

# FREE POLAND

A SEMI-MONTHLY

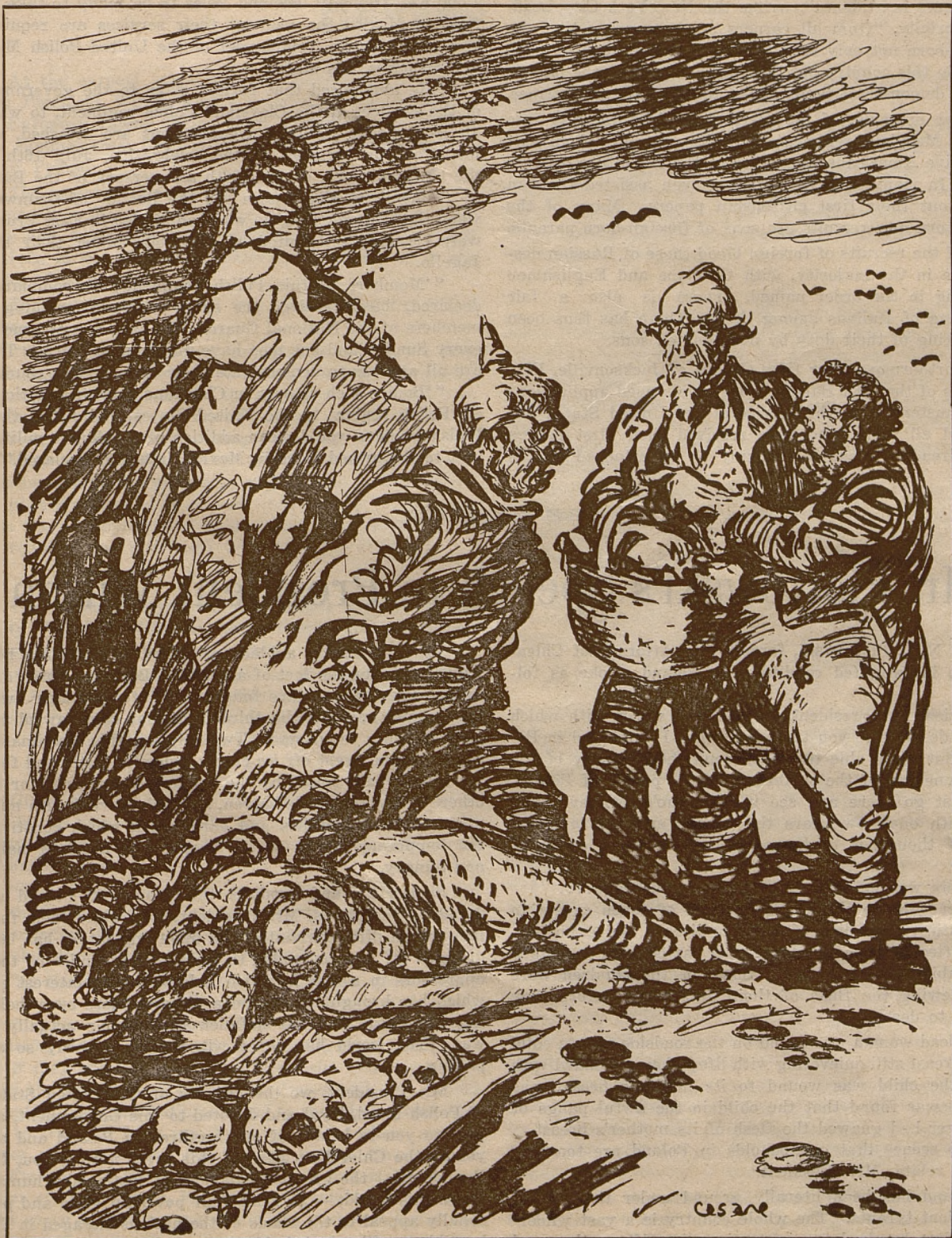
*The Truth About Poland and Her People*

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Vol. II.—No. 22

AUGUST 1, 1916

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# Ready to Die for the United States

Some time ago there was a hue and cry raised over the hyphenates. Away with Polish-Americans, Bohemian-Americans, etc., was the slogan raised by the Yankee. And yet these foreign-born are more eager to fight for this country than the native-born.

"There is evidence", writes the *New York City Leader* editorially, "from all corners of the country that the foreign-born not only read their papers and keep up with events in this country but they are as eager as the native-born to demonstrate their loyalty to the Stars and Stripes."

"For example, of the recruits received recently into the two Maryland regiments of Baltimore, only about half are native Americans, according to the recruiting officers there. In many cases the officers even assisted them in taking out their first citizenship papers. Many of the native-born new recruits are sons of foreign-born parents."

"Of the recruits of foreign blood those of Russian descent are in the majority, with Germans and Englishmen following in the order named. There is also a fair sprinkling of Italians among them. There has thus been no shirking of their duty by our adopted sons."

"Furthermore, over fifty Greeks of Jacksonville, Fla., veterans of the first Balkan War, have signed applications to be mustered into the service of the United States Army, and all those who have received their first papers have already formed a company to be attached to the

First Regiment, National Guard of Florida. Such trained veterans will make excellent additions to our army."

"Then, further, the Poles of Cleveland are responding nobly to the call of their adopted country. The United States can count upon a military contingent of more than 1,000 well-trained Cleveland Poles to be ready to take the field in Mexico the moment their services are required, Col. M. P. Kniola, commander of the United Polish Military Societies, has stated."

"He announced that formal offer to the government of the services of the Cleveland Polish regiment, to which all local Polish military organizations are attached, was made on the occasion of the celebration, July 16th, in the Grays armory, of the 506th anniversary of the Battle of Tannenberg, also known as the Battle of Grunwald, when the Teutonic knights who had settled in East Prussia were crushingly defeated by the Poles under their king Jagello."

"Members of this Polish regiment', its commander declared, 'have received the same course of training as members of the National Guard. We have target practice every Sunday and our men have uniforms and arms. They are all anxious to demonstrate their love for this country.'

"Bodies such as ours in Cleveland exist in practically all Polish centers in the United States, and I feel these Polish soldiers would mean addition of a valuable military unit to the armed force in Mexico, if war is declared."



## Mr. Piotrowski's Speech to President Wilson

Mr. N. L. Piotrowski, former City Attorney of Chicago, who investigated conditions in Poland, spoke as follows.

I wish, Mr. President, I could find words with which I could describe to you the scenes that I witnessed in Poland. But to be able to comprehend the enormity of the misfortune and of the sufferings of the people of Poland, one must go there and see it with one's own eyes and hear with one's own ears the groans and the lamentations of thousands of human beings who are dying of hunger.

There was no milk — no butter — no eggs....

There are no children below age of seven except in large cities; they died of hunger, disease and exposure. A lady fleeing from Warsaw in her car counted seventeen dead babies in the ditches. Some of the children were seen chewing the flesh of their own hands before they starved to death.

A dead woman was found on the roadside with a child at her breast still quivering with life; when the shawl with which the child was wound to its mother's breast was lifted it was found that the child in the awful pangs of its hunger had gnawed the flesh of its mother's breast.

The scenes that one beholds in Poland are too horrible to relate, Mr. President.

Poland has been literally ground under the feet of her ancient tyrants. The whole country is a vast wilderness. Five hundred towns are in ruin, fifteen thousand villages are in ashes.

There is hardly a blade of grass that has not been trampled under the feet of a soldier. Back and forth over its soil vast armies have fought and refought their awful battles and now for the third time that same awful tragedy is being re-enacted. Twice during this war has the country been swept off its crops; twice its cattle and farm stock have been seized by the soldiers of one army or the other. I saw the fields barren, untilled, scarred with miles upon miles of trenches and earth work which constitute the temporary homes of the people who are half naked and hungry.

Shelterless and foodless the people of Poland are dying by thousands, Mr. President; and while their families are in dire extremities the male population has been dragged off and compelled to fight in the armies of their oppressors in a war in which Poland has no interest and which has brought to Poland a disaster more overwhelming than any that has befallen the nations actually at war. The world has never witnessed a tragedy so appalling.

