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THE  
POLITICAL HISTORY  
OF  
POLAND

By  
EDWARD H. LEWINSKI-CORWIN, Ph. D.

“GLI UOMINI LIBERI SONO FRATELLI.”  
*Motto of the Polish Legions of the Napoleonic Era.*

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By EDWARD H. LEWINSKI-CORWIN

To  
My Wife  
This Work  
Is Affectionately  
Dedicated





## Preface

The Great War has placed the Polish Question foremost among the political problems which must be solved at the close of the present hostilities.

With the progress of the war has come increased opportunity for a just and equitable recognition of Poland's national and political rights. Russia and the Central Powers have been outbidding each other in their promises to Poland. As a matter of expediency, by their act of November 5, 1916, the Central Powers allowed that part of Poland which was under Russian rule prior to the outbreak of the war to be organized into a Polish state. The contingencies of the war as well as the pressure brought to bear upon the governments of Germany and Austria-Hungary by the Poles forced the two Emperors to proclaim this act. They did it reluctantly and after long delay, realizing that it was a step toward a truly independent Polish state and that such a state is unthinkable without an outlet to the sea which can be obtained only by the cession of the Polish possessions now held by Prussia and without Galicia, where Polish national life has had its fullest and most intense expression. During the present war Galicia has borne the same relation to Poland's independence as Piedmont, in Cavour's time, bore to the unification and liberation of Italy.

Whatever motives the Central Powers may have had in proclaiming Poland's independence and whatever plans they might have laid for its future undoing, by this act they have put the Polish Question on an international basis and have made Russia's earlier promises for Polish autonomy under Russian sovereignty appear very insignificant. What is more important, however, is that they have thus made it possible for Poland to express in no mistaken terms her demand for complete independence and to take the preliminary steps toward the organization of her own political state.

As Mr. J. H. Harley, editor of the "Polish Review," pub-

lished in London, says: "Poland is fully abreast of the most progressive western ideas, and by 'independence' she does not mean simply freedom of speech or power to regulate her own economic system, not simply the power of administering laws made for her by another, but the free and unfettered liberty to realize her own legislative ideas, the right to raise and control her own army and to manifest her own public policy amid the nations of Europe." \*

The Poles have fully demonstrated that they are well able to resume an independent state existence, not only by their accomplishments in Galicia under home rule, but by the remarkable achievements in the other sections of Poland as well, despite the indescribable oppression of Russia and Prussia. During the course of the present war, with most meagre resources, unaided they have accomplished wonders of organization by enlightened self-help and unity of purpose.

To quote Mr. Herbert Adams Gibbons: "In considering the fitness for independence it is just as absurd to hark back to the weakness and the faults of Poland of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as to judge Germany and Italy of to-day by the Germans and Italians of two hundred years ago. It is what the Poles are to-day that counts. The reconstitution of Poland as an independent state is not only a wise political step in establishing a durable peace, but is also an act of justice to one of the largest and best races of Europe, which has purchased the right to be free by heroic sacrifices willingly made and by the ability amply demonstrated to survive and thrive through four generations of persecution... The creation of an artificial buffer state closely allied in race and sympathies with one or the other of the rival powers or too weak to resist her neighbors would be a makeshift and a farce. But the Poles are neither pro-German nor pro-Russian, nor are they weak. In numbers, in brains, in vitality, in wealth, in unity of spirit, they are stronger to-day than ever in their history,

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\* "The Polish Review," London, January 1917, p. 15.

and as an independent nation would very rapidly become the seventh great power of Europe." \*

The present volume has been undertaken with a view of presenting an accurate account of the political and social evolution of Poland, based especially and largely on Polish sources of information. There are very few works in the English language which reveal a true understanding of Polish history. They are either prejudiced and unfriendly or sentimental and uncritical.

The author of this volume strove to steer clear of extremes. It has been his endeavor to present to the American public a coherent and yet not too extended account of the development of the country and to indicate the causes of the phenomenal growth and the subsequent decline and disappearance of the Polish state. He also endeavored to give his readers a description of Polish life and struggles during the period following the partitions of the country and to construct, from the fragments he was able to gather, as accurate and complete a picture as possible of the events which took place in Poland from the beginning of the war until the overthrow of the autocracy of Russia and the entry of the United States into the war, the two outside circumstances which will have a powerful bearing upon the equitable solution of the Polish Question.

As long as Russia continued to be a rapacious, imperialistic autocracy, Poland's future could only be a dark one. The relations, however, of an independent Polish state, within properly drawn boundaries, to a truly democratic and unaggressive Russian republic cannot be anything but neighborly and harmonious. The participation of the United States in the war assures to it a potent influence in the post-bellum settlement of European questions, which will be exercised for the promotion of justice and democracy. What the attitude of the United States toward the Polish Question will be, has been

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\* "The Future of Poland," The Century Magazine, New York, December 1916, pp. 191-192.

foretold in the memorable address of President Wilson to the Senate on January 22, 1917, when he spoke for a "united, independent and autonomous" Poland. It is the hope of the author that this volume may contribute in a modest measure to the understanding of the life and aspirations of the Polish nation.

In order to vivify the text and to visualize some of the cultural achievements of Poland, the book has been very fully illustrated. The selection of illustrations has been the best that could be made under conditions obtaining during the war, which rendered communication with Poland very difficult. Only such material was available as could be obtained in America.

Thanks are due to the publishers for the painstaking efforts in securing the illustrations and also to all those who co-operated in this as well as in other respects.

The author is under obligation to Professor Franklin H. Giddings and Professor James T. Shotwell of Columbia University, and to Mr. Clarence M. Abbott, who read large parts of the manuscript, for their encouragement and valuable suggestions.

He also wishes to express sincere thanks to all his friends who helped in proof-reading and in the preparation of the index.

Few references have been given throughout the book because the great majority of the works consulted in the preparation of the volume are in Polish. It was considered inadvisable to distract the reader's attention by reference to sources which he could not consult. It may, however, be added that the recognized standard histories of Poland and only the most reliable sources were used.

In order to facilitate the pronunciation of Polish names a key to pronunciation has been appended to the volume.

E. H. L-C.

New York, April, 1917.

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FIG. 1—HISTORICAL PROCESSION

Sculpture by W. Szymanowski.

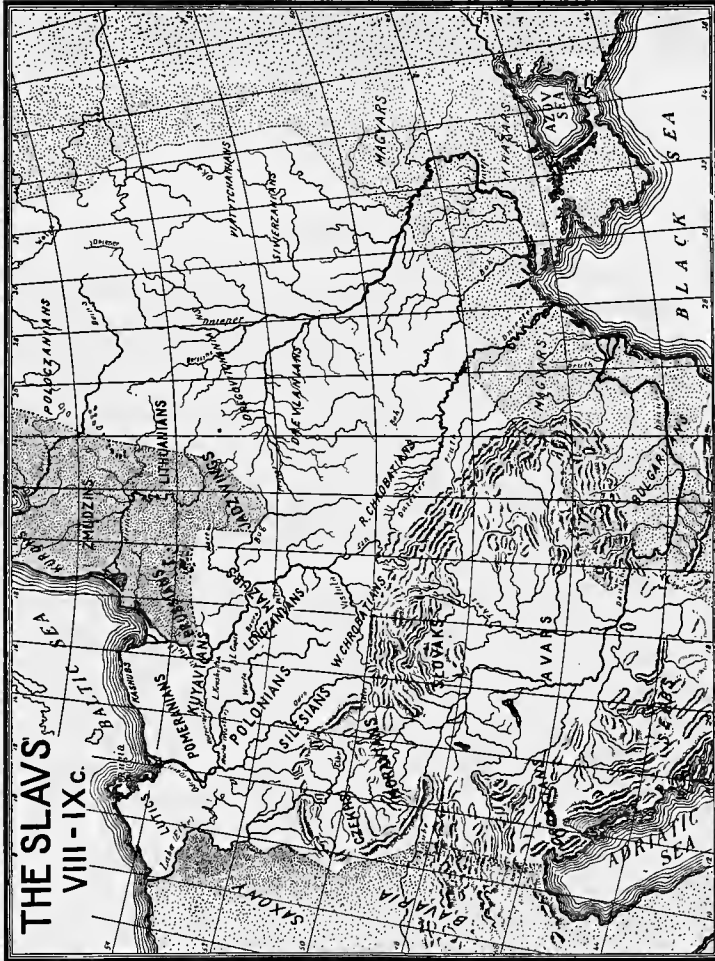
## CHAPTER I.

### Early Poland

The classical and generally accepted historical theory designates central Europe and the mountain sides of the Carpathians as the habitat of the Slavs several centuries before Christ. According to this theory, the Prussians, Lithuanians, Letts, Jadz-wings and Zmuds lived to the north and east of the Slavs, and the Ugro-Finnish peoples surrounded them in a great semicircle from the north of Riga to the lower Volga.

#### The First Settlements of the Slavs

Recent studies based on linguistic data and on geographic nomenclature indicate that the distribution of peoples in the east of Europe was different from what was hitherto believed. According to these later studies, the Carpathians were originally inhabited by the Teutons; close to them on the west were the Celts; the Prussians, Lithuanians and Letts lived to the north, in the region now known as the province of Minsk. The Ugro-Finns had their settlements along the middle Volga, stretching from there through what is now central Russia to northern Poland and Prussia. Wedged in between these peoples were the ancient aboriginal Slavs, with their settlements along the River Niemen. The oldest names of these settlements were of an Indo-European and not Ugro-Finnish origin. It was only much later, about the beginning of our era, that the Slavs, pressed



by the Ugro-Finnish peoples, who originally occupied the middle course of the Volga, moved further south, and occupied the abandoned settlements of the Teutonic and Celtic peoples, who migrated further

west. It was then only that the Carpathians and the Vistula became the cradle of the Slavs, whence they spread in all directions in the first century after Christ. They reached the Don on the east, the Baltic on the north, the Adriatic on the south, and went as far as the River Rhine on the west.

Archeology has not as yet determined the western-most boundaries of Slavdom. The primitive custom of the Slavs of burning their dead, which lasted throughout the Stone Age and well into the Bronze, has deprived us of the oldest anthropological materials. It was not until the beginning of the Iron Age that burial was added to the ancient custom of incineration. In time, burial superseded the older custom almost completely and osseous remains, together with abundant decorations, implements, utensils and arms are found in the tier graves of the western Slavs as well as in the mounds of the east. For a long time the differences between the Slavic and Finnish graves in the east, and between the Slavic and Teutonic graves in the west, could not be definitely established. Thanks to the painstaking labors of the Danish archeologist, Sophus Müller, our knowledge of the matter has become more exact, and we can now distinguish between the Slavic and the Teutonic graves of the earlier (incineration) as well as of the later (burial) periods. The distinguishing features of the Slavic graves are ear chains made up of a number of circular "chopper-links" (Hacker-ringe), rings and earrings, made of twisted bronze wire, wooden pails with iron hoops, urns and earthenware of a peculiar shape, with carved, undulating and linear ornamentation on the outside surface. This contribution of archeology has thrown great light on the prehistoric anthropology of the Slavs and changed the view that the prehistoric Slav was of a

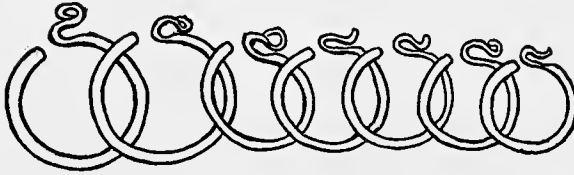
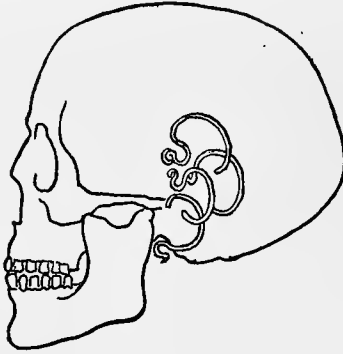


FIG. 2

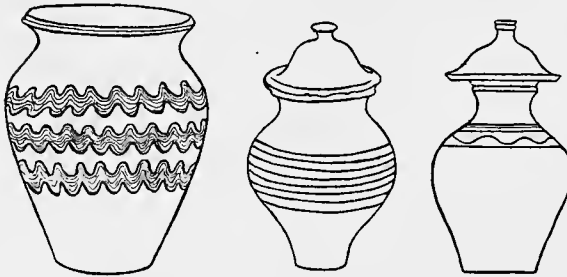


FIG. 3

OBJECTS FOUND IN SLAVIC GRAVES BY WHICH THEY CAN BE DISTINGUISHED FROM TEUTON AND FINNISH GRAVES

(Reproduced from Prof. J. Talko-Hryniewicz.)

brachycephalic type. This was inferred from the fact that the brachycephalic type is prevalent among the present day Slavs. The dolichocephalic skulls found in the excavations in Russia and Poland were



attributed to the Teutons, and no attention was paid to the objects found with the skulls. Modern criteria established the fact that the Slav settlements existed not only at the mouth of the Vistula and on the shores of the Baltic along the Elbe and Oder, but extended as far as the Rhine.

