there rises an ironclad leader of

this caste and announces the extinction of everything for his own abject appetites, depraves by his cynicism and cruelty the moral atmosphere of humanity, subjugates, conquers and challenges with his perfidy the world, whilst at the same time the robber states quell in streams of blood the uprising of Poland attempting to tear down the shackles and lift the stone of her sepulchre! Unable to defend any further the ideals of humanity, degraded by force, Poland cries through the voices of her genial bards, philosophers and poets for the re-Christianization of the world's history, for the uplifting of the shattered banner of the brotherhood of nations and the revival of the laws. But in vain! Among the nations professing that right goes above might, rises a new system of philosophy that declares through the genius of its exponents death and destruction to everything that is weak and helpless — place and freedom for the power of the supermen who offer in donation to the amazed world their armored fist!

The fruit of crime has grown and matured, the poisoned thought of humanity failed to offer resistance any longer, the philosophy of might and the law of the fist have triumphed. What does it matter that somewhere the cry of tortured children for their Polish prayer pierced the skies? What matters if the dispossessed peasant is compelled to leave the land of his grandfathers as a beggar—that the hearts of Polish mothers and wives are bleeding, what does it matter, after all....?

In the meantime, the ranks of steel-clad supermen were growing steadily, the production of deadly instruments of war increases rapidly, and the murderous genius of man has filled with his deadly inventions the depths of the sea—the air—the earth.....

All this was done in great haste and the whole world was gradually transformed into one armed camp, above which soared the triumphant spirit of hatred, the desire of destruction, ruin and blood. The crisis has come, the blood of millions has gushed forth and the earth was shaken by the struggle of two opposing forces. From the chaos of elements two principal war cries have issued: "Place for the supermen, and obedience to their powerful iron will", and — "Room for the oppressed weaker nations, respect for their laws and their right to live". To humanity civilization and the whole toilsome heritage of history has presented itself the terrible question: "To be, or not to be." And the summits of Sinai where the free spirit of the world has erected through thousands of years its most sacred beliefs—cherished ideals and rights—have darkened, and the sacred altars for the Gospel of love of Christ have been shattered to pieces and thrown to the feet of the mountain amid ashes and blood.....

The whole world trembled.... Almighty God, are not these then the invaluable riches of mankind, the fruit of her martyrdom, the sacred heritage of countless generations, the most precious pearls taken from the depths of her spirit....

There is at stake, therefore, an issue of tremendous importance, and all that are not indifferent to the fate of culture and the future of the world, are called to voice their opinion and invest their resources. Even young children of Asia and distant Africa have grasped the call of this historical moment with an unblemished childish instinct, and their dark masses, animated with enthusiasm, hasten to the bustling ranks of fighting humanity in order to throw the weight of their blood on the wavering scales of the world's history! Nobody is allowed to be indifferent or neutral, for the destinies of the world and affairs of immense cosmic importance demand co-operation. Therefore, in this world-war all participate and suf-

fer to-day, directly or indirectly, and history demands the greatest investment for the triumph of the spirit.

In the vapors of blood and martyrdom of ruins and destruction, the old vengeful law of blood and might must fall, and from the ocean of tears and misery of millions the soothing and peaceful law and free will of nations must emerge. There must be a rise in the powerful, living conscience of the world and through the rule of its free will control the destinies of humanity.

Enough of blood, violence and force — enough of destruction, hatred and violation of laws! Crimes will beget crimes—and blood calls for blood, until it reaches the magnitude of a terrible ocean..... We believe that the conscience of the world will awaken and nations will be healed by peaceful Christian laws and the right of their own free will.

Among the giant warring camps of the world, a defenseless country has succumbed—extended like one continuous wound on her cross.... It seems as though the tragedy of fate had chosen innocent—helpless Poland as a fearful illustration of how far a wild riot of instincts can go and precipitate all the moral conquests of humanity. Poland, the bulwark of Christianity, Poland — the guardian and cradle of human liberty! From distant centuries there flow to us strains of her soothing song: "For our liberty and for ours". In the distance the heroic wings of the hussars flutter defending Western culture against Eastern barbarism — and even to-day, she receives in her open bosom the whole hellish terror of the two conflicting worlds, paying with her fortune and life-blood. There is hardly any pain, torture or crime that has not been inflicted upon Poland to-day. Her ground is one big cemetery, strewn with graves and crosses; her children, forced violently into conflicting armies, murder each other with their own hands, repeating in thousands of instances the crime of Cain... Her little ones, a whole generation of them, have been dispersed by the wild enemy in the wilderness and desert, marking with their corpses the ways to the Golgotha of nations and peopling with her sons the marshes and deserts of Siberia..... Those that have been left in the country—beggars that they are—must give their last morsel of bread to the enemy who snatches even at the torn rag that covers the emaciated body of the fainting mother and her child which is deprived of even one drop of milk! A real Gehenna of pain, a Golgotha of the world.....