Mr. President, we the citizens of the United States, of Polish blood, loyal and devoted to this Government, appeal to you in behalf of our brethren in Poland and ask you as the Chief Executive of this great nation, you, Mr. President, — the greatest exponent of justice and humanity in this world, — to raise your powerful voice and personally appeal to the heads of the nations engaged in this horrible conflict in behalf of the Polish nation, that the ancient and noble race may be saved from extermination.





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## Helping Poland

At the earnest solicitation of Americans of Polish birth President Wilson sent a personal letter to each of the European rulers urging their cooperation in getting food supplies from the United States to the starving people of Poland.

The president desires that France, Great Britain and Russia allow the passage of the foodstuffs and that Germany and Austria-Hungary guarantee that the food will be given to the civilian population and not seized by the armies of occupation.

The following statement was given out at the White House:

"The president has sent personal letters to the king of England, the emperor of Germany, the czar of Russia, the emperor of Austria and the president of France, suggesting the taking up entirely afresh of the matter of the relief of the overwhelming suffering in Poland and tendering the friendly offices of this government in negotiations as to the possibility and method of such relief, any plan proposed to be of such character as to be adapted to the accomplishment of no other result than that of the relief of the distressed inhabitants of Poland."

\* \* \*

The Russian government was among the first to reply to President Wilson's plea. It promised to consider immediately the appeal for a Polish relief agreement.

Ambassador David Francis, at Petrograd, notified State Department July 21st that he had conferred July 14 with Premier Sazonoff concerning the matter and the latter promised to take it up at once.

\* \* \*

Great Britain gave its consent to the admission of food in the areas occupied by the Central Powers — with certain restrictions. The letter given out for publication in London reads:

"His majesty's government desires to settle, once for all, the whole question of the importation of foodstuffs into territory in the occupation of the enemy. Therefore, it makes the following final proposal:

"If the German and Austro-Hungarian governments will reserve wholly to the civil populations of occupied territory the entire produce of the soil, all live stock and all stocks of food, fodder and fertilizers in those territories, and if they will admit to those territories neutrals selected by the President of the United States with full powers to control the distribution of food to the whole population and to transfer from one territory to another surplus stocks existing in one and lacking in the other, and if the President of the United States will undertake the selection of these agents, his majesty's government will give them every assistance and admit into such territories any imported food supplies necessary to supplement native stocks and afford the population a fair subsistence ration,

as long as it is satisfied that the enemies are scrupulously observing their part of the agreement.

"If this offer is refused or a reply delayed until the harvest in the occupied territory begins to be gathered his majesty's government will hold them responsible and will exact such reparation as can be secured by the allied arms or enforced by the opinion of the neutral world for every civilian life lost through insufficient nourishment in the territory occupied."

\* \* \*

As to Austria, Foreign Minister Burian told Ambassador Penfield that it was his opinion that the request of the president would be met by Austria and Germany.

Ambassador Penfield was told by the foreign minister that Austria was administering affairs in one-third of Russian Poland and that famine conditions there have been greatly ameliorated in recent months by good crops and management.

State department officials regard the reception of the president's letter at the Austrian foreign office as a hopeful sign of concessions which will eventually permit American relief measures for the starving Poles.

\* \* \*

Germany called the conditions imposed by Great Britain "impracticable". Germany makes clear its position in a note handed to Mr. Gerard July 29th.

The text of the note follows:

"From the very beginning the imperial government declared its readiness to offer its assistance in order that the distress apparent in those parts of Russia which are occupied by German troops and were systematically wasted and deprived of all victuals for the use of the remaining inhabitants by the retreating Russian hosts, be eased by the relief work of the United States of America, which is organized on such a great scale. The imperial government has particularly offered all guarantees consistent with the requirements of war that the imported foodstuffs will only serve the needs of the population of the territory occupied.

"Accordingly, the American relief might have been released several months ago with the same provisions as in northern France, had not the government of Great Britain prevented its accomplishment by clinging to its unfounded and impracticable conditions.

"In this way it has become practically impossible to convey a considerable amount of foodstuffs from America to Poland by the expiration of the term set, as the end of the relief work is Oct. 1. Accordingly, further negotiations are devoid of purpose.

"But, on the other hand, thanks to the intense culture of the land effected by the imperial government by using the means available and every effort possible in the occupied territory, and owing to the favorable harvest pros-



pects, relief action after Oct. 1, 1916, can apparently be dispensed with.

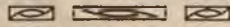
"The fact that the population of Poland and Lithuania will to some extent suffer until the new crop is lodged, and later on will sometimes have to put up with straitened circumstances, can therefore not be laid to the blame of the imperial government, but to that of Great Britain."

\* \* \*

Again obstacles to Polish Relief are raised! Again mu-

tual recriminations! Whereas it is vitally important that a satisfactory basis for an agreement which will permit the United States to relieve the distress in Poland should be reached at once!

If Germany refuse to grant the necessary guarantee, a whole nation, whose present suffering is unparalleled, will die — a "man's inhumanity to man", which will form one of the blackest pages in the book of European history.



## The President's Plea

The American press has widely commented on President Wilson's personal letter to the European rulers who have it in their power to relieve the ineffable distress in Poland.

"President Wilson's personal plea to the European rulers", writes the *Chicago Herald*, "to cooperate in the relief of the stricken population of Poland, after the efforts of the State Department to secure the necessary concessions proved unavailing, is an unusual procedure more than justified by an unusual situation. All must devoutly hope that the rulers addressed will be impressed by this plea from the head of a great nation sufficiently to use their influence to have the whole question reopened and settled on a basis of humanity, with due regard for the rights of the belligerents. It is incredible that a satisfactory basis for an agreement which will permit the United States to help relieve Poland's sufferings cannot be found, if it is sincerely sought. Whatever be the result of the President's latest effort for Polish relief, it will be a source of satisfaction to all Americans that their government has left no stone unturned to help that unfortunate nation."

\* \* \*

The presidential appeal ought to be effective. It is to be hoped that the Powers of Europe are not altogether deaf to the voice of humanity.

"President Wilson's direct appeal to the governments of the European nations at war", writes the *Chicago Tribune*, "asking in the name of the American people for permission to relieve suffering in Poland ought to gain its end or put the obstructing nation or nations in a position for which coming generations of its or their citizens will be apologetic.

"The president's request is that the nations submit an agreement which will enable the innocent Polish victims of war to be given relief without there being a contribution as the result of that relief to the military efficiency of any nation.

"The British, French, and Russians must allow the supplies to go through. The Germans and Austrians must guarantee that the incoming supplies will not be directly or indirectly an addition to their own victualing. If they refuse the only sufferers are the Poles. If they agree the only gainers are the Poles. It would seem that the request does not permit a refusal."

\* \* \*

The conditions in Poland are frightful.

"The stories reaching this country from Poland", — writes the *New York Globe And Commercial Advertiser*, "are such as to melt a heart of stone. In all its long and distressing history this distracted country has never suffered as it is suffering now. Think of the statement soberly made by the delegation of Poles who yesterday visited the President that their information was that in the portion of Poland now under German occupation practically every child under seven years of age is dead.

"Great Britain refuses to allow the transport of food from the United States to Poland because of Germany's refusal to give satisfactory guarantees that the food will not be used for military purposes. In reply the German government alleges that the assurances it offers are ample and that Great Britain is responsible for the starvation.

"Something more than a year ago Poland, while not possessed of abundant food supplies, was not starving. Then came the German occupation and reports that trainloads of food were transported from Poland to Germany. Recently German newspapers, explaining how the war is to be won, have boasted of the crop being raised in Poland, and have said it was ample to provide for Germany's wants. These statements may not be true, but if they are they convict Germany of a great wrong. A nation that conquers alien territory may not strip it of the food necessary to the life of its civilian population. In the case of Belgium, where the food shortage threatened millions of people until the British government began to furnish money to the dispossessed Belgian government to buy food in America, Germany was able to say that the food supply of Belgium in normal times was not adequate for her needs. But Poland is an agricultural country, usually producing more than she requires. If it shall appear that the German government has abused her occupation to strip Poland of food and has thus brought starvation to a whole people, heavy indeed is the guilt of those in power in Germany who are responsible for the policy. Irrelevant railings against the British blockade will not alter the ugly facts.