The westernmost outposts of the Slavs were very early annihilated by the Teutons, who pushed the Slavs toward the east. This early German "Drang nach Osten" was halted by the Slavic tribes living along the Warthe,<sup>1</sup> Oder<sup>2</sup> and Netze<sup>3</sup> Rivers, called Poloni by the early Latin chronicles. They called themselves Polanie or inhabitants of the plains or fields, "pole" meaning field in the Slavic languages. They were a strong, sturdy race, predominantly agricultural. Their extensive and fertile lands, reclaimed from primitive forests, stretching amidst the great chain of lakes and rivers made possible an early intercourse between these peoples, who thereby attained a higher economic and social structure. It was in this region that the nucleus of the Polish Nation was formed.

Owing to the frequent raids of the Norsemen the people of this region early organized an effective military force of defense. Under the protection of the military bands and their chiefs the fields could safely be cultivated, and the little fortified towns (grody), which became places for the transaction of intratribal business and barter, for common worship and for the storage of goods during a foreign invasion, could be successfully defended and the wrongs of the people redressed. The military bands and their leaders soon became the unifying force, and the forti-

**The Growth  
of Military  
Organization**

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\*1, 2, 3. In Polish these rivers are known as: Warta, Odra and Noteć.

fied towns the centres of a larger political organization, with the freeman (Kmieć or Kmeton) as its base. The first historical town of this nature was that of Kruszwica, on the Lake of Goplo. It soon gave place to that of Gniezno (called Gnesen by the Germans) or Knezno, further west, which by its very name indicates that it was the residence of a Knez, or prince or duke. In time Poznań (Posen) became

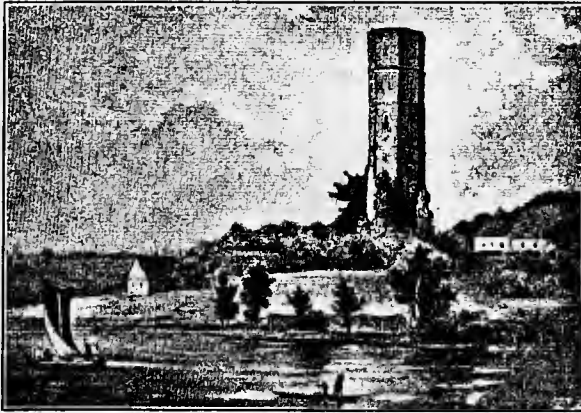


FIG. 4.—AN ANCIENT HISTORICAL TOWER AT KRUSZWICA.  
(MYSIA WIEŻA.)

the princely town, and the principality began to assert itself and to grow westward to the Oder, southward to the Barycza and eastward to the Pilica Rivers. In the east this territorial expansion met with the armed opposition of another large tribe, the Lenczanians, which was similarly organized under a military ruler and which occupied the plains between the Warta, Bzura and Pilica Rivers. Further east, in the jungles of the middle course of the Vistula to the north of Pilica, lived the most savage of the Polish tribes, the Mazurs. This tribe was the latest to

come under the sovereignty of the principality which began its political existence on the bank of the Goplo Lake under the leadership of the wheelwright Piast, whose dynasty ruled the country till 1370. To the north of the Netze River, between the Oder and the Baltic, lived the northernmost of the Polish tribes, known as the Pomorzanie, or people living by the sea. "Po" in Polish means "by" and "morze" the sea; hence the name of the province—Pomorze, later changed by the Teutons to Pomerania.

Some historical writers attribute the change in the political organization of the primitive Polanie tribe to the influence of foreign commerce which for geographic reasons had early centered around the Goplo. At that period the lake was a very large body of water with a level at least ten feet higher than at present. The many small lakes now existing in the region were in all probability a part of Goplo, and the valleys of the vicinity constituted the bottom of the lake. There are many reasons to believe that such was the hydrography of the section in that remote age. In his description of Goplo, written five hundred years ago, Dlugosz, a Polish historian, speaks of a vast body of water, leading us to believe that the lake then was much larger than it is at the present time. There is reason to believe that five hundred years previous to this historian's time, before the primeval forests were cut, the lake was still larger. The supposition that Goplo at the time of its highest level was connected by means of small navigable streams with the rivers Warta, Oder and the Vistula is quite plausible. The constructive fancy of the economic historian sees flotillas of the Pomeranian merchants moving to and fro from Stettin down the Oder and Netze. Here they met merchants from the east, the southeast and the southwest of Europe. The Byzan-

tian, Roman and Scandinavian cultures met at Kruszwica, the largest town on the banks of this vast internal sea of Poland, and exercised a revolutionary effect upon the modes of thought and the political institutions of the tribe. Otherwise the sudden transformation which took place from the tribal and communal organization of the people, which still existed in the second half of the eighth century, to the militaristic structure of society with a strong princely power, as is known to have existed in the ninth century, becomes almost unaccountable. The pressure from the west and north was, no doubt, an important element, but it alone would hardly seem sufficient to explain the change. Economic and cultural reasons had unquestionably exercised a great influence in the rapid moulding of a new form of political life which was more adapted to conditions that had arisen since the change from nomadic pursuits to settled agriculture.

Though somewhat differing in civilization, the tribes which later formed the Polish nation were kindred in their social, moral and religious ideas. They were scattered in large clans or gentes, bound by ties of blood. The lands belonging to a group or family were held in common. The work was done in common under the direction of the "starosta," the elder or patriarch of the gens. He was the chief executive, and had control over the crops and the allotments of work. It must, however, be noted in this connection that since the earliest times there existed private property in movables, especially in tools. The Polish Slavs, unlike the others and especially the Southern Slavs, never had the so-called "zadrugas" or great com-

**The Social  
and Political  
Structure  
of Early  
Slavic Life**

inunal households. From their early history they exhibited a strong individualistic propensity.

Important matters were decided by a popular assembly called "Wiec," to which belonged all the male adults of the community. It is impossible to determine accurately the relation between the power of the Wiec and that of the starosta. It varied from place to place and from time to time; sometimes the popular assembly maintained supreme power; sometimes the starosta gained ascendancy and endeavored to make his office hereditary. In many instances he was successful.

As elsewhere in a similar primitive social organization the individual did not exist outside of his clan. The solidarity of the members of the clan was the basis for protection and any injury sustained by a member of the clan at the hands of an outsider was an offense against the whole community. The principle of blood vengeance prevailed. He who did not belong to a clan had no protection and either perished or was made a slave, becoming the property of the clan as a unit, and, in later stages, of certain individuals within the community. The slaves were recruited chiefly from among the prisoners of war, but some were bought. In some instances murder was punishable by slavery. The children of slaves were retained by the masters as slaves.

Concomitant with the growth of the "grody" and the increased demands of the military princes, came the agglomeration and greater economic exploitation of the slaves in the interests of the small fortified towns and their garrisons. Settlements given over entirely to slaves sprang up around the "grody," and certain specified tasks were assigned to the inhabitants. Some settlements ground grain, some supplied bread or fish, others cared for horses

and cattle, built boats or made shields, and the settlements were named for the industry in which the inhabitants engaged. This distribution of occupations among the settlements lasted well into the twelfth century, the occupations having become hereditary from father to son. The names of many such "purposely created" (narokowe) villages have survived until the present day.

We do not possess adequate sources of information as to the primitive religion of the Polish Slavs.

**The Religion  
of the  
Early Slavs**

Like all primitive peoples they deified the forces and phenomena of nature. The surrounding world was filled with supernatural beings: gods, goddesses and spirits. It seems that none of the Slavic peoples had any idea of a god as a supreme being ruling the whole world. In some places certain deities were worshipped more than others, but there was no gradation or hierarchy of gods. One feature of the Slavic religion that distinguishes it from that of the Teutons was the calmness and serenity of the Slavic gods, a difference which emphasizes the peaceful character of the Slavs.

The most generally recognized deity was Świa-towit (Indra), the Slavic Zeus. He was pictured with four faces, hence seeing everything; with a cornucopia in his right hand a sword in his left hand. He was worshipped particularly in Pomorze (Pomerania) and on the Island of Rugia (Rugen). The other well-known deities were Perun, the god of storms; Welles, the god of cattle; Lada, the goddess of order and beauty; Marzanna, the goddess of death; Dzie-wanna, the goddess of spring; Radegast, the protector of merchants and guests. In addition, the woods and waters were filled with nymphs, sirens and fauns. The Slavs believed in the immortality of

the soul and in an afterworld, with punishment and reward. The dead were the objects of particular care, and funerals were very elaborate and carried on with great pomp. Certain days of the year were set aside for offerings and prayers to the dead. Some people, particularly women, had special powers of communi-



FIG. 5

TWO STATUES OF SWIATOVIT



FIG. 6

cation with the spirits of the dead, and their services as intermediaries were often sought. Generally speaking, however, this class of sorcerers and magicians did not develop into a permanent priestly class. The only exception to this rule were the Slavs on the Elbe and in Rugia among whom a class of professional priests is known to have existed.



FIG. 7—VIEW OF GNIEZNO

## CHAPTER II.

### Beginnings of the Polish State

The recorded political history of the Polish Nation begins with the conversion of the people to Christianity, which took place in the year 963 A.D., when the Polish Prince Mieszko I, 960-982, facing a German invasion, forsook the faith of his fathers and by so doing halted the march of ruthless extermination by the Germans, ostensibly undertaken in the name of Christianity. Exhausted by previous wars with his northern neighbors and realizing that he could not withstand the triumphant armies of Otto I of Saxony, founder of the Holy Roman Empire, conqueror of France, Denmark, Burgundy and Bohemia, Mieszko promptly recognized the sovereignty of the German Emperor and embraced the new faith. Closely following the official introduction of Christianity and the establishment of the first Bishopric in Poznań (Posen) comes the overweening influence of the west-  
ern world.