But there will and must be a judgment—the conscience of mankind already rises and beats the big bell of alarm. On the way to the life, the blood-stained body of Poland lies, and at her side lie the broken tablets of Christ's covenant and his laws of love.... This covenant must be raised and Poland must be lifted from her cross and restored to her lost dignity in the world. It is a necessary law of regeneration for mankind and of a new luminous era of the world. The law of blood must perish, and a free peaceful will of the world's nations must rise. Poland awaits her resurrection not from blood, but from the free will of nations. Their potent word will restore her lost place and rights among the nations of the world. This word is already resounding and wakening her to her senses out of her unspeakable pain.

We are waiting.... The dawns are rising.... We trust and we believe.... The great free nation of this Republic, whose dawn has united the Polish blood with that of her own illustrious sons in her struggle for liberty, will cast its powerful voice on the scale of Poland's destiny and will overbalance it to her favor.

The Influence of a Powerful Neutral Country



AMERICA has been acclaimed the champion of democracy and freedom. Belief has been expressed by many writers that America, in the interest of humanity, upon the termination of this war, will be instrumental in meting out justice to the oppressed. From Prussia the Poles expect nothing; they have reasons to distrust Russia; and surely, since Russia seems to be holding the winning card in this war, England and France out of sheer gratitude will not strongly insist on Russia's carrying out of whatever pledges and promises she hitherto has made to Poland. That is the reason bleeding Poland looks up to Uncle Sam to "establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty."

On the other hand, there has been current belief that America, as not directly participating in this world war, will have an insignificant role in the deliberations of the future Peace Congress.

The Poles, however, are convinced that America's powerful endorsement will be no mean factor in shaping the future destinies of Poland. America is indebted to her for the services of her illustrious sons—Kościuszko and Pulaski. And as has been said only too often, Kościuszko is called the "Father of American Artillery" and Pulaski — the "Father of American Cavalry." The Polish heroes fought for independence and helped the Colonies, after they had "fired the shot heard round the world", to win the inalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." The Poles are appealing to America to repay the old debt — and that is the mission of FREE POLAND.

There is nothing startling, therefore, in what Mr. Harry Hansen reports to the Daily News, April 1st. The Polish patriot who informs him that the Poles will appeal to this Republic for its moral force and assistance in the Polish Question is terribly late — almost two years. FREE POLAND has been doing it for that period, having been founded for the purpose of diffusing and keeping in the American mind a lively interest for ill-fated Poland.

The conclusions of the Polish patriot, as given to Mr. Harry Hansen in Stockholm, Sweden, follow:

"Nothing in the way of autonomy for Poland is to be expected from either Germany, Austria or Russia, despite their promises.

"Russia already has declared that the Polish question is a question of internal policy, and therefore not debatable, and France already has yielded to her in this regard.

"Germany to-day is not spreading Polish but German doctrines in the conquered territory.

"If the nations of the world admit that Poland is purely an internal question, Polish nationality is dead.

"Therefore, we must create a sentiment throughout the world, particularly in America, for making the Polish question an order of business at the coming international congress. That is our only hope."

Going more into details the Polish patriot who gave Mr. Hansen this information thus sketched the situation:

"At the present time Russia, Germany and Austria are flirting with Poland. But this has not misled any of the true patriots of Poland. The idea of a triple union of Poland, Austria and Hungary sounds well, but no one is going to give Austria what she cannot herself take. The German idea of a buffer state is good too, but it is unlikely that any flag but the German would be allowed there. We place absolutely no faith in the promises of

Russia regarding Poland. To-day Russia is half way lenient toward the Polish propoganda. But the silence may come any moment.