"The President indicates that he can do nothing for Poland, much as his feelings are stirred, except to urge Great Britain and Germany to come to an agreement. He can do more. He can find out what became of the food of Poland—how many trainloads, if any, were rolled out of this helpless country. If the movement of food toward Berlin has been considerable, or if the German army of occupation has seized Poland's supplies, he can make the fact known to the world and perhaps thereby lead to a saving change of practice."



# The Necessity of Poland's Independence

This article is a translation from Jan Kucharzewski's *LA POLOGNE ET LA GUERRE*, published earlier in *LA GAZETTE DE LAUSANNE*. After considering the present war in relation to the Polish Question, after depicting the tragedy and the partition of Poland, Kucharzewski writes in the concluding chapter of his brochure as follows:

**P**OLES, you knew not how to prevent your engulfing, see at least that they will not digest you."

Uttered by an illustrious writer at the time of Poland's dismemberment, these words have proved prophetic. In these civilized times no nation can devour a living people without soon experiencing the destructive consequences of such anthropophagy; its entrails are soon poisoned, it becomes diseased. As the wild beast is awakened in the tame animal at the sight of a piece of fresh meat, just so a civilized nation becomes savage while rending and torturing a living people. The Polish lands, methodically denationalized by both German and Russian, have become for these two States a nursery of despotism, a school of cruelty. Russia which broke loose from its former depths of barbarism, suffered a relapse when oppressing the Poles. How often does Russia dash her own progress to pieces upon the rock of Polish persecution! Under Alexander II, when after the Crimean War a breath of liberty swept through Russia and a gradual realization of the vast program of reforms was in sight; when Poland, encouraged and annoyed at the same time, began vigorously to demand her national rights, the demon of reaction, already half subdued, had stirred up the fire of Russian national passions and a wave of hatred, directed against the Poles, had buried their hopes along with the germs of Russian regeneration. Alexander Herzen, the eminent propagator of Russian progressive thought, had lost his popularity for having sided with the Poles in 1863, Moravieff, the hangman of Lithuania, for a time becoming the popular hero.

The following period, there appeared grand masters of nationalistic reaction (the famous Plehve and so many others), who forced the Uniats of Podlasie to enter the bosom of the Orthodox Church and initiated the dire process of oppression. In the last internal crisis of Russia, some years ago, the reactionaries, burning with the desire to stifle the constitutional and progressive movement, raised the now widespread wave of nationalism, so that in place of concessions and reforms, the Polish nation underwent a new series of exceptional laws, hailed with enthusiasm by the Ultra-Russians.

Russia never succeeded in a political and civic regeneration,—at least she never completely gave up the system of denationalization by military dictatorship and infringement upon the sacred rights of Poland.

The implacable system of oppression as practiced by Germany against the Poles has likewise exercised a destructive influence upon the oppressors. It is Prussian Poland which has developed the type of cruel chauvinist; it is there you have witnessed this relapse into paganism and barbarism, this insolent cynism which will torture a whole nation without any remorseful feeling, and this imperialistic folly, this blind passion of playing the role of ancient Rome among barbarians.

*Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento!*

Such is the maxim appropriated by modern Germany, which fails to perceive its monstrous anachronism.

There is a close relation between the oppression of the Poles and the violation of the Belgian neutrality. It is said that the war of 1870 was won by the schoolmaster (*der deutsche Schulmeister*). It is the German schoolmaster of Posen who influenced the present war; it is the schoolmaster of Wreschen (Wrzesnia) who beat and tortured the Polish children for wanting to learn the catechism in their native tongue; it is he who has educated the German cavaliers who now destroy Louvain, Rheims, Ypres, Kalisz. There exists, to be sure, an intimate solidarity and a reciprocal connection between the destinies of less strong peoples. If it is lawful to disinherit Poland and to treat this country as an integral part of Russia or of Germany; if it is licit not to take any account of the existence of a nation of 24,000,000 souls, why should it not be right to seize Belgium, Switzerland and a part of France? It is only a question of force pure and simple.

Then you refer to the prescription of Poland's rights to independence. But when does the expiration of national rights legally lapse? The suppression of a State through conquest and spoliation is not sufficient, if the nation itself remains alive. If this nation gives all signs of life, and of suffering in its captivity, its bondage means only an every day violence, and its unceasing death encourages and justifies every new crime. Let us suppose that Belgium be conquered and subjugated in consequence of the present war. When will, in this case, its right to existence expire? Would a treaty establishing the suppression of the Belgian state be for this nation the peremptory arrest of a national suicide? If, later, Belgium should take up arms against the oppressor and be defeated in an unequal struggle, would they say in Paris or elsewhere: "Order reigns in Brussels", as in Warsaw in 1831?

The Poles have always recognized and pleaded solidarity of heroism and misfortune. At the time of the great national struggles, Polish blood was shed wherever oppression was fought against. The Poles fought in the army of Washington, in the ranks of the Italians, the Hungarians, the French. When the nations had succeeded in their self-liberation from the yoke of the oppressors, national or foreign, and when they had attained their desires, then they would proceed to forget the Poles.

\* \* \*

The rulers of Poland, while seeking to justify themselves, slander her with a view to proving that she is incapable of governing herself. Thus they confirm the saying of the ancients: *Odisse quos laesis*, "you hate those whom you have hurt." If in consequence of the present war, one of the countries actually in the struggle has the misfortune of losing its independence the conquering nation will bring forth many historians, statesmen, sociologists, economists, etc., who will prove learnedly that the conquered people were unworthy as well as incapable of being independent, and even theologians will not be lacking to affirm that such was the will of God and to sprinkle holy water on this work of force.

All sorts of faults and vices have been attributed to the Poles without regard for truth psychology. When they were accused of incurable anarchy and unbridled individualism, they simultaneously reproached them for



their reactionary spirit, their exaggerated clericalism and their impatience of any authority. The Russian Pan-Slavists themselves bitterly commented on Polish indifference to Slavic sentiment, a gross accusation if you are familiar with the facts. When, in 1830, Poland rose to regain her independence, the Russian poet Pushkin declared that the struggle would decide "if the Slavic streams would dissolve in the Russian sea." To make the Polish stream enter the Russian sea, an army was sent against the Poles, the Prussian Diebitch with the generals Kreutz, Ruediger, Geismar, Pahlen, Toll, the prince of Wuerttemberg, etc., in command. And several times since, Poles were reproached for being imbued too much with the western and Latin spirit, as if Slavism were incompatible with European civilization.

Despite all the calumnies and funereal chants she inspired, Poland showed in the 19th century and the 20th an astonishingly vital force. It was sufficient that some portion of Polish territory was granted certain concessions or some national liberty, in order to have the talents and precious qualities of the nation manifest themselves with a remarkable force. During the short constitutional period of 1807-1831 flourished such eminent political minds as Xavier Lubecki, Mostowski, Staszic, Stanislaus Potocki, not to mention more. During the period the Poles succeeded in creating so perfect an administrative and financial mechanism that even the Russian governors of Poland the following period, such as Paskevich, admitted frankly, their arrogance notwithstanding, the evident superiority of the Polish administration over that of the Russian regime. A short era of autonomy in 1862, sufficed to reconstitute for a time the political edifice half ruined by the destructive system of thirty years. During the period of its autonomy, Austrian Galicia did not only create a body of statesmen and skillful functionaries for the local administration, but was also the cradle of great political talents which exercised an important and advantageous influence upon the destinies of the monarchy; as Adam and Arthur Potocki, Goluchowski, father and son, Smolka, Dunajewski, Madejski, Biliński and others. If the intellectual and social state of Poland left now much to be desired, it was nor the fault of the Poles, for they are not masters of their destinies.

The genius of the Polish nation found perhaps its most remarkable expression in the field of public educa-

tion. At the decline of its political existence, in 1773, Poland had created a commission of public education which was a marvelous institution, without parallel in the Europe of the 18th century. The worst enemies and slanderers of the Polish nation, such as Suvaroff, minister of public instruction in Russia under Nicholas I, acknowledged the great valor of this nation. The work of the commission was done away with with the fall of the State, but when the Duchy of Warsaw had been established, Potocki, minister of public instruction, introduced compulsory education in the primary schools (1808).