The monasteries established in Poland were branches of Italian, French and German abbeys. The

The  
Influence  
of the Roman  
Catholic  
Church





FIG. 8—MIESZKO I (960-982)

(J. Matejko,

foreign methods of organization and of agriculture brought over by them from the west exercised a very powerful and beneficent influence upon the productiveness of the Polish farmer and upon his modes of life. He was taught the use of more developed agricultural implements and was shown how to drain swamps, build better houses, plant orchards, and do many other things which he had not known.

The establishment of a monastery was almost invariably accompanied by an influx of foreign labor-



FIG. 9—THE CATHEDRAL OF POSEN

ers. They were brought over to produce certain things which the natives could not, and which were needed by the friars. The craftsmen, however, were not the only foreign working element which arrived in Poland at the time. The country was changing from its former basis to more intense agriculture, and this change necessitated a larger labor force, and many German peasants settled in Poland. Moreover, the grants of land given to the monasteries in the various sections of the principality did not, as a rule, include the right to the population settled on these

donated domains. To do the necessary work on their extensive estates the monasteries were oftentimes compelled to resort to foreign labor which, when imported by them, was chiefly non-free in character. In this way the monasteries, which at the time of their introduction into Poland were the only large private landowners, supplied an example of organization of large manors and the utilization of the half free class of foreign peasants who became attached to the soil (*adscriptitii*).

By adopting the Church of Rome, Poland, like Bohemia, Moravia and Croatia, joined the commonwealth of the nations of western Europe and became spiritually as well as socially separated from the rest of Slavdom. The double set of influences at work, the Byzantian and the Roman, not only cleft the Slavic peoples in twain, but created two entirely distinct civilizations which frequently clashed with each other in a very severe manner.

Since the days of Mieszko I the Polish forms of political and spiritual life have been consciously moulded according to western models. In the internal administration of the Polish principality the organization of the German burgwards was followed. The patriarchal form of life was gradually dissolving and the "grody" were combined into counties administered by governors called "castellans," from the Latin word "castellum" or castle. These officials were the personal representatives of the Prince, and were recruited chiefly from the descendants of the chiefs of the subjugated tribes or the earls of the former democratic townships. They soon formed the nucleus of a feudal aristocracy. The political life of the people became more centralized, and, as in western Europe, more subjected to the power of the feudal lords.

With the growth of the power of the Prince the burdens of the people grew heavier. Mieszko was compelled to maintain a large and permanent standing army to preserve the unity of his principality. The taxes of the people had to be increased for the maintenance of this army. In addition to the support of the army, of the Prince and his Court, and the requirement of supplying them with food, forage and lodging, greater personal services were requested for the building and up-keep of the fortified towns and roads. Furthermore, the introduction of tithes for the maintenance of the churches and the clergy, mostly foreign and whom the people hated, added much to the pressure put upon them.

In compensation for the added economic burdens came a powerful swing of national development and political consolidation. Boleslav the **The Growth of the State** Brave, 982-1025 A.D., the oldest son of Mieszko, having disposed of his brothers, with whom he was joint heir to the domains of his father, became the single ruler of Poland and determined to push her boundaries far and wide. After having successfully checkmated the Bohemian and Ruthenian invasions, Boleslav defeated the Pomeranians and conquered the Baltic seacoast. In the year 999 A.D. the old commercial town of Cracow was annexed, and after beating back a Hungarian invasion, Boleslav added Trans-Carpathian Slavonia to Poland.

With the death of Emperor Otto III (1002 A.D.) the imperial branch of the House of Saxony became extinct, and during the interregnum a period of internal dissension ensued in Germany and Italy. At the same time a civil war was in progress in Bohemia, and, taking advantage of the situation, Boleslav entered Prague, proclaimed himself Prince of Bohemia,

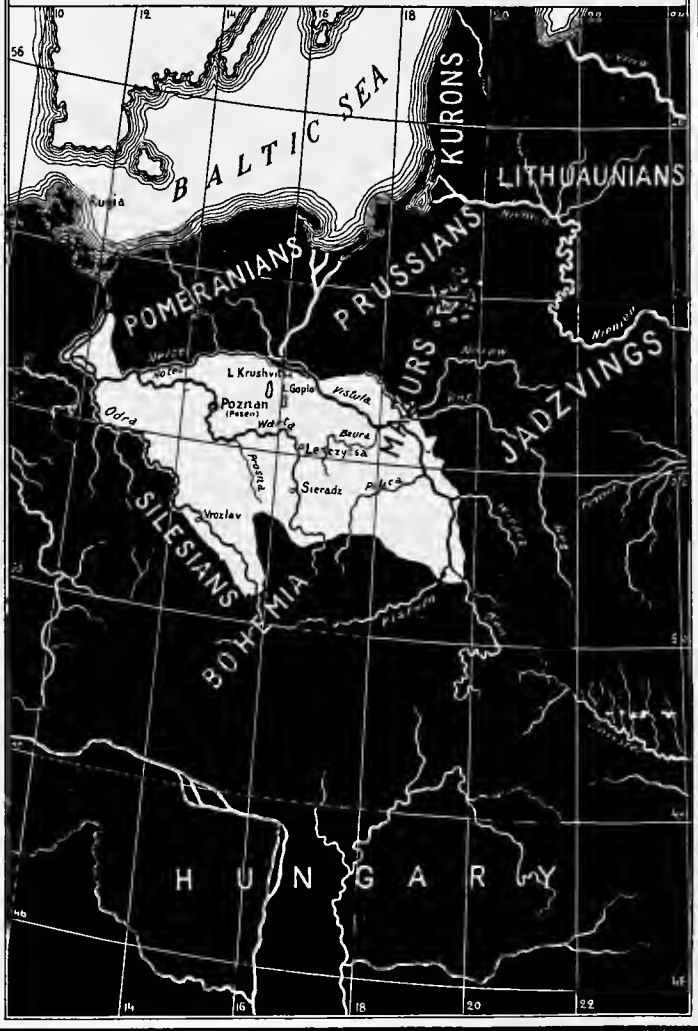


FIG. 10—BOLESLAV THE BRAVE (982-1025)

(J. Mateyko)

# POLAND

in the year 992



and fused the two principalities into one State (1003 A.D.). But this did not prove to be a lasting conquest, as very soon after Henry II of Bavaria became the German Emperor, and a joint expedition of Germans and Bohemians was sent against Boleslav. A bloody and devastating war began which lasted fourteen years. Boleslav was compelled to abandon his claims to Bohemia. He retained, however, most of the conquered territory of the other Slavic peoples on the west and east, the German marks between the Oder and the Elbe, the City of Kieff and many towns of Red Russia. At the end of his reign Poland extended from the Baltic on the north to the Danube

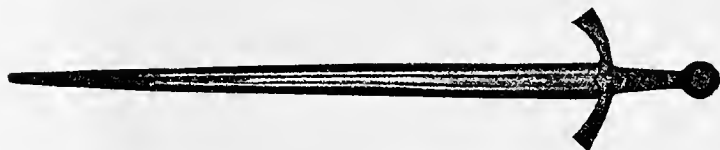


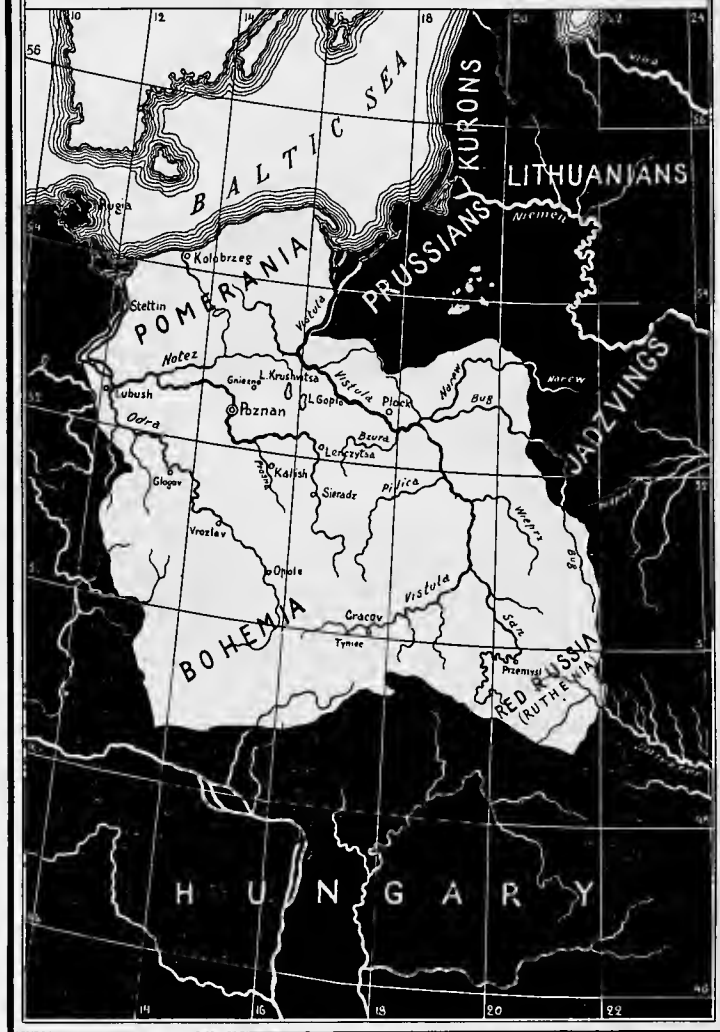
FIG. 11—THE SWORD OF BOLESNAV THE BRAVE  
(In the Ermitage Museum at Petrograd)

on the south, and from the rivers Bug and Dniester in the east to the Elbe in the west.

In addition to his qualities as a warrior, Boleslav was a statesman and diplomat of conspicuous ability. He realized that his achievements would not be lasting unless the ancient Slavic law of equal rights of inheritance of all the male heirs was changed to that of primogeniture. This could be achieved only by making the Polish principality a kingdom. The Pope, desirous of curbing the power of the German Emperor but fearing him, deferred giving his consent. Another reason for his hesitancy to acquiesce in Boleslav's request was his disinclination to concede to the Polish monarch the power of nominating bishops, which his investment with royal prerogatives

# POLAND

at the time of the death of Boleslav the Brave 982-1025





would carry. Not awaiting the Pope's final decision, the impetuous Boleslav convoked the Polish bishops at Gniezno (Gnesen), the seat of the archbishopric, and was crowned there by the archbishop amid great splendor, and in the presence of his feudatories and his great army of twenty thousand warriors. This was a bold defiance to the German Emperor, whose sovereignty he ceased to recognize (1024 A.D.).



FIG. 12—COIN OF BOLESNAV THE BRAVE

A coalition of the German Empire with Bohemia and all the other conquered countries which came under the rule of Boleslav, led to a war which, by the year 1040, left Poland stripped of almost all her previous conquests. The internal strife between the two sons of Boleslav the Brave and the revolt of the people against oppressive taxation and brutal treatment, experienced at the hands of the Church and the feudal lords, contributed to the Polish defeat and plunged the country into a state of chaos and dissolution which for a time threatened its very existence. Cities, castles, churches and monasteries

The Relation  
of Poland  
to the German  
Empire

were burned and demolished, and in many places the people reverted to paganism after having murdered the hated priests and monks.



FIG. 13—THE MONUMENT OF MIESZKO I AND BOLESNAV THE BRAVE  
IN THE GOLDEN CHAPEL AT POSEN

As in many other instances, so in this crisis in Polish history, outside circumstances averted the disruption of the Kingdom of Boleslav. The growing power of Bohemia aroused the fears and disquietude of the German Emperor, Henry III. A strong Poland

was needed to curb the Bohemian ambitions. The Germans lent their aid to Kazimir the Restorer (1040-1058 A.D.), who, with the help of his loyal feudatories, reconquered some of the lost provinces, restored unity and peace, and began to devote himself to internal reorganization along German lines. He estab-



(J. Matejko)

FIG. 14—KAZIMIR THE RESTORER (1040-1058)

lished a bureaucracy and an ecclesiastical hierarchy, rebuilt cities and churches, and imposed very heavy taxes and duties on the people in an effort to reduce them into complete subjugation to the warriors and clergy. In compensation for the aid of Germany, Kazimir recognized the sovereignty of the German Emperor and renounced the title of King.