"When the Germans were fighting their way into Russian Poland their flying machines scattered handbills calling on the Poles to help throw off the Russian yoke and saying: "We come to establish the independence of Poland." In the months of the German occupation Germany has done absolutely nothing to cause us to hope for assistance here. On the contrary with the German army has come the German school, the German system, the German Polish legion, but no hint of a national or autonomous Poland.

"We know what has been done in German Poland, and we are not misled by bids for troops. Even now Germany has stripped Poland and her people are starving. The official denials of the charges that Germany had taken foodstuffs out of Poland are lies out of the whole cloth, and the arguments of the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, intended to prove that the Germans removed no grain, have no weight with us. We know what has been done and how the people are starving.

"Not so long ago the newspapers of Paris took up the cause of Poland and declared the entente should at once guarantee the restitution of the Polish crown and the acknowledgment of Poland as a kingdom. It was a subject that might well appeal to the heart of a Frenchman. Immediately the Russian ambassador at Paris made representations to the French government that the Polish question is an internal question and concerns only the arbiters of the Russian empire, and so should not be discussed openly in the columns of the press of an ally. The French government, eager to conciliate Russia and not a little uneasy about the sentiment for a separate peace in Russia, clamped the muzzle on the press. The discussion ceased.

"If we permit the whole subject to be treated as an internal question by the nations involved we are lost. England can help us, France can help us, but because of their relations with Russia they cannot initiate a program for a national Poland; they can only support it. Our greatest help must come from the neutral nations. We do not want a second Vienna congress. And so we are going before the court of the great neutral nations, and the United States first of all."

The members of the Polish national committee informed Mr. Hansen that if Poland were constituted as a nation it would assume seventh place among the nations of Europe, with a population of nearly 20,000,000 persons. The states would then rank as follows: Russia, Germany, Austria-Hungary, England, France, Italy and Poland.

"There are 11,000,000 Poles in Russia", he said, "of whom 9,000,000 live together in Poland and 2,000,000 are scattered over the empire. Austria has 5,000,000 and Germany approximately 4,000,000. This growth has gone forward in spite of the persecutions and the many attempts to root out Polish national thoughts and aspirations in the last century.

"To-day Poland is regarded by all the nations surrounding it as territory to exploit. If this were not so, why do these nations—Russia, Germany and Austria — place our people in the front rank of the battle, exposed to the most severe fire? I am unable to make a distinction between these nations and to say that one of the

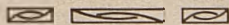
other will be the savior of Poland. Under Russia we Poles pay taxes amounting to 18.32 rubles per capita, whereas all other Russians pay only 13.50 rubles per capita. In return the state expends 2.42 rubles per capita on Poland, and 4.11 rubles per capita on the rest of Russia.

"We were led to believe that German administration would improve on Russian administration. Yet to-day, in Warsaw, the German petty official looks for his tip just as surely as the Russian ever did. He seems to argue that whereas the people are used to giving money to officials they might as well keep it up, and that there is no reason why he should be discriminated against."


The Polish nationalist who will present the program of the Polish committee to Chicago is personally known to Mr. Hansen, although he is not permitted to give his name. It is unlikely that his name will be made public in Chicago. It is for the sake of his wife and children, rather than

for himself, that his anonymity, as well as that of other Polish delegates, was agreed on. He personally is indifferent to any consequences his act might have in Russia.

"Why should I fear ruin or exile, or even death?" he asked. "Poland's soil is drenched with the blood of her sons and yet the Polish idea comes forward stronger, more powerful than ever before. My family has bled in the cause of Polish nationalism for generations. Some of my people have been shot, some exiled, some imprisoned. I can give but little to the cause. I am a patriot. When I think of where our people have fought and bled, and where their graves are laid, I seem to see the whole sphere of this earth, and I am proud. They bled in the war of independence of the United States, as in their own wars. In spite of this they have not died out, or been absorbed by other nations. As long as our race survives our national idea must survive."



Bits of Polish History

 In this present war which is devastating Europe and causing so much ruin, misery and anguish, there are a number of small nations which, though entirely innocent, have to bear the most terrible sufferings. One country which stands out so prominently in the role of martyrs is Poland, and in this paper we shall briefly review the history of truly great and chivalrous country that once was the dominant power of Europe and earned the title, "Bulwark of Christendom."