And if a century later the kingdom of Poland had an enormous percentage of analphabets, you cannot hold the Polish nation responsible for this state of affairs.

\* \* \*

For many years the phantom of Poland appeared as an unfortunate mar-joy to the European bourgeoisie which is so rich and eager for gold and material force. To-day, in the face of so many sufferings and bloody sacrifices amid ruin and conflagration, shall we expect that Europe will show herself more sensible, more compassionate for misfortune? After the calamities which have been heaped upon Belgium, it cannot be affirmed that the loss of independence is only the fatal consequence of the shortcomings of a nation and that it is always decreed by the just tribunal of history.

If during the great liquidation which will follow the present war Poland is once more forgotten, it will be proof that the right of the strongest continues to dominate Europe with all the destructive consequences for the weaker nations. If, on the contrary, international relations shall finally be founded on right and justice, one will be enabled to affirm that at the price of unheard of sufferings humanity has approached the desired goal of the brotherhood of nations. In this case, the present misfortunes would have a happy result, and the ruins of Poland and Flanders, sad memories of barbarism turned loose, would stake out the road of human progress.

It is through martyrdom that mankind has come to consider charity as the moral principle in the relations among individuals. It is through bloody sacrifices that mankind will acknowledge the same principle as the necessary basis in the relations among the nations of the world.

(Translated from the French by John S. Furrow.)



## America to Poland

Dedicated to Ignacy Paderewski.

For thee, dear Poland, many tears are shed,  
By many peoples who have never seen  
Thy stricken face, yet who are daily led  
To think of thee,—their loving aid is given.

Thy night is dark and dreary is thy way,  
Thy cry is long and seemeth, too, in vain;  
But darkest darkness may be nearest day  
Of thine uplifting, — liberty again.

Columbia ever feels her debt to thee,  
Remembers the heroes two of distant past; \*)

As long as she shall breathe in liberty  
Kindest memory of thee shall last.

America with generous hand of aid,  
And heart of love, bids thee to Hope arise;  
Invokes the blessing of the nations' Head  
To give thee peace, beneath true Freedom's skies. ..

D. D. JENKINS.

Wilkes-Barre, Pa.  
April 1916.

\*) Pulaski and Kościuszko.



# The Polish Peasant

The communal organization of the peasant in Poland is actually in a process of disintegration, writes Florian Znaniecki, a collaborator of Prof. W. I. Thomas, of the University of Chicago, in the July number of the *Immigrants in America Review*. The main factors of this disintegration, he writes, are the climbing tendency of the modern peasant and the influence of modern industrial life.

"Liberation from serfdom", he continues, "endowment with land, economical development of the country, growth of cities, new ways of communication, progress of instruction, all these conditions have set free in the peasant a powerful desire to rise socially, at first within his own community and later above the whole peasant class. A new class-system is being formed, based upon individual, not upon familial, distinctions; money and education are the fundamental criteria of the new social hierarchy, and both are at least theoretically accessible for every individual. . . . A growing individualization is the unavoidable outcome of these new conditions. . . .

"This process of individualization must and will be followed by the construction of a new and more adequate social system, unless it is to lead to a radical disorganization of social and individual life, to anarchy, vagabondage pauperism and crime. . . . A new social system has long ago spontaneously germinated in Poland. But those who understand the slowness of social evolution when left to itself know that if we wait for this new system to grow it may be too late. Because of the abnormal political situation of the country during the last hundred years, the peasant is in many respects behind the times, and the pace of modern life, suddenly bursting into calm country communities, is too rapid for him. Therefore, the main problem of the higher classes of Polish society during the last fifty years has been how to help the peasant develop this social system and how to facilitate and hasten its spontaneous growth by a conscious educational and constructive activity. There were many false steps, many failures, but finally the right way was found and the results definitely reached in Posen, half reached in other provinces, constitute one of the most interesting experiments in social work ever made.

"The problem seems simple when it is already solved. The basis for the new social organization must be sought in those new tendencies to social advances which, as I said, have lately appeared among the peasants. Whenever necessary, those tendencies should be awakened and strengthened. The desire to climb expresses itself in the main in two ways, in a struggle to acquire wealth or in an attempt to get an education, these being the fundamental criteria of the new social hierarchy. The first way is the more common among the peasants.

"In the course of his spontaneous development the peasant progresses towards the objects of his desires by individual efforts and thus grows more and more asocial, if not antisocial. The higher classes by educational methods are now endeavoring to show that both aims can be better attained by co-operation. By the constitution of co-operative economical associations adapted to the conditions of peasant life and the formation of free educational circles considerable advancement has been made along this line. And as this organization progresses it gradually becomes the foundation upon which the whole construction of modern culture can be raised. New atti-

tudes of conscious solidarity developed in peasant associations afterwards extend to all the domains of cultural life. They give birth to a new and higher morality, help to create purer religious, intellectual, esthetic interests, and counteract with astonishing efficiency all the social vices, particularly alcoholism and vagabondage. And further, they establish a civic consciousness. If in Prussia a handful of Poles have successfully withstood all the efforts of Germanization and maintained a national unity in spite of the lack of a national state, this result is mainly due to the economical organization of the Polish peasants.

"Of course, the chief reason for the success of this new social organization lies in the fact that it appeals to those fundamental attitudes which were expressed in the traditional system and which lack an adequate expression when this system has been dissolved. The substitution of the marriage-group for the large family leaves certain forms of the demand for response incompletely satisfied; the substitution of a loose acquaintance-milieu for the community leaves a margin of unsatisfied desires for recognition. The new organization is successful precisely as far as it fills this margin. A peasant association must have some familial character. This is easily attained in small circles where the atmosphere is as unofficial as possible and these circles can be unified later into larger associations. The desire for social recognition can get satisfaction only if the individual is a really active member of the group, if he has a full field for the display of his personal initiative and can feel his own importance. The peasant associations, at first organized and patronized by the higher classes, become more and more independent and self-governing.

"Let us now apply the lesson learned from a study of the conditions in Poland to the situation existing in America as a result of Polish immigration to this country. The Polish peasant who comes here is usually in a stage of a more or less advanced individualization.

"And thus the American social worker is faced by the same problem which has already faced the intelligent classes of Polish society; he must either hasten and direct the formation of such a social organization as will gradually make of the immigrants useful members of American society, or resign himself to seeing a growing demoralization whose first manifestations have already been observed by the student of social vices. The example of Poland points the way. Organize the serious and genuine interests of the immigrant, economical and educational. Do not try to impose upon him your interests; these cannot appeal to him. Have the associations of the immigrants contain as much as possible of the real familial spirit. And above all, make him actively co-operate in the construction of American life. Let him feel that he is not a tool in your hands or the passive object of your religious, philanthropic Americanizing activity, but a productive and autonomous member of a great society. Show him how to write his own future by helping in the building of a greater America and reciprocally. Make way for his initiative and develop his spirit of creation. He will become a real citizen only if you treat him as such. He will learn to understand American life only if you show him how it can be improved with his help. He will learn how to love America only if you teach him how to do something for her."



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## *The Truth About Poland and Her People*

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### Remember

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

Poland demands peace with freedom.

Poland, as a buffer State, will be one of the greatest  
guardians for the future peace of Europe.In fact, Poland "asks nothing for herself but what  
she has a right to ask for humanity itself."

## The Second Year of War

The present month of August marks the end of the second year of the world's greatest war. It is a year marked by tremendous changes, by ebbs and flows of unheard-of magnitude. A twelve-month ago the Central Powers were on the offensive at all vital points. To-day the tables have turned — the Allies are thrusting ever new attacks with an impetus which is a source of danger to the all-harassed Teuton.

The British failure at Gallipoli, the Champagne-Loos offensive, the weakening of the German drive against Russia, the overwhelming of Serbia, and, later, the Russian offensive in Asia, the German attack on Verdun, the fall of Kut-el-Amara, the unsuccessful Austrian offensive in Trentino, the successful Russian offensive against Austria, the Allied offensive in Picardy, and, lastly, the intensive fighting at the northern end of the Russian front, where Hindenburg entrenched himself among the marshes of the Dvina — all these are the outstanding episodes of that gigantic struggle in Europe.