The political history of Poland from the introduction of Christianity to the end of the XIIth cen-

tury turns around the relation of the Polish sovereigns to the German emperors. The suzerainty of the German Emperor was recognized by the rulers of Poland only when the Germans were in a position to force them into this relation. As soon as either internal dissensions or foreign wars enfeebled the power of the German Empire, the Polish state immediately tried to secure emancipation.



(J. Matejko)

FIG 15—BOLES LAV THE BOLD (1058-1079)

It fell to the lot of Boleslav the Bold, or Generous, the successor of Kazimir (1058-1079 A.D.), a man of power and strong will, to restore the glory of the Kingdom of Boleslav the Brave by an alliance with the Pope.

In the beginning of the existence of the Polish state, Mieszko I, in an endeavor to loosen the ties binding him to the German Empire, had sought to establish an entente with the Pope, John

**The Alliance  
with the  
Holy See**

XV, and confided Poland to the protection of the Apostolic See. In token of this relation an annual gift, known as St. Peter's pence, was sent to the Pope by the King. In establishing direct relations with the Pope, Poland endeavored to eliminate the intervention of the Emperor in her foreign relations. At times under the pressure of the Emperor, the relations with Rome became less intimate, but no opportunity was missed to re-establish them. As a matter of fact, the annual St. Peter's pence was regularly sent to Rome until the end of the XIIth century.

During the reign of Boleslav II the Bold, occurred that famous struggle for supremacy between Pope Gregory VII, Hildebrand and the Emperor Henry IV. In recognition of the assistance shown him in this conflict, the Pope crowned Boleslav as independent King in 1076 A.D. Seeking revenge, the Emperor recognized the Bohemian ruler as King and offered him the Polish provinces of Cracow and Silesia. A war followed which led to internal dissensions in Poland. In carrying out rigorously the reforms of Hildebrand, the King made many enemies among the clergy. His despotic character was also resented by the nobility. Under the leadership of the king's brother, Wladyslav Herman, a revolution broke out. The Bishop of Cracow interdicted the king and joined the Bohemians. For this he paid the penalty of death. The story goes that the infuriated king personally murdered the Bishop in the church at mass. Recent studies, however, show that the bishop was tried for treason by the King's Court, was found guilty and was executed.

The civil war resulted in the king's defeat and he fled the country. Cracow and southern Poland went to Bohemia, and Poland once more became a feudatory of the German Empire, and the new ruler,

Wladyslav Herman (1070-1102 A.D.), lost his title of king.

By a skillful playing off of Poland and Bohemia against each other, and by the active encouragement of internal hereditary strifes, the German Emperors kept both of these western Slavic nations from developing into powerful states.



(J. Mateyko)

FIG. 16—WLADYSLAV HERMAN (1070-1102)

A principal cause for the constantly recurring civil wars was the Slavic laws of inheritance, which Boleslav the Brave failed to abolish, and which Kazimir tried to modify by establishing the so-called seniorate. This was a system of inheritance whereby all sons were equal sharers in their father's estate, but

**The Polish  
Laws of  
Inheritance**

the oldest son, the senior, became the supreme lord over all of them. It was a compromise measure designed to retain the old customs and laws of Poland, and to preserve at the same time the political unity, which was gravely threatened after the death of each ruler.



FIG 17—THE SEAL OF WLADYSLAV HERMAN  
(The Oldest Known Seal of a Polish Prince)

The years following the death of Wladyslav Herman witnessed one of these terrific internal strifes which, in this instance, was aggravated by a German invasion, finally repelled by Boleslav the Wrymouthed (1102-1138 A.D.), who succeeded also in conquering Pomerania and extending the Polish possessions on the Baltic Seaboard, far across the Oder up to and including the Island of Rugia (Rugen). He died, however, a feudatory of the German Emperor.

# POLAND

at the time of the death of Boleslav the Wrymouthed 1138





Mindful of the dangers of another civil strife after his death, he obtained the sanction of the Emperor and of the Pope to the Kazimirian principle of seniorate. The aristocracy of the land, which had grown during the years in wealth and class consciousness, was opposed to a strong centralized government. They preferred a number of smaller principalities, which precluded the centralization of power in one ruler, and gave more offices and freedom to themselves. It was due to their antagonism that the imperial and Papal sanction of the seniorate failed to bring the desired results.



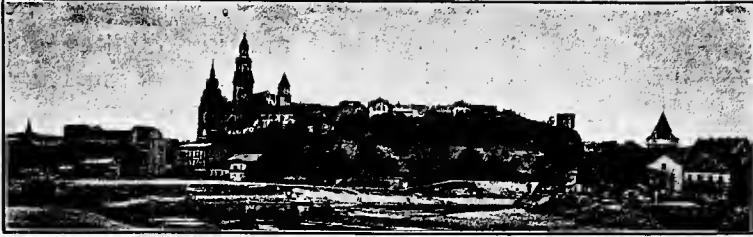


FIG. 18—WAWEL, THE ROYAL CASTLE AT CRACOW

## CHAPTER III.

### The Decline of Monarchical Power.

Following his theory of seniorate, Boleslav the Wrymouthed divided the country into five principalities—Silesia, Great Poland,\* Mazovia, Sandomir and Cracow. The first four provinces were divided among his four sons who became independent rulers.

The Prerogatives of the Grand Duke of Cracow

The fifth province, that of Cracow, was to be added to the senior among the Princes who, as the Grand Duke of Cracow, was the representative of the whole of Poland. No sooner did Boleslav die than his oldest son, Wladyslav, conceived the idea of restoring Poland's unity by depriving his brothers of their shares. He met with the determined opposition of the Church and the magnates, who clearly recognized that a centralized power was detrimental to their interests and influence. The Archbishop of Gnesen hurled an anathema at Wladyslav and two

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\* The name was not meant to indicate that the principality was larger than the others, but that it was "older," "original" Poland. The Latin name Major Polonia was mistakenly translated as "Great Poland." The principalities of Cracow and Sandomir, having come later into the fold of the Polish state, were named "younger Poland," but in the course of time, in contrast to the misnomer "Great Poland," became popularly known as "Little Poland."

powerful potentates organized an army against him. A civil war ensued, which, despite the help received from outside and the interference of Friedrich Barbarossa, ended in the defeat of the Grand Duke of Cracow. This marks the beginning of the era of disintegration of the young Polish state and the decline of monarchical power in Poland. The principalities of Silesia, Great Poland and Mazovia had become divided into smaller units, with further sub-divisions and occasional fusions. Separatist interests and jealousies led to almost incessant warfare.

The ruler of Cracow retained the title of Dux Poloniæ, the Duke of Poland, but the security of his office depended upon his relations with the aristocracy and clergy. Kazimir the Just (1177-1194) had been obliged to summon a council of nobles and clergy and to surrender certain of his rights and privileges. He was also compelled to promise to call such councils when important matters of state were to be decided upon. At the Council or Synod of Lenczyca, held in 1180, the Church, under the threat of an interdict, enjoined the Duke from the exercise of his right to the personal property of deceased bishops (*Ius Spolii*) and to certain levies for his officials and representatives. In return for these concessions or immunities the Council abolished the seniorate and vested in the line of Kazimir the Just the perpetual right to the principality of Cracow. Thus the right of seniority in the House of Piast the Wheelwright gave way to the law of primogeniture in the line of Kazimir the Just. This right was frequently contested by armed interference. The authority of the Duke of Cracow was not adequately defined by law and was nil in actual practice. The heads of the smaller principalities were, in fact, independent rulers. They were free to establish alliances for de-



(J. Mateyko)

FIG. 19—BOLES LAV THE WRYMOUTHED (1102-1139)

# POLAND

as subdivided among the sons of Boleslav the Wrymouthed



fensive and offensive warfare, to make treaties and to maintain independent customs barriers. In other words, Poland of the XIII century was no longer one solid political entity. The sovereignty of the former state became diffused among a number of smaller independent political units, with only the common bonds of language, race, religion and tradition.



(J. Mateyko)

FIG. 20—KAZIMIR THE JUST (1177-1194)

The princely power was theoretically unlimited. By the "grace of God" the princes were absolute lords of their dominions. Actually, the exercise of their power depended on the strength or weakness of the barons and clergy, and on their own skill in playing off the interests of the one against those of the other. The barons and the clergy became very powerful in the XIIIth century. Both

**The Restriction of the Sovereign Power of the Princes**

classes acquired large land holdings with jurisdiction over their subjects. The Church grew constantly stronger on account of its splendid organization, its accumulation of wealth and the moral control it exercised over the people. Then, too, it had become more independent since the adoption of the Gregorian reforms, which deprived the king of the power to appoint bishops. By their presence at the Councils of the Prince, called "Colloquia," they, in conjunction with the barons, exercised direct control over the affairs of the principality. The Colloquium was called at such times as state business demanded. In addition to the relatives of the prince, the barons and prelates were invited to attend it, and at these gatherings matters of foreign policies, as well as of internal administration, were determined. The granting of franchises, the fixing of taxes and matters of like nature were decided at these meetings, and at times the Colloquium also served as the Prince's Court. The Colloquium was the nucleus of what later developed into the Senate.

Synchronous with the metamorphosis in the structure of the Polish State and sovereignty was an economic and social impoverishment of the country. Harassed by civil strifes and foreign invasions, like that of the Tartars in 1241 A.D., the small principalities became enfeebled and depopulated. The incomes of the Princes began to decrease materially. This led them to take steps toward encouraging immigration from foreign countries. A great number of German peasants, who, during the interregnum following the death of Friedrich II Hohenstaufen, suffered great oppression at the hands of their lords, were induced to settle in Poland under certain very

**German  
Settlements  
in Poland**

favorable conditions. German immigration into Poland had started spontaneously at an earlier period, about the end of the XI century, and was the result of overpopulation in the central provinces of the Empire. Advantage of the existing tendency had already been taken by the Polish Princes in the XIIth century for the development of cities and crafts. Now the movement became intensified.

Studies of the development of the German settlements in Poland indicate that they sprang up along the wide belt which was laid waste by the Tartars in 1241. It was a stretch of land comprising present Galicia and Southern Silesia. Prior to the Tartar invasion these two provinces were thickly settled and highly developed. Through them ran the commercial highways from the East and the Levant to the Baltic and the west of Europe. Cracow and Breslau were large and prosperous towns. After the Tartar barbarians retired the country was in ruins and the population either scattered or exterminated. Large numbers were taken prisoners. The refugees went north and helped to colonize the sparsely inhabited areas and to clear the forests to the east of the Vistula in Mazovia. On the heels of the receding Tartars came the Germans. Theirs was a movement along the line of least resistance. The new settlers were spared the hard labor of the pioneers as the soil they occupied had been used for arable purposes centuries before. There was no need of clearing primeval forest or colonizing an utter wilderness.

It would be a mistake to think that all the newcomers were Teutons. Slavic tribes, at that time, separated Poland from Germany, and the Germans who came to Poland went through this Slavic screen and brought with them numerous autochthons of the



border Slavic lands. Upon arriving in Poland the settlers from the west restored agriculture, rebuilt the cities and came into the possession of all the advantages the fertile soil and the favorable geographic position gave them.