The name Pole, designating an individual of the Polish nationality, comes from the Polish word "pole" meaning a plain, because Poland is for the most part a plain. The Polish name, **Polaki**, and the names of some cities are accounted for in an historical legend. On the mountainous district of Croatia there rise above the river Krapina two elevations, the Krapina and the Psary, on which are the ruins of former castles. The legend says, that in these castles there once lived three Pagan Slavic princes named Lech, Czech, and Rus, the sons of Pan, a prince of Pannonia. They had a sister named Wylinda, who out of love for a hostile chief, conducted his forces to the settlements of her brothers, who taken unawares were defeated. In their wrath the brothers cursed their sister, and leaving the castle departed for other lands in 550 A.D.

After crossing the Danube they separated and started in different directions. Lech with his followers arrived at the banks of the Warta where another Slavic tribe called the **Polani** had settled. Here he noticed on the trees several nests from each of which there flew a pair of white eagles. He settled here and called the place **Gniezno**, Nest, which is the present city of Gnesen. He became ruler of the people who thereafter were called **Polaki**, from the words **Po Lechu**, "descendants of Lech." This tribe took as its coat of arms a white eagle with lifted wings on a field of claret.

After many years the brothers of Lech, viz. Czech, from whom the Czechs (Bohemians) received their name, and Rus, the founder of the Ruthenian tribe, chanced to meet at a spot not far from Gnesen. To commemorate their meeting and recognition (**poznanie**) they founded the town called **Poznań**, the present city of Posen.

The earliest authentic account of the **Polaki** dates back to A. D. 830. **Ziemovit**, supposed to be the second ruler of the **Piast** dynasty, is the first of whom we know

anything at all reliable. It was not till a century later when **Mieczyslaw** occupied the throne and, through marriage to **Dombrowka**, a Bohemian princess, because a convert to Christianity, that Poland really came into the field of European history. After this conversion, **Mieczyslaw** "broke down with his own hands the idols of his country." He ordered that, whenever the Gospel was read, the hearers should half-draw their swords to show their readiness to defend the Truth. The first formal edict of a Polish ruler recorded in history is an order, that a Christian hymn be sung before engaging in battle."

Poland continued to prosper from now on and, being governed by such illustrious kings as **Boleslaw I.** and the **Casimirs**, she increased in magnitude and wealth. But the real greatness of Poland began with her union to Lithuania. **Hedwig**, queen of Poland, daughter of King **Lewis** of Hungary, married **Jagiello**, prince of Lithuania, on condition that he and his followers be converted to Christianity. Through this marriage the two countries were united under one sovereign. **Jagiello** was solemnly baptized at Cracow in 1386 and assumed the name of **Wladyslaw II.** "Jagiello himself overthrew the idol **Perkun** and extinguished the sacred fire. The removal of the seat of government from Cracow to Warsaw was a result of this union of sovereigns and nations."

After **Jagiello Sigismund I.**, surnamed the Great, held sway over the country and added another jewel to the resplendent diadem. He was the last independent monarch; from then on Poland was governed by elected kings. In 1648 **John Casimir** was king of Poland. A fact to be noted here is that **Casimir** was at one time a monk, and had actually been created a cardinal. Another evidence of the union of church and state in Poland was the custom that, during interregnum of a year or two generally intervening before a new king was elected an archbishop became the ruler. This is a strong symbol evidence of the Polish faith, for such a thing could not happen except in a thoroughly Catholic country.

A near successor of **Casimir** was **Jan Sobieski**, one of the greatest men ever produced by Poland. **Sobieski** was not a man of royal birth, but he had distinguished himself in war especially against the Turks, who called him the "Unvanquished Northern Lion."

Ten years later came his greatest military triumph,

the rescue of Vienna from the Turks. The Austrian emperor Leopold I. had fled in terror from his capital, and Sobieski was looked upon as the only man who could save Europe from the Turk. At the request of the Pope and of the emperor, Sobieski approached Vienna, and soon the decisive battle occurred. Sobieski kept himself in the thickest of the fight crying: "Not to us, O Lord not to us, but to Thy name be glory", and his message to Pope Innocent XI was: *Veni, Vidi, Deus Vicit*. The people of the city went wild over the Polish hero. In a letter to his wife he says: "I have been in two churches where the people kissed my hands, feet, and clothes." A service of thanksgiving was held in the Cathedral, and the preacher used these words as his text: There was a man sent from God whose name was John. Sobieski was the last great king of Poland.