Alongside of these, the second year of war has brought in its wake such minor events — as the insurrection in Ireland, the destruction of the German colonial empire-

building, the irregular fighting in Persia, the uprising of the Arabs against Turkish rule, Kitchener's tragic death in the North Sea, the frequent German overtures for peace. And among these, the devastation of Poland, though a side picture in the dreadful panorama of Europe's butchery, is nevertheless a vital issue affecting the future existence of a whole people.

Wrecked and looted, Poland is too weak to seek redress. Her fields and farms have been destroyed; her grain seized and sent to Germany; her mills, shops, mines and manufactories closed; her available forests cut down; her trades monopolized by a German company; her sons and daughters starved for want of even the barest necessities of life. German guarantees as to Polish relief are viewed with distrust by Great Britain, for surely military necessity sweeps aside all mandates of humanity — mutual recriminations follow, and in consequence the specter of hunger and famine looms larger and larger, though President Wilson's personal letter to the Powers in question inspires some assurance as to the ultimate settlement of Poland's food problem and privation.

But this vitally important question of food is whisked aside by the ruthless exigencies of war. When the world is changing, when whole countries shift from hands to hands, so that new maps have constantly to be redrawn, when powers are changing hands, when coalitions dissolve only to give way to new combinations, when entire Europe is going through the hell of hatred and fire — there seems little room, in the chambers of European diplomacy, for discussing the Polish problem with a view to settling it definitely at the opportune moment. And after all, Poles, fighting in the Russian, German and Austrian ranks, are not fighting for Poland, but of necessity they are shedding their life-blood to further the interests of these monarchies. For with the latter there are, they say, bigger things at stake than the solution of the Polish Question.

First of all, the Powers, they aver, are fighting for their very existence, for their name and prestige in the eyes of the world. Germany's militarism and need of economical expansion, Russia's territorial greed, England's trade greed, France's desire of a *revanche* have been pointed out as inspiring the tenacity with which this world's greatest struggle has been waged. And the results to date have been staggering — Europe faces, according to the figures furnished by the United Press, the total of 15,355,000 men killed, wounded and missing.

Think of it: approximately 16,000,000 killed, wounded and missing! Killed for what? To uphold the principle of nations, the rights of lesser nationalities? To preserve the tenets of democracy? Or to capture the world trade, the world markets?

And how many innocent Poles have been slaughtered among those millions! Slaughtered for what? Butchered to restore the independence of Poland?

Verily, at the end of the second year of the struggle, the future is dark with harrowing uncertainties for Poland. Only one thing is sure — if blood is the price of liberty, if liberty means political independence, then Poland has fully earned her right to independence by the wholesale slaughter of her sons. And once given a chance to expand economically, she will become one of the brilliant States in the family of European nations.



## Not Pan-Slavistic

In the last issue of *Free Poland* we published the appeal of the Committee of Slavic Journalists, with its headquarters in New York, which aims to unite all Slavs for a more systematic work in behalf of the lesser Slavic nationalities of Europe.

"All the Slavic nations," the appeal reads, "except Russia and Bulgaria, are to-day under the foreign yoke." The Committee aims not only to achieve the betterment of the Slavic people in the United States, but also to help secure the liberation of the oppressed countries of their kinsmen.

The Committee, if it aims to organize the representative men of the lesser Slavic nationalities, such as Bohemians, Croatians, Serbs, Slovaks, Slovenes and Poles, is a commendable endeavor to interpret the desires and aspirations of peoples who, groaning under the yoke of foreign oppression, have no other means to address

the forum of the world. And we, on our part, familiar with the histories and ideals of these peoples, would willingly lay our shoulders to the wheel of Slavic progress.

Yet we fail to see why Russia, who is not one of the oppressed, but in fact one of the arch-oppressors, should be represented on this Committee. We have been laboring under the impression that Muscovy would be one of "the foreign yokes" (mentioned in the appeal), which the Committee would do well to bend its energy to extricate their peoples from.

At a loss to see why powerful, independent Russia is found on the list of representatives, shall we be informed why this is the case? We should not like to commit ourselves to committees which may be inspired by the all-reaching arms of Russia's secret service. More light on the subject, gentlemen.

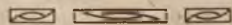


## The Annual Convention

The Polish National Council of America is finishing its third year of existence as a potent factor for good. Representing an effort to unite the Polish conservative element for educational, patriotic and social endeavors, the Council is about to give account of its work at its annual convention, to be held on October 25th and 26th.

We shall give a more detailed report of its activity in the following numbers of *Free Poland*; here suffice it

to say that the Council has acquitted itself well in the field of Relief Work, having collected a quarter-million for the War Sufferers' Fund; that the Department of Scouting has been well attended to by the Rev. F. Langfort, its chairman, to whose skillful management unstinted credit is due for the success of the Boy Scout camping at Lyons, Ill.; that *Free Poland* has gained a wide circle of friends, whose disinterested support makes its publication possible.



## A Friend of Poland

"To read the history of Poland is proof of your sympathy for this country so grievously tried and so unjustly oppressed. May this modest review of an epic without parallel in the world inspire you, when the propitious moment will be sounded, to raise your voice in favor of an admirable people."

Such is the envoy of Louis Vallot-Duval's admirable book, *Vive La Pologne*.

"Poland", the concluding paragraphs of the book read, "a martyr at the beginning of the 20th century and tyrannized over during the whole course of the war for justice and civilization, ought soon to be reborn at any price. The evolution of this country will be the last word. They had desired to kill this country, but what they did only was to awaken the conscience of a people. The nation which had formerly fought for civilization and saved humanity against the barbarians of the Levant, would remain immortal. Never had Poland more vitality, more brilliance and charm. Rent asunder by the black eagles, the white eagle of Poland will rise like the phoenix of old. According to the beautiful prophecy of Lamennais — Sleep, O my Poland, what they call thy tomb, is thy cradle! — a resurrection will come to pass and history will soon record the reestablishment of this country.

"The independence of Poland is in effect a European duty in which the Allies should not fail. More than a half-million of Poles are serving in the Russian army. Besides, millions of Polish emigrants and as naturalized Americans, English Canadian, French, have joined the

ranks of the Allies with enthusiasm at the beginning of the war of 1914. The Polish legions are fighting with their legendary national intrepidity. The first detachment of Polish Legionaries, composed of the youth of the Parisian colony, covered itself with glory; the Bayonnais, so called because these brave warriors had finished their training at Bayonne, numbered more than 500 men; their banner was perforated with 34 German bullets.

"The independence of Poland is an European duty. The masters of Europe and of the world will certainly remember that as long as they base everything on force, just so long there will be a people oppressed, while the danger of war will subsist. The general conflagration for the freedom of peoples, predicted by Mickiewicz a century ago, has burst out; it means that peace declared, the irons of the oppressed will be broken. Poland should be snatched from the hands of the invaders. The country of Jagiello, of Sobieski and Kościuszko will have well merited this emancipation, and eternal Poland, triumphant and radiant mistress of her destinies, will resume her place in civilized Europe."

*VIVE LA POLOGNE* covers the history of Poland from the earliest times to date; the booklet offers also an abbreviated survey of the artistic, literary, musical and scientific achievements of that country. Beautifully printed on heavy satin paper, strong Japan cover in two colors; sixteen illustrations, two maps. Price 35 cents, postage free, upon receipt of that amount sent to Publications des Etats Allies, 15bis, rue Amelie, Asnieres, Seine, France.