The entrepreneur (known by the Latin name of *villicator*), who brought over a number of settlers, received, in addition to the compensation for his services, a piece of land for the colony of which he became the chief (*woyt*), with hereditary right to certain taxes. These rights he could concede or sell. He was also the judge of the colony. He was free from all duties except those of a knight and a tax collector, and responsible to nobody except to the Prince. The settlers, after dividing among themselves the land granted to them by the Prince, proceeded to build the city with its town hall, market-place and church in the centre. The streets ran radius-like from the centre. The town was surrounded by a mound and ditch, beyond which lay the arable fields, pastures and woods. The settlers were given every privilege of building the towns in the way to which they were accustomed, and to govern themselves according to the practice of their native country. For a number of years, varying in each case, the settlers were free from all taxes or duties. After the expiration of the term of years they had to pay a stipulated annual tax into the Prince's treasury. The tax was to be paid in money, not like that of the Polish *grody*, in kind and services. In addition they were, in some instances, required to maintain defensive walls, towers and gates, and to supply impedimenta for war and armed servants. In their internal affairs they were given full home rule and were free from all interference by representatives of the Prince. They governed them-

selves according to German law, the chief (woyt) and a chosen jury constituting the court. Appeals from the decisions of this court could be taken to the Court of the Prince or to the higher courts in the German cities. The administration was in the hands of a City Council, consisting of the burgomaster and advisors, either elected by the people or appointed by the Prince, this depending on the terms of the charter. The artisans established guilds which regulated the quality and price of products. The Prince had the sole authority to grant town charters. Sometimes he gave this power to the feudal and ecclesiastical lords of the principality.

In this way beside the Polish "grody" sprang into existence a large number of towns, with German laws, customs and institutions. The ancient towns of Cracow, Lwów, Poznań, Plock and others received a large admixture of German population, and became regarded by the metropolitan towns in Germany as their branches and as outposts of German trade and civilization in Poland. The common law of the country was supplanted by the Magdeburg and Halle law, German silver coins became the money of the country, and all municipal records began to be kept in the German language. Had it not been for the Tartar invasion, Polish towns would have developed normally and created a city population truly Polish, which would have been organically allied to the whole social and national fabric. As it was the cities became oases for a foreign element, hostile, or at least indifferent, to the country, and this condition became responsible in a measure for the excessive prerogatives gained in the future by one class of the Polish nation, the nobility, who alone bore the brunt of national defence.

Similar to the growth of German towns was the development by colonization of villages based on German law. To induce settlers in the unoccupied areas the Prince granted tracts of land exempt from taxes for a number of years. All the settlers on these lands were absolutely free. The only obligation was the payment of an annual rent to the Prince, collected for him by the organizer of the settlement, who, in compensation for his work, received in hereditary right a large grant of land, a flour mill or tavern. In addition to the duties of a tax collector the organizer, called *soltys*, was to render military service and act as the police officer of the village. He was also the presiding officer of the jury chosen by the villagers. In all administrative matters the village, like the city, had complete home rule. Except for the town hall and the town council the villages did not differ much from the towns. With the consent of the Prince, barons and prelates could either establish new free settlements or change the legal basis of the already existing native villages in their domains from the Polish to the German law.

On account of the advantages that the German method of settling gave to land owners, it became very popular with them and exercised a great influence upon the administrative, economic and particularly, political life of the country. The influx of great masses of the German element, that had all the support of their native country as well as of the military Teutonic Orders, which settled on the Baltic seacoast in the beginning of the XIIIth century and from its earliest days engaged in a ruthless war of extermination on the autochthonous population under the guise of spreading Christ's gospel, destroyed political cohesion.

An additional foreign element began to settle in Poland in great numbers at the same time. The Jews, persecuted all over Europe during the Crusades, fled to Poland where they were received in a most hospitable manner. They settled in the towns and began to carry on commerce and banking. As illustrative of the friendliness of the Poles toward these newcomers may be cited the statue of Kalisz, promulgated by Prince Boleslav in the year 1246 by which the Jews received every protection of the law and which imposed heavy penalties for any insults to their cemeteries, synagogues and other sanctuaries. About the same time Prince Henry IV of Wroclaw (Breslau) imposed heavy penalties upon those who accused Jews of ritual murder. Anyone who made such an accusation had to prove it by six witnesses, three Gentiles and three Jews, and in case of his inability to prove the charge in a satisfactory manner he was himself found guilty and subject to severe punishment.

While the Jews adapted themselves to their new environment and coalesced, to a degree, with the native population, the German element, backed by their government, became aggressive and sought to dominate the country. The rich German town people were supported in their endeavors by the clergy, who arrived from Germany in great numbers and occupied prominent church positions. It was with the aid of the Germans that the dauntless but Germanized Leszek the Dark (1278-1288), and after him Henry Probus (1289-1290), who joined the ancient Polish Duchy of Silesia to the German Empire, ascended the throne of Cracow. The German influence grew disquietingly. A strong antagonistic movement arose and the clash of the two forces con-

**Jewish  
Immigration  
to Poland**

stitutes the pith of Polish history during the next century. The conflict resulted in complete Polonization of the German element and among the descendants of these settlers there have been many of the most ardent Polish patriots. This is eloquent testimony of the great assimilative powers of the people and of the state building capabilities of the Poles.

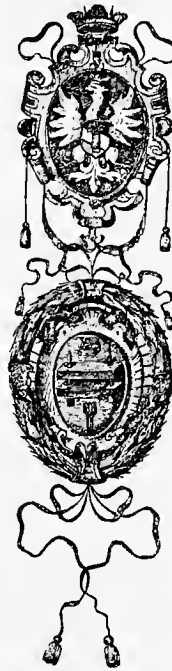




FIG. 21—THE MARKET PLACE OF CRACOW

## CHAPTER IV.

### The Consolidation of Poland

The Acquisition of Pomerania

That part of the Baltic seaboard which lies between the Vistula in the east and the Oder in the west, and bounded by the Noteć on the south, was inhabited by the Pomeranians, a cognate Slavic people, who, separated from Poland by virgin forests, long resisted the numerous armed attempts to bring them into the fold of the Polish state. No regular wars could be carried on with them but guerilla warfare, resembling that of Charlemagne with the Saxons, lasted for over a century. Finally in 1109, by a brilliant victory near the town of Naklo on the Noteć River, Boleslav the Wrymouthed succeeded in forcing the Pomeranian princes to recognize the sovereignty of Poland.

The administration of the newly acquired territory was left to the native princes. The people of the southern part of Pomerania accepted Christianity and became incorporated into the diocese of Great Poland.

The advantages secured by the accession of the

seacoast could not be immediately exploited by the Poles, for it was necessary to defend vital national interests against a new German invasion, sent by the Emperor Henry V in the year 1109. After a defeat at Wroclaw (Breslau) the Germans were forced to retreat, having devastated a large area of Poland and exterminated many prosperous towns. In this war the city of Glogow (Glogau) became famous for its desperate defense, in the course of which the children of the town, captured by the Germans and carried in front of their siege machines, were killed by their fathers.

After the war with the German Empire Pomerania again claimed the attention of the Polish sovereign. Aided by the Prussians, a neighboring people on their east, the Pomeranians, under the leadership of Swietopelk of Naklo, rebelled. The rebellion was crushed and Pomerania, together with the cities of Naklo, Santok, Czarnkow, Uscie and others, was incorporated into the Duchy of Great Poland. Suspecting other princes to the east of Pomerania to be in sympathy with Swietopelk, the victorious Boleslav the Wrymouthed crossed the Oder, conquered the Lutics, another Slavic tribe on the Baltic, took their chief city of Stettin and went further west, vanquishing the Slavic peoples of Mecklenburg and Brandenburg and along the Baltic seacoast up to and including the Holy Island of Rugia (Rugen) in 1121. Since that time the name of Pomerania has been applied to the whole stretch of the Baltic seacoast extending from the mouth of the Vistula to the Isle of Rugia.

Boleslav endeavored to introduce Christianity into the conquered territories but all attempts proved futile until the arrival of the mission of St. Otto, the chaplain of Boleslav's father, who, instead of appear-

ing as a poor ascetic, came, aided by the power of the Polish sovereign, in full dazzling splendor of a prince of the Church and won the hearts of the people by his gifts and kindness. By 1130, when the first bishopric in Pomerania was established at Wolin, and the people of the country, who had so persistently fought Christianity, were all converted by the apostolic endeavors of the Polish ruler and his saintly bishop.

Further extensions of Polish influence to the west, or even a firm grounding of the Poles in the newly conquered territories, were rendered impossible, first by an unfortunate war with Hungary, 1132-1135, and then, after the death of Boleslav the Wry-mouthed in 1138, by the above described division of Poland into five independent principalities with the ensuing civil strifes and the disappearance of a constructive political polity.

About the year 1147 the Margrave Albrecht the Bear, Henry the Lion of Saxony, and the Danish King Waldemar the Great organized a joint expedition against the Northwestern Slavs. The expedition crowned the centuries long efforts to subdue the Slavs. On the Slavic lands, between the Elbe and the Oder, Albrecht founded a new German Duchy called Brandenburg from the old Slavic town of Branibor, and settled it with Teuton colonizers, mostly from the Netherlands. The Saxon Prince and the Danish King divided the Slav territories on the lower Elbe and the Island of Rugia. The Lutic Prince of Stettin became at first a feudatory of the Saxon Prince and later of the German Emperor. The autochthonous Slavic population of these regions was either exterminated or pushed into Poland, which lost all of the seacoast west of the Vistula. Following this, a considerable number of German colonizers occupied the lands watered by the lower course of the Vistula.



To offset the losses in the west the Polish princes turned their attention to the Prussians who occupied the Baltic seaboard from the right shore of the Vistula to the Niemen, and extended south, through bogs and forests, as far as the Narev. Further south of them, on the Narev and the right shore of the Bug, west of the Mazurs, lived the Jadz-wings, a tribe closely related to the Prussians. Both the Prussians and the Jadz-wings came under partial Polish suzerainty by the end of the XIIIth century during the reign of Kazimir the Just, 1177-1194, but this did not prevent their constant ferocious raids on Mazovia, which proved most exasperating to the Mazurian princes. All Christian missions among the Prussians were unavailing. They clung tenaciously to paganism. In order to make it possible to wage constant and unrelenting war against these heathens, Pope Honorius III relieved the Poles from expeditions to Palestine and proclaimed throughout Germany a crusade against the Prussians. Two such crusades were undertaken, one in 1219 and another in 1222, but both without perceptible success.

After a defeat suffered at the hands of the fierce Prussians, Conrad, Prince of Mazovia, decided to turn for help to the Knights of the Cross, the German order, which after returning from Palestine settled on the Baltic in the early part of the XIIIth century soon after the Knights of the Sword established themselves at the estuary of the Dvina for the purpose of converting the Lithuanians. For their help in the campaign against the Prussians, Conrad granted to them the districts of Chelmno and Nieszawa in Mazovia. It was custom-

**The Polish  
Crusade  
Against the  
Prussians**

**The Political  
Aggressive-  
ness of the  
Knights of the  
Cross**

ary for princes in those days to bestow such large territorial gifts on ecclesiastical corporations, but the grants did not involve the loss of princely sovereignty over them. Not so did the Knights of the Cross regard this cession. Their ambition from the first was to found an independent state on Polish territory, and in pursuance of this design they obtained, prior to the receipt of the grants of Conrad, a charter from Emperor Friedrich II to organize all the lands they might acquire or conquer into a feudal state of the German Empire. They also obtained from Pope Gregory IX the privilege of complete freedom from any church intervention in their territories.