Poland was at one time the greatest power in central Europe. In 1660 her territory consisted of about 382,000 square miles, extending from the Baltic to the Black Sea, and reaching from the heart of Prussia almost to the heart of Muscovy. The area of Poland was as large as that of Texas, Ohio, Indiana, and Kentucky combined. We can more easily get an idea of her extent and power if we compare her expansion with that of Germany and France to-day, which countries have an area of 210,232 and 207,217 square miles respectively. In a word, to show the great power of the Poles, it will be sufficient to mention that Great Poland, Little Poland (Galicia, Podolia, Ukraina), Livonia, Lithuania (including Samogitia, Black and White Russia, Polesia and Tchernigov), Pomerania, Ermeland, Curland, Moldavia, Bukowina, Wallachia, Bessarabia and Prussia were either integral parts of Poland, or were subject to her. In consequence of her decisive defeat at the hands of the Poles under Sigismund III, Russia offered to take one of his sons as her Czar. Sweden made a similar offer to another of his sons. A Pole ruled for a while in Muscovy. Prussia asked help from the Poles against her enemies at one time and acknowledged her dependency upon Poland. Leopold I, of Austria, as we have seen, pleaded with Sobieski to come and deliver Vienna from the Turks. But afterwards these three wolves, garbed in the clothing of sheep, paid their gratitude to Poland by effacing her from the map of Europe.

The civil power of Poland, great as it was, was far overshadowed by the inestimable good she rendered to humanity. One historian says it was "Poland that first gave to Prussia, when Prussia was a province of Poland, some of the grace of Christianity and civilization that lifted the Prussians out of barbarism, and she exerted a similar influence on Austria and Russia. Poland saved Europe from the Turks and from the blight of Mohammedanism. For centuries before the last great battle with the Turks at Vienna, this same Poland had rolled back invasion after invasion of Tartar, Turk and Russian hordes. Her record of heroism is greater than that of any other European nation of the Middle Ages."

Poland did more than this: she saved to Europe the idea of federal government by representatives in a par-

liament, or diet, that elected the ruler of the kingdom. She was a great commonwealth of modern times; she was a Roman Catholic nation, strongly imbued with the finest ideals in the Church of her time. "One of the strongest notes in the Polish character has always been the spiritual note—the ideal purpose; and it was this Christian unity that enabled her to beat back the barbaric invasions."

Poland never wronged or oppressed any people; never did she try to rob a people of their sacred birthright. "Never did she refuse, on the entreaty of the Church or weaker nations, to undo the chains and strike them off from the limbs of the oppressed. Never did she draw that sword, which she wielded for centuries, in an unjust or doubtful cause; never did Poland shed a drop of blood unjustly, but only in the defence of the highest, the holiest and best of causes—the altars of God and the altars of the nation."

Having such power at her command and doing so much good, one would naturally suppose that Poland would thrive; but she did not continue to enjoy her prosperity, nor did she become a dominant factor of Europe. After Sobieski's memorable reign her power began to decline rapidly, through internal dissensions among the nobles, the ruling class, and through interference of Russia and Prussia in the selection of her kings. The politicians, in whom the people had great faith, gradually became corrupt, as the country grew rich in wealth, and fell victims to the bribes of Russia and Prussia. Besides this, some historians claim that the so-called reformation was also a cause of Poland's disintegration..... At a favorable moment Prussia and Russia invaded Poland on the pretext of restoring order. They flooded the land with soldiery, and Poland, without any natural frontiers or ready army to protect her, had to submit to the intruders. For their part in restoring order, which they never did, Russia and Prussia very charitably annexed, each, a part of Poland. This was the first of a series of acts of dismemberment, which culminated finally in depriving the Poles of their land.

The first partition took place in 1772, the second in 1792, and the third and last in 1795, despite Kościuszko's desperate rally to save his doomed country. Russia and Prussia took part in the first and second divisions and Austria came to their aid in the third. The lion's share of the territory went to Russia, who took three-fourths of it; the remainder was parcelled out between Prussia and Austria. The council of Vienna, 1815, forgetful of Poland and its deeds, ratified this high-handed robbery, and ever since Poland as a nation has ceased to exist.