# Ireland and Poland

## II.

The Irish revolt is marked with two distinctive features which give it a note of individuality such as is not found in similar uprisings of the past. The one is that it occurred at a time when continental Europe was in the throes of a death-life struggle. The other, that we are told it was set on foot, in an estimable measure, by Germany with a view to bringing freedom and independence to the Irish. We pass on the first and discuss the second and say that Germany's espousal of the Irish cause viewed from the angle of her policy toward those nations who have the misfortune to fall under her rule, is an arbitrary development of the present war, resting not on Germany's disinterested aim to free Ireland, but on her own good which would necessarily result from the revolt by involving England in trouble at home and so weakening Germany's enemy. To the Pole who feels the sting of the German rule, to see Germany cross the sea with a view to bringing freedom to the Irish sounds as paradoxical as if Russia would attempt to cross the Atlantic to free the Americans were these in subjection. No one can give what he has not, and in Germany do the Alsations and particularly the Polish not groan under the most abject oppression? From the military viewpoint such move should be a shrewd strategy and one which would redound to the good of Germany. A diversion in the British army and a creation of trouble to England at home would be a valuable asset to Germany, more valuable than the declaration of freedom to the Irish, as Germany is guided not by the good of other nations, but by that of her almighty state to which every means irrespective of its moral nature is forced to serve. At best we could think Germany's desire to free the Irish to be of the nature of the Russian manifesto to the Poles promising them full autonomy at a time when to win their sympathy was for Russia almost a necessity, or like Germany's loose and incoherent promises to the Polish to reconstitute their country. The Russian Manifesto and the German promises, what are they but deceptive baits which in the past they knew so well how to dangle before the eyes of the liberty-craving Pole? They would merit at least the appearance of honesty and sincerity had they been made prior to the declaration of the war. Of Germany no one ever heard as planning to free Ireland. History has not recorded one instance where Germany ever in the past offered to free Ireland. We read of France, Spain and other countries taking concrete measures to liberate the Irish. Of Germany as taking measures to bring about this noble work we read nowhere. Whence, then, the spontaneous wish of Germany to free Ireland? Whence the metamorphosis of the Prussian who would persecute his subject people at home? Is it that Prussian Germany decided to relax her persecution of the Poles now that she entered upon her noble mission of freeing the Irish, or is it because she wishes to draw a benefit to herself at the unpardonable cost of being ludicrously inconsistent. How can Prussia, we ask, honestly try to proclaim freedom to the Irish when she most abominably persecutes the Poles? How can she enfranchise the Irish across the sea and evict the Pole from the land which he inherited from his forefathers? How can the authors of the expropriation act by virtue of which they aim to destroy the Pole ever think of resenting the persecution which they say Ireland unjustly suffers from England? How can the Prussian condemn England for her

repressive measures against Ireland, and launch forth the very same measures only a thousand times worse, against the Polish? R. J. Kelly K. C. shows that he well understands Ireland's position to Prussia when he says: "Prussia brought in the infamous Colonization Bill to acquire the land of the native Poles and plant them with Germans, as the Germans would do in Ireland to-morrow if they ever came here."

We just wonder whether Germany's position, viewed in the light of her procedure in regard to her Polish subjects, would not necessarily be that of a benevolent society which would leave a community of paupers and sufferers in their own city and go to another, ostensibly to relieve the sufferings of the inhabitants, of whom they knew nothing about, and who in fact did not need their assistance. This manner of acting would not likely merit endorsement from anyone. In fact, they would be politely reminded that if charity begins at home, they had better work among their own sufferers. The Irish do not need Prussia's help. The Irish are well able to take care of themselves. They would none of Prussia's freedom. They want to be free and they will become free but never through Prussia.

Germany's repressive measures against her Polish subjects are too recent and too well known not to recur in connection with her espousal of the Irish cause. Her insane interference with the religion of the Polish, her conscriptions of the use of the Polish language, her villainous expropriation act which, not unlike the penal laws of England against the Irish, directly aims at making a total wreck of the Polish people, would certainly make Germany's overtures to Ireland nothing but phenomenally ridiculous, were she not in the same breath willing to restore freedom to their much languishing Polish subjects. We would not think that Germany could afford to liberate one people and persecute another, though we could sooner believe that Germany did not so much care to free the Irish as to promote her own interest by creating trouble to England at home. Perhaps the idea that Germany would try to Germanize Ireland would merit the name: "posterous", from those who do not share in our opinion. But yet to enter upon such a course would be for Germany in keeping with her inalienable policy. We would charitably suppose Prussia consistent in her policy of conquest. She no sooner takes possession of a territory than she begins to Germanize it without regard to the people's language, religion and national integrity. She changes the names of cities and even streets. She christens railroad stations and gives them more "Kultured" German names; for Prussia "colonizes" every country she conquers; she recognizes no civilization but her own; and she "colonizes" Poland as though an African desert; she "colonizes" Belgium as the American colonists colonized the American wilds. To Prussia it does not matter that Poland prior to her partition, was, as Moltke tells us, "the most civilized country in Europe"; that, as Kelly puts it: "They (the Poles) are the most imaginative and cultured race in Europe and immensely the superior in every quality that constitutes goodness and culture of the barbarian Prussians, who at best are showing themselves to be only brute beastly Huns with a thin veneer of civilization." To Prussia, the Poles are so many undesirable individuals who must be got rid of, to give free expansion for salutary Prussian "Kultur."



Could it be reasonably supposed that Prussian Germany, once in possession of Ireland, would not try to Germanize the Isle of Erin? There is no reason why we should not most firmly believe this. Prussia would be too inconsistent to admit the Irish civilization without its Prussian vaccination. Just how Prussia would try to attempt to Germanize the Irish names immortalized in the Irish history is another question. To Germanize Ireland's capital, Dublin, Ireland's famous places like Armagh, Limerick etc., to Germanize Irish names in "O" and "Mc". would be, we think, a rather serious problem to Prussia, even barring it from the conflict with the warm-blooded Irishmen, whose blood would boil to the boiling point at the mere mention of such a course. But yet if history repeats itself, if the Prussian be consistent with his policy he would change the name of Dublin just as readily as he changed Warsaw to "Warschau". A von Treitschke would not hesitate to call the Irish "der minderwertigen Nation" and urge the government to do away with them. A Hartmann would not think ridiculous to call upon the Prussian government to extirpate the Irish.

It is truths like the above that make the Irishman a natural friend to the Poles and naturally prompts him to mistrust the "friendly" overtures of the Prussian. They fear the Prussian bringing gifts. The distinguished writer Wm. Canon Barry is one of the immense legion of true Irishmen when he gives utterance in the Catholic Columbian to just such truth. "England's hour of peril", he says, "is upon her and Ireland forgives her. What of Germany?" He continues, "England has repented of the wrongs done to Catholic Ireland. Has Prussia so much as dreamed of taking her mailed fist off Catholic Poland? They govern Poland by the jackboot; and by the jackboot they would govern Ireland if destiny gave them a chance. Ireland

forgives the past — do the irreconcilable want to see a German Ireland, in other words, an Irish Poland?" These are strong sentiments, strengthened by resting on a foundation built by history. They plainly state actual facts.

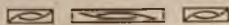
The Irish and the Polish will become free nations. There is no reason why they should be subject nations, while their mental resourcefulness and their administrative abilities guarantee success in their self-government, and their countries possess all the resources which make for the happiness and prosperity of a people. In the final analysis there is justice in history. God the Creator of nations holds their destinies in His Almighty hand. He entrusted the two nations with the noblest of missions and to-day, after all which the nations went through, we could scarcely explain their vigorous existence were there not a just God ruling over the affairs of Ireland and Poland who have stood proof against all machinations of the enemy to destroy them. With their sparkling vitality which forces its way through the outlet of intellectual and spiritual progress Ireland and Poland have nothing to fear. The very fact that they are to-day what they are calls forth for a speedy restoration of the freedom and independence which God wished every nation to possess and which is conformable to the dignity and indispensable to the natural self-explication of a people.

No matter what the outcome of the war, the world will witness the rise of two nations — both martyrs but, now both free and independent — one the Isle of Saints — the other the land of Knights, one, the teacher of Christianity, the other its Knight — one Ireland, the other Poland.

A. J. ZIELINSKI,

St. Louis, Mo.

(The End)



## The Year of 1410

On July 15th, Poland commemorated the never-to-be-forgotten date of the battle of Grunwald, of the great victory of King Ladislaus Jagiello over the Teutonic masses.

Now when the murdered corpse, mangled to bloody shreds from a whole nation, is abandoned to the ebb and flow of the present titanic waves, — behold in the distant past the resplendent dawn of force and of triumph.

There is no greater suffering than to recall in distress former moments of good fortune, said the Italian poet.