With such plans in mind they arrived in Mazovia in 1228. They were received with open arms by the rulers and the people, and were supported most loyally throughout their campaign against the Prussians, which lasted over half a century, until the whole of Prussia as far as the Niemen was conquered. Having finished with the Prussians they turned against the heathen Lithuanians who lived to the east of Prussia, along the middle Niemen and its tributaries. They soon began to exhibit their real designs with reference to the Poles, who were not heathens, and who, through the Mazurian prince, had induced them to undertake the crusade against the Prussians and who had bestowed upon them help and friendship.

The pressure of Brandenburg in the northwest and of the Order of the Cross in the northeast led to a realization, on the part of the Poles, of the imminent danger from the Teutons and the need of concerted action against them. Moreover, the constant civil wars between the Polish princes were ruining the people and thwarting the economic, social and political progress of the country. The need of a

**The Causes  
of Political  
Consolidation**

fusion of the small political units into a powerful kingdom became apparent, particularly among the clergy, who were the most enlightened and educated people of the time and who by their church organization formed the one truly Polish institution.

This budding tendency toward the unification of the state was strongly supported by the cities, as,



FIG. 22—PRZEMYSŁAW I (1295-1296)

in addition to the wars, the various tariff restrictions and the multifarious other taxes hampered the development of commerce and industry.

The period preceding the unification of the country abounded in warfare and bloodshed. Prince Przemysław, of Great Poland, with the consent of the

Pope, crowned himself King of Poland in Gniezno (Gnesen) in 1295, but a few months later was murdered by the agents of Brandenburg. After his death the struggle between the various princes who strove for the high dignity again became acute. As a com-



(J. Mateyko)

FIG. 23—WACLAV I (1300-1305)

promise Wacław, King of Bohemia, was crowned King of Poland in 1300. All Poland, except Mazovia, came under his sceptre. The unification, however, entailed the loss of national independence and subjected Poland to a rigid administrative rule of Bohemia and to a strong German influence, which at that time had already become predominant in Bohemia.

One of the princes of Great Poland, Wladyslav Lokietek, 1306-1333, an able and enterprising man, who, by the unification lost his title to sovereignty, fled abroad, enlisted the help of the powerful Pope Boniface VIII, and, choosing an appropriate moment when Bohemia became involved in a war with Hungary, appeared in Poland. He met with a cordial reception in all the parts of the country. Cracow and the whole of Little Poland, Kujawy at the lower course of the

The Difficulties with the Knights of the Cross and the Disloyalty of the German Settlers



FIG. 24—A GENERAL VIEW OF THE MALBORG CASTLE

Vistula, and Pomerania, joined him. Great Poland alone chose another prince of their own, and Mazovia did not participate in the struggle.

At this juncture the Markgrave of Brandenburg invaded Pomerania and conquered it. Lokietek, at war with Great Poland, asked the Order of the Cross to help him against the Markgrave. This they did, but after defeating the Brandenburgians turned against the Pomeranians. Following a most cruel

slaughter of the population, the province was annexed by the Knights, who established there at the city of Malborg, on the Vistula, their permanent capital.

They immediately proceeded to Germanize this newly conquered province. By joining hands with the other German order they formed an extensive and powerful Teutonic Empire. In this way Poland became isolated from the sea by a formidable foe who

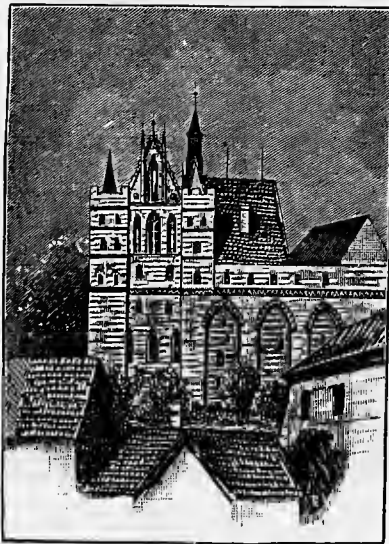


FIG. 25—THE CASTLE OF THE KNIGHTS OF THE CROSS AT MALBORG

commanded at the time the admiration of all Europe. Lokietek hesitated to risk a war with the Order. The case was submitted to the Pope who issued a decree commanding the Knights to restore Pomerania and repay to Lokietek all war expenditures. This they refused to do.

While the difficulties with the Knights were growing, the German element in the city of Cracow



(J. Matejko)

FIG. 26—WŁADYSŁAW LOKIETEK (1306-1333)

succeeded in organizing a rebellion against Lokietek in favor of a Germanized prince. The rebellion, led by the mayor and the bishop, was crushed and the Germans dealt with very severely. The city was deprived of its home rule and was for a time governed by appointive officers of the prince. The severe punishment of Cracow had a discouraging effect upon the German troublemakers in other Polish cities. They soon abandoned their nationalistic political aspirations and returned to peaceful vocations.

Similarly successful were Lokietek's expeditions against his enemies in Great Poland. Before long all the Polish principalities united into one political state. The inherently constructive force of the Polish genius asserted itself despite the powerful influences that were arrayed against it. Lokietek was but an incarnation of the national spirit that had produced Boleslav the Brave and Boleslav the Wrymouthed and that revealed itself most powerfully in the days of Jagiello and on many subsequent occasions in the course of Polish history. The union brought about by the leadership of Lokietek was, however, personal at first. The sovereign was the only bond that kept the various provinces together. In their internal organization the component parts of the unified state were completely autonomous and governed in exactly the same way as they had been before the consolidation took place. To give to the political unity an adequate outward expression Lokietek strove for royal dignity. With the consent of the Pope he was crowned in 1320 in Cracow as an independent King of Poland.

This act led to a prolonged and costly war with the German Emperor, who was antagonistic to the

**Lokietek's  
Proclamation  
of Poland's  
Political  
Sovereignty  
and the  
Ensuing Wars**



Pope, and, having renewed the struggle of the Emperors against Rome, still regarded Poland as his vassal. Emperor Ludwig joined forces with John of Luxemburg, King of Bohemia, who, as a son-in-law of Waclav, claimed the right to the throne of Poland, and with the Markgrave of Brandenburg declared war on Poland.

Foreseeing the war, Lokietek forged a chain of friendships: first with the Scandinavian countries, then with Hungary, by giving away in marriage his daughter Elizabeth to the Hungarian King, Karl Robert. He also approached the heathen Lithuanians, which was a bold step for a Christian prince to take, and in 1325 his only son, Kazimir, married Anna Aldona, the daughter of the Lithuanian Grand Duke Gedymin.

The struggle began in 1327 and was not terminated at the time of Lokietek's death in 1333. The war proved disastrous. By the treaty of Tenczyn in Hungary, the new Polish King Kazimir, 1333-1370, acknowledged the right of Bohemia to suzerainty over Silesia and Mazovia. The pearl of the Polish crown, the westernmost province of Silesia, was thus forever torn from Poland. Kazimir, however, succeeded in retaining Polish spiritual influence over the province by insisting that it be not severed from the Archbishopric at Gnesen, and Mazovia soon reverted, in 1355, into the fold of the Polish state as a feudatory of the Crown.

Final peace with the Knights of the Cross was established in 1343 after a drawn-out suit brought against them by the order of the Pope Benedict XII for the recovery of Pomerania and other occupied territories. Demands had also been made for compensation for their inhuman treatment of the native population and their wanton destruction of life and



FIG. 27—KAZIMIR THE GREAT (1333-1370)

(J. Mateyko)

property. The court rendered a verdict in favor of Poland. Conscious of their superior military power they refused to obey the verdict and Poland had to submit to the loss of Pomerania. Kujawy, however, and the other occupied territories were returned to Poland.

**The Acquisition of Ruthenian Territories** Kazimir could not undertake another war for the restoration of Pomerania, as the country was exhausted and as his attention was directed to Ruthenia where, on account of the extinction of the reigning dynasty he had to press his claims as against those of other pretenders. After a prolonged war with the Tartars and Lithuanians, the western part of Volhynia was annexed to Poland and the Prince of Podolia recognized the overlordship of the Polish sovereign. Kazimir endeavored to reach the seacoast of the Black Sea but his expedition was unsuccessful.

The acquisition of new lands in the east with a population element different in religion and lower in civilization, together with the chaos that existed in the internal affairs of the country ruined by internal dissensions and by long and bloody foreign wars, led Kazimir to devote his thoughts and energy to the material upbuilding of the land, and to the restoration of law and order in his vast domains.

**Internal Reforms** The law of the country was a compound of the native common law and of the German law. It was differently interpreted in the different localities. The chaos gave rise to injustice in the application of the law and its enforcement, and pointed very clearly to the acute need of uniformity and of establishing a firm, well defined judicial and administrative system. In 1347

# POLAND

in the year 1341 Reign of Kazimir the Great



a special council was called to Wislica to improve the laws. The results of their labors of many years, known as the Statutes of Wislica, where a body of uniform laws with special regard for the local conditions of the several sections of the country. It may be noted in this connection that Poland in the time of Kazimir had a large number of eminent writers



FIG. 28.—THE STATE SEAL OF 1334

and jurists. Janko of Charnkov wrote a valuable contemporary history in the form of chronicles, similar to that of Gallus, who wrote in the XIIth century during the time of Boleslav the Wrymouthed.

By the time the Wislica statutes were drafted, slavery had ceased to exist in all parts of Poland, but the relations of peasants to landowners were not uniform throughout the country. They differed from

place to place. Almost universally the taxes in kind had ceased to exist. It may be of interest to note that in Kazimir's time the exigencies of commerce demanded a regulation of the monetary problem and that the Wislica statutes provided that "there shall be throughout the country uniform money of a constant value and weight." One of the reasons for this



FIG. 29—THE CROWN, SCEPTRE AND MOUND OF KAZIMIR THE GREAT, FOUND IN HIS GRAVE IN 1869

requirement, as given in the statute, was "that the state might not look like a many-headed monster." Both taxes and tithes were paid in money. The peasant was free to make contracts with the landowner for the use of leased land, but he was oftentimes helpless in preventing the landlord from exacting more than the contract stipulations provided, especially when the settlements were based on German law and the landlord was the "soltys," or the

chief and judge of the village. In many instances the peasants were leaving the settlements and taking with them all the stock received from the landlord. Such migrations were frequent at that time. The tracts of land laid waste by the Knights of the Cross in the lake region of Prussia and the country formerly occupied by the Jadzwingi, whom the Chevaliers completely exterminated, offered opportunities for advantageous settlement. Polish colonization of these regions was going on very rapidly. A similar colonizing movement was taking place in the acquired provinces of Ruthenia. The Polish peasant was settling there on the German law basis and was bringing with him western civilization to these remote eastern regions. Likewise many of the townspeople and of the nobility settled in Ruthenia and became in time the natural bond between the natives of these provinces, whose faith bound them to Constantinople, and the rest of the empire whose tastes and connections were those of the west.

Although Kazimir realized that unity in religion would be most desirable for the solidarity of the nation, and with that in view founded Roman Catholic bishoprics in Przemyśl, Włodzimierz (Vladimir Volhynski) and Chelm, and established two religious orders in Ruthenia, yet he gave complete freedom and encouragement to the prevailing Greek religion. The Ruthenian bishopric at Halicz was raised to the dignity of a metropolis to make it independent of the See of that Church, recently moved from Kieff to Moscow. His religious tolerance was well exhibited in his relations with the Jews, who, persecuted practically all over Europe, settled in large numbers in the Polish cities. The protection afforded to them in the XIIIth century in Kalisz and Great Poland was extended by Kazimir throughout his kingdom.