For more than a century the Poles have suffered untold misery and persecution. Russia and Prussia have been and are the worst oppressors of the Poles. Austria has been somewhat conciliatory with the Poles in Galicia, where they have practical autonomy. Their speech and religion have not been much tampered with. Russia and Prussia, however, have tried to crush out the Polish nationality, and to this end have used inhuman means. For instance, in Prussia the Poles have been expropriated from their own lands. Millions of dollars have been appropriated in the Reichstag for this end and for the immigration of Germans into Poland. The Poles are not allowed to purchase any land and there is one case where the family

of a Pole, by the name of Drzymala, had to wander about in a gypsy cart. About 1908 Germany resorted to very drastic measures in order to crush out the Polish nationality and spirit. Polish meetings were not allowed; newspapers were confiscated and editors imprisoned. The Polish tongue was forbidden and the children were not even allowed to say their prayers in Polish.

Of all her subjects, Germany has treated the Poles most cruelly and unmercifully. This is because Poland has the misfortune of lying so near to Prussia. Here is at least one instance where a person might justly point the finger of scorn at the boasted Prussian Kultur. Prussian conduct toward the Poles is a blot upon her government which can never be effaced.

In Russia the conditions are the same, if not worse. The language is forbidden; Russian is taught in the schools; the transportation of illustrious Poles to Siberia has been incessant; and education and refinement are woefully neglected.

Not only have these two countries gnawed at the very vitals of Polish nationality, but they have also raised their hands against her religion. But despite the most violent persecutions, Poland, like Ireland, remains a firm and staunch adherent of the Catholic faith. As the tyrants become more rigid in oppression, Poland becomes more united and indomitable. She is termed the land of Mary, and has to her credit such saints as Stanislaus, Adalbert, Casimir, Josaphat, John Cantius, and Hedwig; she has produced such great men as Kosciuszko and Pulaski, who received the titles, Father of American Cavalry and Father of American Artillery, in the Revolutionary War; Sobieski, the deliverer of Vienna from the Turks; M. Kopernik (Copernicus) the astronomer, who first demonstrated that the earth moves around the sun; Chopin and Paderewski, the piano wizards; Sienkiewicz, the author of *Quo Vadis*. These are names to be proud of.

At the present day—oh, the pen refuses to unveil the

horror of her situation. Poland is plunged in suffering, the like of which no nation has ever experienced. You have heard about Belgium's fate; but Poland's is a thousand times worse. Being entirely innocent of this great catastrophe, which is devouring Europe, and having no interest in this war, her brave men, rigidly forced into the armies, must engage in a fratricidal conflict; and thus what her oppressors could hardly accomplish in peace is being done by war: the extermination of the Pole. Whilst the sons of the renowned Poland are shedding their life-blood in the trenches and on battlefields, the peaceful population, the aged, the women and children, without homes, are dying of starvation and disease in the woods. The ill-fated children extend their emaciated arms to their mothers for food, and oh, how those mothers' hearth must ache and bleed when they can give their children nothing but tears. Such is the woe of Poland, the once mighty "Bulwark of Christendom." It seems this unnatural struggle is either the death-cry or birth-pangs of a chivalrous nation. That the latter may be the case is the hope of every ardent Pole; he is willing to make this bitter sacrifice for freedom.

When this terrible war has been fought and the peace parties assemble to draw up the treaty, we hope and pray that Poland will loom up before them as an index or keynote for the solution of this war. May the heroes and deeds of Poland impress the peacemakers, as they sit at their sacred tribunal of justice, and may the persecution and misery of the present condition of unhappy Poland move the arbitrators—force them—for the sake of humanity, civilization and justice, to liberate Poland from her thralldom. "Poland desires not to rule the world or dominate the seas; she simply asks for justice and freedom, a place in the sun."

A. ZALEWSKI,
St. Benedict's College,
Atchison, Kansas.

Pope Asks Entente Allies to Admit Food to Poland

(Cabled from London)

The Daily Chronicle's Rome correspondent says that in response to appeals by the central committee for the relief of Poland the pope has approached the representatives of the allies in Rome asking that facilities be given for the importation of foodstuffs into Poland.

A favorable reply has been given but with the reservation that an effective guaranty must be provided that the foodstuffs will reach the suffering Poles and not be confiscated for the benefit of German troops.

The Vatican is endeavoring to organize in Poland some reliable neutral organization similar to that existing in Belgium for the reception and distribution of relief.

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