These sufferings, though cruel, are inevitable. At this time of distress, the human thought reverts to the sunny period in order to be dashed again upon the rocks of its dark destiny. And this thought, running through the paths which have led it to the abyss, sees with frightful clearness the faults of yesterday, sees all what contributed to bring about the present tragic lot.

The nations are like men.

The echo of the intoxicating victory of Grunwald does not recall to the Poland of to-day her trophies, but evokes the shadows of error.

May these shadows serve as an example to those whose chivalrous efforts aspire after the triumph of a Jagiello.

Poland, seeing her mortal enemy on their knees, the Germanic hosts suing for grace, sheathes her sword, and, pronouncing the words of pardon, believes the hydra to be docile and inoffensive for ever.

Beware of like generosity! Know that when the hour of the debacle will be sounded, the arrogant Prussians will crawl at your feet as they so often did in the past at the feet of the Polish nation.

Grunwald!

Grunwald for us has meant a hundred and fifty years of bondage, a hundred-fifty years of martyrdom and later, at the times of the war for freedom, the sad and pathetic lot of a dust grain whipped about by the squall.

WACLAW GĄSIOROWSKI.

(W. Gąsiorowski (b. 1869) is a well known writer and novelist of Poland. His novels deal with the times of Napoleon and Polish participation in the Napoleonic wars. The above, a translation from the French, represents his reflections on the 506th anniversary of the battle of Grunwald, where King Jagiello gained a decisive victory over the Teutonic hosts.)



# Tragedy of the Century

*By the REV. DR. THOMAS MISICKI*

Great many Americans do not know that there is one great nation in Europe that suffers keenly in this awful war; indeed, it suffers much more and more intensely than the gallant Belgium, than poor Serbia and others. Only the unspeakable fate of the Armenians can be compared with that of Poland.

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Let me first mention the devastation of Poland and the destruction of life and property in that unfortunate country. That I call one of the most cruel and undeserved events, almost unique in history. The beautiful land of Poland has been laid waste by the marching and remarching armies of Germany, of Russia and of Austria. The *hundreds* of Polish streams, rivers and rivulets and brooks, the Vistula, the Dniester, the Dunajec, etc., have been reddened with the blood of our three arch-enemies, who have selected our Carpathian mountains and our fertile plains for the reckoning and blood settling of their own troubles.

Is this not a tragedy of tragedies that three voracious governments should have stolen our land and our independence in 1772, in 1793, and 1795? Is this not tragedy of tragedies that they had robbed and destroyed and killed in our territory of old, in Kościuszko's time, and during our several insurrections, especially in 1831 and 1863? And now that they have *trampled* our sacred and glorious ground by millions, they rob and steal everything they can lay hands on in order that their armies might be fed and clothed and the Poles be hungry and bare and naked and die out?

Please remember the names of all the principal battles of this war between the Russian armies on one side and the German or Austrian armies, singly or jointly fighting, on the other side, and think of poor Poland. Of Warszawa (pronounced Varshava) and Wilno (Vilno) and Przemyśl (Pshemisl) and Lemberg and Kowno and hundreds of different cities and villages which have been taken and sometimes retaken; of martial laws introduced, grain and cattle and horses requisitioned or stolen; thousands of villages burned down; millions of men, women and children wandering about like ghosts, emaciated and cold and hungry. The Prussian portion of Poland, fortunately, has not been touched by war; there live about five million Poles; but the Russian and Austrian portions, where twelve million and six million live, respectively, have been, literally speaking, made a veritable desert, where cemeteries and ruins and human shadows are practically all that exist.

That is indeed the climax of a not human, but devilish, way to destroy, in a seemingly legal and permissible manner, what could not be destroyed by continuous persecutions which lasted for about 150 years.

According to the statistics prepared by two of the most eminent and famous Poles, Ignatius Paderewski, who is now working in the United States for the cause of Poland, and Henry Sienkiewicz, the head of the Polish relief committee with headquarters in Switzerland, it must be believed that about five million Poles have no shelter, and lack of food and clothing, and that more than two thousand villages have been destroyed.

In some places it is impossible to find a child less

than seven years of age, the poor, innocent creatures having perished for want of milk and sufficient food. The same foreign soldiery which has been the curse of Poles for several generations and has desecrated what was to the nation the most sacred and most precious, pure women and tender children, has proven again in this hellish war the source of material and moral destruction for individuals and for the nation.

And while American generosity and our brethren's hearts are ready and preparing to quickly send to Poland clothing and food, England France and Russia, the allied governments are not satisfied with the guarantees of Germany and Austria, fearing that these donations of mercy will be confiscated again and diverted to the uses of Austrian and German regiments.

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But this wholesale devastation of Poland and the eating up of its resources and its people is only the first act of Polish tragedy. The other act, still worse, is the enforced enrollment of over two million Polish young men coerced to fight for the cause of their enemies.

It is impossible at this writing to tell exactly the number of Poles called to the colors by their oppressors, but it is safe to say that at least 500,000 young men have been pressed into service by Austria and as many by Germany, and the toll demanded by Russia must have been more than one million men. I imagine, then, that two million Poles are forced to do military duty for their enemies and are being killed or maimed in great numbers. To the desolation of Polish soil and the destruction of Polish life through hunger and all manner of privations, is being added the gradual extinction of young and robust men, the flower and hope of future Poland.

It is very true, as the ancients have said, that it is sweet and honorable to die for one's country. But it is hard and abominable to suffer and to perish for the cause of one's persecutors and oppressors! And who can ignore the unspeakable tortures and persecutions over a century old and still continuing to be exerted over Poland, particularly by two governments, the Russian and the German? The Austrian rule has been, or rather has had to be, more lenient toward the Poles for the last fifty years.

Who can comprehend with what depression of mind and heart a Polish youth goes to the front, who has read of and even recently seen the terrible outrages committed by Germany and Russia against his fathers and his country? Both when awake or asleep, during the awful and weary hours of a soldier's existence, he cannot help seeing, if he has come from under the Russian yoke, the numerous rows of gallows on which the best and noblest sons of Poland died in 1863 and later, or hundreds of thousands of his elder brothers, shipped or driven like cattle to Siberia and bearing there untold hardships for the sake of being true-hearted patriots. If he be the subject of Germany (let us rather say Prussia), then, both awake and slumbering, he will and must remember Bismarck's crushing measures against the Polish language and the Polish church, the flagellation of tender Polish children even in recent years, in the Prussian schools, because they nobly refused to pray in German; he will and must remember the latest and severest Prussian crime only a few months ago approved in Berlin, in voting and spend-



ing hundreds of millions of marks to buy forcibly old Polish homesteads and to expatriate the old aborigines for the good of the onrushing German settlers. Isn't that tragedy of tragedies again?

We are told, but the accusation must be proven by more people after this war, that Prussian regiments, where mostly Poles must be serving, were and are being sent to the most dangerous spots where certain death and certain annihilation must follow. That would be another so-called legal and permissible method of destroying Polish life. I wonder if the commanding generals on such occasions ordered the playing of the beautiful Polish national hymns in order to deceive the Polish youths and stir them up to *d e e d s o f v a l o r*. The great author of *Quo Vadis*, Henry Sienkiewicz, tells us in one of his novels that such was the case in the Franco-Prussian war in 1870, with very much success too for the German victory! Why therefore should not the sleek German commander for the high Prussian reasons be permitted to do that which in times of peace was forbidden under penalty of fine and imprisonment? Let the idealistically and patriotically inclined Poles again be heroes, as in former times and kill for the Germans and be killed themselves while enthused over "Poland is not lost as yet", or over the unforgettable hymn, "God who hast surrounded Poland, for long centuries with greatness and glory, Return us our country and freedom."

But let the Poles be killed, legally and illegally, by ruse and openly, right and justice will triumph in the end and the prophetic saying of one great Pole, spoken at the tombs of the dead Polish kings during a great national disaster 300 years ago, must and will be true:

"Fortuna variabilis,  
Deus admirabilis."

"Fortune and fate are constantly changing but God is doing wonderful things!" God's justice will and must be vindicated and justice must be done to men and nations! The greater the wrong perpetrated has been the greater the justice that shall be meted out.