The German settlers in the villages, forming small foreign islets in a great native sea, had in the course of time become completely amalgamated with the native population. In the cities, however, where they clustered in large groups, they preserved their distinct identity and had strong German attachments. Shielded by their independent municipal organizations they remained entirely foreign to the country of their adoption. They formed an anomaly in the body politic, which proved dangerous in times of war.



FIG. 30—THE SEAL OF KAZIMIR THE GREAT

Kazimir like his father Lokietek who had to face an open rebellion on the part of the German city element, well realized the gravity of the situation and strove to modify the relations of the cities to the crown. In 1356 Kazimir established in Cracow a court for city affairs, to which appeals from local municipal courts were to be taken. This court was established to obviate the need of appealing to the Courts of Magdeburg and Halle.

By special protection of the rights and safety of merchants Kazimir gave an additional stimulus to



Polish commerce. Poland was and still is the natural bridge between Europe and the East. Commercial routes between the Baltic and the Black Sea, between Russia and the Hanseatic cities cross in Poland. Some of the Polish cities, like that of Kalisz, ruined during the recent war operations, were known in antiquity. In the XIVth century a number of large and prosperous cities, like Wroclaw (Breslau) and Cracow were in constant touch with the largest trad-

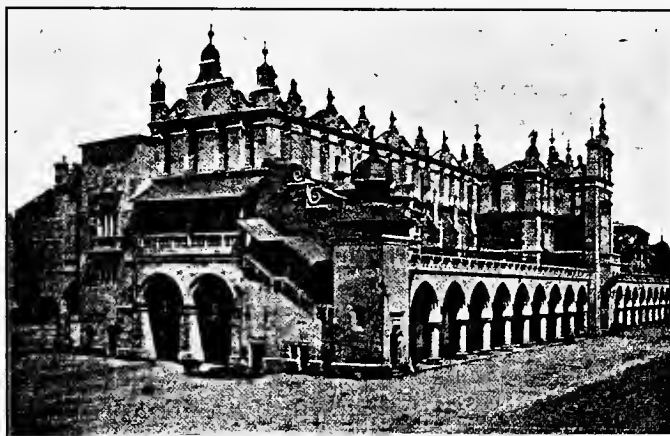


FIG. 31—SUKIENNICE, THE ANCIENT CLOTH HALL OF CRACOW

ing centres of the world. The products of Polish industries were at the time successfully competing with those of other industrial countries and Polish cloth (polenschen Laken) compared favorably with that of Flanders. Famous were the cloth-halls of Poland, and that still standing in Cracow is a magnificent example of Polish municipal architecture of the middle ages.

To increase the natural advantages of the Polish cities, Kazimir improved the roads, constructed

bridges, suppressed highway robbery, and built large storehouses in the cities and along the roads and navigable rivers. Through colonization he founded a large number of new towns, encouraged industries and navigation. He strengthened, by walls and castles, the defenses of the country. To protect the native merchants he promulgated a law whereby foreign merchants were debarred from retail sales. In the development of the cities and in the growth of their wealth and importance he saw a support of the kingly power against the disquietingly growing might and lawlessness of the magnates and nobility and the independence of the church.

Kazimir's reforms and particularly the strong executive arm of the government were strongly opposed by both the magnates and the clergy, and a number of armed uprisings were organized, all of which were suppressed by the King. He realized, however, that reforms, no matter how wise or beneficial, cannot be forced upon a nation by the superior will of a sovereign, and that law and order cannot be enforced unless they have the respect of the people. To educate political leaders he founded an Academy of Sciences in Cracow in the year 1364. This was the second academy of the kind in Europe, that of Prague preceding it by a few years only. For purposes of comparison it may be of interest to state that the University of Vienna was founded a year later, and that of Heidelberg two years later. The University of Erfurt was established in 1392, of Leipzig in 1409, of Cologne and of Rostock in 1419, of Halle in 1694, of Breslau in 1702, of Göttingen in 1736 and of Berlin in 1809. The University of Moscow was founded in the year 1755 and that of St. Petersburg in 1819. Even before the founding of the Cracow Academy a number of writers and scientists of high attainment

and originality appeared in Poland. The most distinguished of them was Ciolek, known by his Latin name of Vitellio, who is considered as the founder of the science of optics.

By the end of Kazimir's reign Poland was unified politically, not only in the person of the King, but through the legal, economic and social reforms which he had been able to bring about. Well aware of the profound changes which were taking place in the life of contemporary Poland, he and his advisors endeavored to frame legislation that would meet adequately the new conditions. Expression was given to the really true conception of the function of all legislation in the opening sentences of the Wislica Statute which stated that "no one should wonder or condemn if, with the change of times, the customs and laws also change." The evolutionary conception of law, as thus expressed in this first Polish Statute, is truly remarkable. The principle served as a guide for future generations and Polish political thought indeed never recognized immutability or fixity of state organization or of traditional legal concepts. The life of the citizen was never fettered by rigid law enactments. On the contrary, laws were made to meet newly arising conditions as soon as they became discernible. This explains the fullness of Polish life which so often puzzled foreign observers, brought up as they were under the traditions of absolutism. It explains also both the strength and the weakness of the Polish Republic.

Though Kazimir's foreign policy failed to bring back into the Polish fold the lost provinces, yet for his wise administration and peaceful achievements he is known in Polish history as Kazimir the Great, who "found Poland of wood and left her of stone."



FIG. 32.—GENERAL VIEW OF GRODNO

## CHAPTER V.

### The Union with Lithuania

With Kazimir the Great the Polish dynasty of the Piasts came to an end in 1370. Kazimir was married thrice but left no male heir. Long before his death the matter of succession to the throne was widely discussed. Realizing the growing dangers to the country from the Order of the Cross on one side, and from the German Empire, Bohemia and Brandenburg, all united under one dynasty, on the other, the King and the country saw the need of a permanent union with another strong nation. The Hungarian King Ludwig, son of Karl Robert and Elizabeth, Kazimir's sister, was chosen heir to the Polish throne. In acceding to this choice in preference to a native Prince of the House of Piast the magnates demanded certain guarantees from Ludwig. First, that he would restore the lost provinces, particularly Pomerania, to Poland; second, that no Polish troops would be used in wars carried on in the interests of Hungary; third, that the public offices in Poland would be given to Poles exclusively; and fourth, that there would be no interference with home

The Extinction of the Piast Dynasty

rule and with the privileges and exemptions in force at the time. After having sworn to all the above named guarantees, Ludwig was proclaimed heir to the Polish throne without any opposition on the part of the numerous Piast princes.



(J. Mateyko)

FIG. 33—LUDWIG (1370-1382)

In 1370 Ludwig, then King of Hungary, ascended the throne of Poland. Ambitious but narrow-minded, he soon came into conflict with the Polish nobles, whom he desired to subdue as he had subdued the barons of his native land. Feeling against him rose high when he tore Red Russia from Poland and gave it to one of his friends with a feudatory title. Great Poland openly rebelled. Soon, however, he entered into a compromise with the nobles, particularly those of Little Poland, over the matter of succession to the Polish throne. Ludwig had no son, but he

had three daughters, and his desire was to leave a throne to each of them.

To insure the consent of the nobles to the acceptance of his second daughter as Queen of Poland

**The Origin  
of Special  
Concessions  
in Favor of the  
Nobility**

he entered into a pact with them by which, for the support of his daughter, he promised the restoration of the lost provinces, reconfirmed his pre-coronation guarantees and offered certain additional privileges, and a practical exemption from taxes, except on land, and those were made very low. This famous covenant of Koszyce, made in 1374, introduced a new feature into the political life of the country. Henceforth the Kings of Poland were forced to make certain agreements before their titles and prerogatives were recognized by the nobles. The other importance that attaches to this covenant lies in the fact that for the first time in Polish history class privileges received legal sanction. Heretofore only individuals had been granted exemptions. Now the whole nobility, or knighthood, as a class, were given certain special privileges.

After the death of Ludwig, in 1382, an open revolt broke out against his daughter Mary, who was betrothed to Siegmund, Markgrave of Brandenburg, and son of Emperor Karl IV. It was feared that through such a union German domination would again be forced upon Poland. During the interregnum lasting two years, Jadwiga, the younger daughter of the deceased king, married to an unimportant German prince, was agreed upon as Queen of Poland by the confederacy of Great Poland, with the specific understanding, however, that the queen reside permanently in Poland. This confederacy of

**The First  
Civil War  
Over Royal  
Succession**



FIG. 34—JADWIGA (1384-1399)

(J. Mateyko)

the nobility was the prototype of a political organization which was peculiarly Polish, and which played an important rôle in the future history of the country.

After a fierce civil war among the various factions which desired to restore one of the native princes to the throne, the youthful Jadwiga was crowned as the sovereign of Poland on October 15, 1384.

The magnates of Little Poland, who, until the maturity of the Queen, were to be the regents of the country, now conceived a plan of annulling Jadwiga's marriage and uniting Poland and Lithuania against their common enemy, the Order of the Cross, through the marriage of the Queen with the Lithuanian Prince Jagiello. At the time Lithuania was in the throes of a civil war skillfully grafted upon the country by the intrigue of the Grand Master of the Order, who, in a peaceful development of Lithuania and her growing propensities toward Christianity, saw a vanishing opportunity for further conquests.

The founder of the Lithuanian Empire was Gedymin, 1315-1341, who had carried his successful expeditions against the Northern Slavs and Ruthenians as far as Pskov on the north and the Dnieper on the east, and conquered Kieff on the south. Though a pagan himself, Gedymin favored Roman Catholicism, built churches in Wilno and Novogrodek, gave his daughter, Anna Aldona, to Prince Kazimir the Great, and intended to become a Christian himself, but his plans were frustrated by the intrigues of the Order of the Cross. After his death Lithuania became divided among his sons. At the time of Jad-

**The Union  
with Lithuania  
in Defence  
Against  
Teuton  
Aggressiveness**



wiga's ascendance to the Polish throne Lithuania consisted of two independent duchies, one with a native Lithuanian population and the other composed almost entirely of conquered Ruthenian territories. After a long feud between the rulers of the two duchies, craftily supported by the Chevaliers of the Cross, peace was established to make joint war against the Order possible. This peace came at the time when the Polish statesmen were planning the union with Lithuania. It was not difficult to induce Jagiello to make the first move. He consented to receive baptism in accordance with the Roman Catholic rites and to introduce Catholicism in Lithuania. He also agreed to extend the privileges of the nobility and pledged himself to restore to Poland her lost provinces. The new covenant with the King guaranteed: first, all Polish offices to the local nobility; second, compensation for military service outside of Poland; third, the right to elect judges of certain courts; and fourth, jurisdiction over the peasants in the landowners.

The first guarantee was a severe blow to concentration of military power in the hands of the King, for the commanders of the castles could not be appointed from among other than local nobles, and the second guarantee put a restraint on his freedom with reference to foreign affairs. In divesting the King of the power to appoint criminal judges the nobles scored a great victory which was, however, largely exploited by the magnates to further their control over the rank and file of the nobility. The fourth privilege gave the landlords supreme power over their peasants.