\* \* \*

Another stage of this second great tragedy of my country is the enmity created by the three hostile governments between Poles and Poles — oftentimes even between

relatives for the simple reason that they happen to live on opposite sides of the border.

The forcible putting of Austrian, Prussian and Russian uniforms on the poor Poles, tries to kill in them the patriotism, the neighborly love, makes out of them innocent fratricides and innocent destructors of their own land.

Thousands of incidents and everyday happenings will be related after the war is over to prove the unspeakable torture of souls and the awful disruption of family ties. Two typical facts will speak for the others and give some idea of the horrible conditions which exist.

A year ago last winter, in our beautiful Carpathian mountains, one company of soldiers in Russian uniforms were annihilated by a splendid charge of a noble Polish youth, the leader of a group of fifty so-called Polish Legionaries, clothed like the Polish soldiers of old but serving under Austrian orders.

Of such a detachment of idealists the youthful leader, after inflicting untold losses on the Russians was finally caught and brought before a court martial. The presiding officer of the court was Colonel R——— and the young culprit was quickly recognized as his eighteen year old son, Casimir, who months before had escaped the Russian domain and enrolled in the Polish legion! The youth was quickly condemned and shot but the record did not say if the father had gone insane!

Another almost daily occurrence has been repeated hundreds of times on the eastern front and the mere repetition of the tale stops the blood in our veins and raises the hair on end.

A bayonet attack had been ordered by the Austrian commander against the Russian outpost near a Galician village. Both sides, stirred up by the shouts of their officers and the pushing of their comrades rushed to pierce fellow human beings with iron and steel—abominable butchery.

One soldier from the Austrian ranks had just transfixed his nearest adversary in the Russian cohorts and suddenly heard the *exclamation* in Polish, "Jesus, Mary, Joseph! Have pity on me! Oh, my dear brother Peter, you've killed me, your Stanislaus. Take care of my wife and five children." Stanislaus died. Peter became violently insane.

## Press Comment

Poland must starve. The Kaiser has so willed it.

"The allies", writes the *Chicago Journal*, "offered to permit the shipment of food to Poland on two conditions: First, that neither the food sent in nor that raised in the starving country should be seized for use of the German army; and, second, that the distribution of food should be in the hands of neutrals appointed by the president of the United States. These conditions are substantially those under which the relief of Belgium was undertaken, and are manifestly fair. Berlin has rejected them — and has not even mentioned President Wilson's personal appeal in behalf of the starving Poles.

"To be sure, the kaiser's government does hold out one consolation. It says there will be food enough in Poland—or nearly so—after Oct. 1. Very possibly this is true. From all that travelers tell us of present conditions in that country, the Polish population is likely to be so reduced by October that a very little food will suffice.

"Armenia fell under the scimitar. Poland is being

murdered by starvation. There must be times when the Poles envy the the quick and easy death of their Asiatic brothers in misfortune."

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The *Chicago Tribune* comments on the subject of Polish Relief as follows:

"Belligerent nations by arguing the question of Polish relief as if were an issue in law and not in equity cannot hide the fact that there are innocent people needing help, that aid is available, and that it cannot reach them because belligerents will not agree as to conditions.

"The question is merely one of aiding the Poles. All that is required is that belligerents who have brought Poles, Belgians, and other peoples to this extraordinary and distressing condition in which they are found shall keep their hands off the supplies for which their acts have made excessive need in the harassed lands. That is all, but quibbles make it a complication which seems to defy the intent of neutrals to be of aid."



# Anent Polish Relief

The American Press continues to comment widely on the subject of Polish relief.

The *Chicago Tribune* writes:

"Great Britain's statement of the conditions the empire and its allies will accept for the victualing of Poland seems equitable and reasonable. Points the Germans may be able to make against them will seem more intended to defeat the relief schemes than to protect German interests.

"Great Britain says that if the Germans will permit Poland the unrestricted and unmolested use of her own food resources, and will not draw upon Polish supplies for their own subsistence, such supplies as may be needed for the Poles may be sent in and distributed under American direction.

"The British make a rational objection against any scheme which seems to feed the Poles and in effect feeds the Germans. American relief is not intended indirectly to be relief for the Germans. The process of trying to starve a nation to death is unpleasant to consider, but this is a war of nations. The Germans almost re-

duced Paris to starvation. The north tried to starve the south. About the first thing done with Lee's soldiers after Appomattox was to feed them. The British are trying to weaken Germany by obstructing channels by which supplies are obtained. It is a method which would be applied to Great Britain by Germany in a minute if the opportunity were afforded.

"Polish relief must be based upon a convention which stipulates that American supplies going into Poland shall not find an equivalent in Polish supplies going into Germany.

"We can see a possibility of retort by the Germans which might have more real value than it would appear to have. It might be that German direction of Polish resources, an intensive cultivation brought about by war necessities, had created values there which to some degree represented German work and intelligence. The Germans might say that the excess above normal represented what Germany might claim as the product of her own genius, not the product of Poland; but we cannot see Germany

making any headway with such an argument.

"As the case stands, Poland can have relief if the Germans will hold inviolate the resources of Poland and allow them to contribute to the sustenance of the Polish people. The channel of relief cannot have one opening in Poland and one in Germany. The supplies given to Polish relief cannot have one opening in Poland and one in Germany. The supplies given to Polish relief cannot be permitted to release other supplies for the relief of Germany.

Great Britain seems to have laid down fair conditions and to have avoided responsibility if disaster comes to Poland this winter!"

\* \* \*

The *Philadelphia Record* has this to say anent Polish Relief:

"President Wilson directed personal messages to the rulers of the allied Powers and the Central Empires of Europe urging their co-operation in getting food supplies from the United States to the starving people of Poland. Five months ago Ambassador Page submitted a proposal to

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the same effect to the allied Governments. An American commission was to undertake the partial revictualing of Lodz. Warsaw, Kovno, Vilna, Czenstochova and Bella Etap, in which cities about 4,000,000 destitute refugees from the war-swept districts of Russian Poland and Lithuania had been concentrated. The Germans were to furnish the ships for carrying the supplies to Danzig and assume the whole burden of relief after October 1, so far as the harvest of the current year would then permit. The plan to be followed was to be similar to that adopted in the case of Belgium, and, of course, was to include a guarantee that the supplies sent were to be reserved exclusively for the civilian population to be relieved.

Russia assented to the proposal, but Great Britain demanded a number of concessions. She declined to grant immunity to German vessels employed in this work of mercy. Austrian Poland, Servia, Montenegro and Albania, the British Government insisted, should be included in the arrangement; and no native food supplies whatever should be used by the occupying forces. Finally, the relief commission was to be permitted to import only the minimum required to supplement the quantity of food-stuffs which the Central Empires themselves were capable of supplying. The deadlock thus created has proved irresolvable. Germany would not, and could not, give guarantees respecting territory occupied by Austria and under the administration of the latter Power. Germany was quite prepared to limit the use of imported supplies to the relief of distress, but insisted upon her right to requisition native Polish products, where such were available, for the support of the army employed in policing the country. This force, of the estimated strength of 150,000 men, being scattered in small detachments over a vast area, wherein the means of communication were deficient, the difficulties of supplying them independently of local resources from a base in Germany would be almost insuperable. Anyhow, this police army would constitute not more than 1 per cent. of the total population of Lithuania and Poland, and more than 20 times the quantity of native food the army would consume has been brought into the country by the German Import Company to be sold at prices only slightly higher than those ruling in Germany and under similar regulations.

Prime Minister Asquith's charge that the shortage in Poland is due to

the systematic confiscation of native stocks by the army of occupation probably rests on no better foundation than the requisitions made by the policing troops. The real cause of the shortage is the systematic devastation of the country by the Russians on their retreat from the Vistula to the Dwina. It is admitted that wheat too wet to be ground in native Polish mills, had been exported to Germany; but it is asserted that an equivalent quantity of flour had been returned to Poland in every case. The recently-cabled statement of Dr. Karl Helfferich, German Minister of the Interior, indicates a great improvement in the conditions of Poland, and holds forth the promise of an abundant crop in the occupied territory. The action

of the President, however, indicates that the need of relief is as urgent as ever."

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