**The Social  
and Political  
Significance  
of the Union**

With the coronation of Jagiello in 1386, who, on

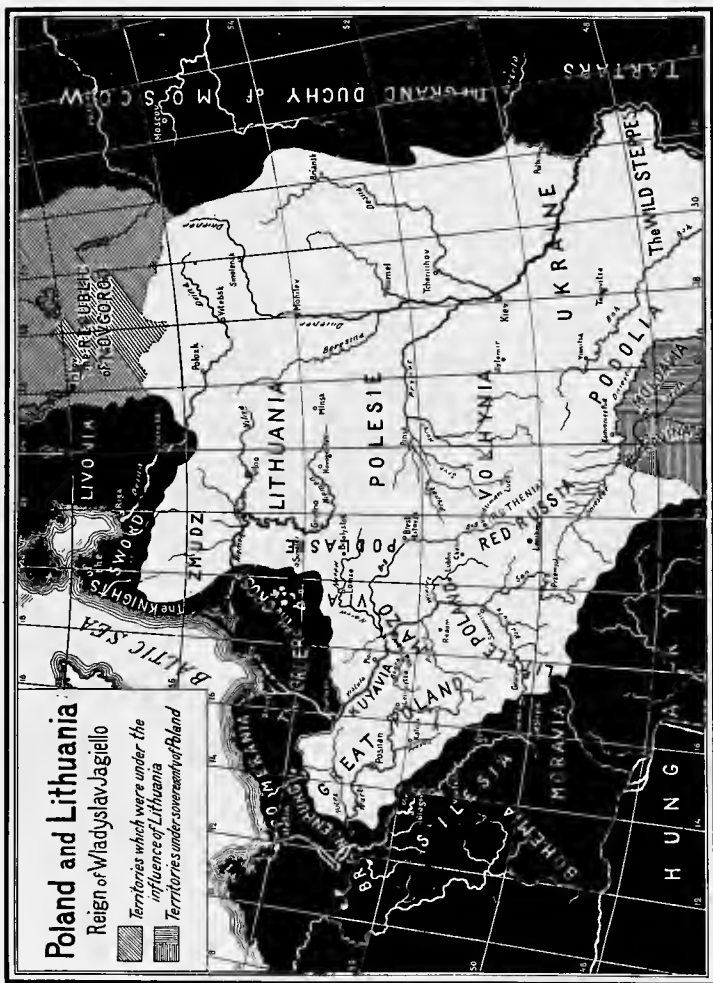


FIG. 35—WLADYSLAV JAGIELLO, (1386-1434) (J. Mateyko)

baptism, took the Christian name of Wladyslav, all of his domains in Lithuania proper, as well as in White and Black Russia, Ukraine, Volhynia and elsewhere, became integral parts of the Polish state. These extensive lands over which Poland had waged long wars thus became peacefully united with Poland. At about the same time Red Russia was reclaimed from Hungary by force of arms, and the Hospodar of Moldavia, seeking protection against Hungary, paid homage to King Jagiello and became his vassal. In 1389 Wallachia recognized Polish sovereignty, and in 1396 Bessarabia followed the course of her neighbors. In this way Poland reached the lower Danube and Dnieper and the shores of the Black Sea. A strong, healthy colonization movement again resumed its natural course into the sparsely settled territories of Ruthenia, Volhynia and the fertile plains between the Dniester and the Dnieper, carrying with it advanced agriculture, industries and prosperity, law, order, language and literature. The Polish influence had not died out in what is now Roumania until the beginning of the past century. A hundred years ago Polish still was the language of the upper classes of that country.

Polish science took a powerful upward swing after the reorganization of the Kazimirian Academy in 1400. Queen Jadwiga, a noble and pious woman, bequeathed her personal wealth for the endowment and enlargement of the Academy. A School of Theology was added to the existing departments. King Jagiello, after whom the University had been named, gave in perpetuity the income from certain domains toward the maintenance of the institution. The charter, organization and character of the old Academy was changed. The bishops of Cracow became the heredi-

**The University  
of Cracow**



tary ex-officio chancellors of the Academy and the professors, students, librarians and other officers were organized into a university corporation and came under special jurisdiction. The office of the Rector of the University was made elective, the incumbent to be chosen from among the professors.



FIG. 36—A BACHELOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CRACOW WITH THE ZODIAC

Soon the fame of the new university spread over all Europe and attracted a large number of scholars and students from foreign countries. In the second half of the XVth century almost one-half of the students enrolled were of foreign birth.\* The total enrollment was very large and both the student body and the teaching staff were recruited from all

\* L. Litwinski "Intellectual Poland," N. Y. The Polish Book Importing Co., Inc., 1916, p. 32.

strata of society. Beside the sons of the potentates sat young men from the humbler ranks of nobility, of city birth and even peasants.

By means of large donations wealthy patrons increased the endowment and opportunities of the



FIG. 37.—THE SCEPTRES OF THE UNIVERSITY

Academy. Several commodious and well equipped college dormitories were built, and a number of preparatory schools established. The stimulus given by the Academy to the intellectual life of the country was pronounced and beneficent. "The University

became the living link connecting Poland with European education and science. . . . It gave rise to that

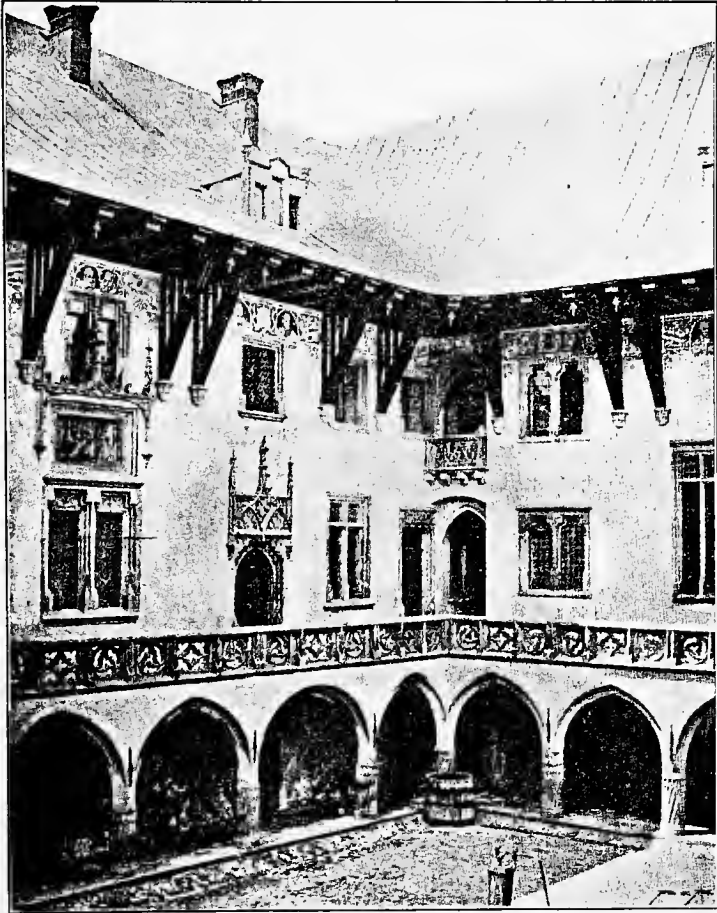


FIG. 38—THE COURT OF THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

union of Poland with the civilization of the west, which moulded the country's character and history,

and which has left on her an imprint so strong that nothing can remove it.”\*

At the time the University was reorganized, theological questions were occupying the minds of the greatest thinkers of Europe. The Cracow Academy came at once to the front in these discussions and made important contributions. The respect with which the ecclesiastical world listened to the dissertations of the Polish scholars and the influence they



FIG. 39--VOYCIECH OF BRUDZEV, MATHEMATICIAN AND ASTRONOMER,  
TEACHER OF COPERNICUS

exercised at the deliberations of the great Church synods of the XVth century is an eloquent tribute to the scholarship of the Academy. In spite of the pre-occupation of the faculty with problems of theology and the control the Church exercised over the teaching at the University, Humanism found an early echo at Cracow. Great as was the reputation of the University for its theological dissertations, it was insignificant in comparison with the renown it

\* S. Tarnowski, "Historia literatury polskiej," Kraków, 1903, p. 29-30.



gained by its contributions to science. The mathematical and astronomical works of Voyciech of Brudzew, the medical knowledge of Matthew of Miechow and the glory of the immortal Copernicus, astronomer and economist, placed the Jagiellon University among the foremost European temples of learning.



FIG. 40—THE SEAL OF THE CRACOW UNIVERSITY IN THE DAYS OF WLADYSLAV JAGIELLO

For Lithuania the union with Poland had the most far-reaching political and cultural advantages.

**The Importance of the Union for Lithuania**

The civilization of Lithuania was very low at the time. Slavery was the basis of her social and economical structure. The prince's power was absolute. He was supreme lord over the life and death of his subjects. The Lithuanian nobles or "boyars" held lands as feudatories and had no right to dispose of them. Without the permission of the prince they could not even marry. Through the union with Poland the "boyars" received many rights and privileges similar to those which the Polish nobility enjoyed. The introduction of the Roman Church and

the spread of the standards of European civilization which came with the mighty tide of Polish colonization brought Lithuania into the family of western nations. She shook off the influence of the east to which she had nearly succumbed under the influence of Northern Slavic and Ruthenian peoples, who were under her sovereignty and whose life standards, though low, were still higher than those of the Lithuanians. Before the union with Poland Ruthenian had

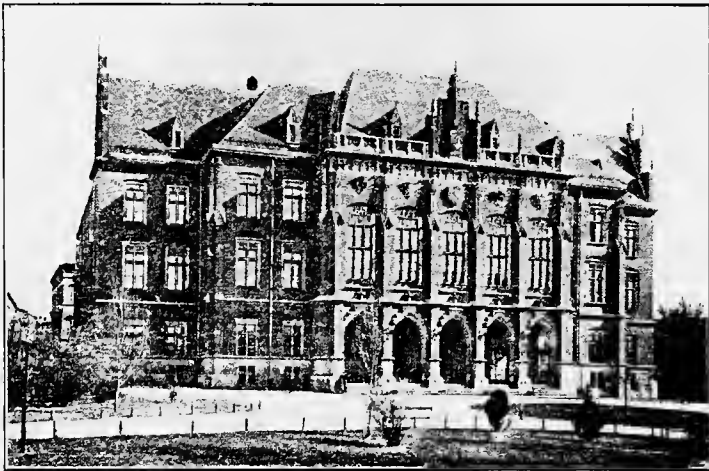


FIG. 41—THE NEW BUILDING OF THE UNIVERSITY (COLLEGIUM NOVUM)

become the language of the court and of the nobles. Though crude, it was superior to the Lithuanian tongue which never developed into a literary language.

By uniting with Poland, Lithuania could freely concentrate her energy on the Order of the Cross, as the wars with Poland for the supremacy over Ruthenian provinces naturally ceased. This was a great political advantage.



(J. Mateyko)  
FIG. 42--DUKE WITOLD OF LITHUANIA

The enemies of Poland and Lithuania were quick to perceive that this union of the two countries was against their interests and decided to bring about its disruption. For this purpose they utilized Jagiello's cousin, the indomitable Duke Witold, who was the ruler of another part of Gedymin's empire, and who had temporarily abandoned the old feud which existed between his father and Jagiello. Entangled

**Lithuania's  
Position in the  
Dual State**

in the web cleverly spun by the Order of the Cross, the ambitious Witold declared war against Jagiello. To stop the bloody civil strife Jagiello appointed Witold the sole Governor of all Lithuania and Ruthenia. Witold accepted the appointment and adopted the title of Grand Duke of Lithuania. Order was soon restored in the domains under Witold's rule and extensive foreign conquests were made. He recaptured Smolensk, which remained under Polish sovereignty for over a hundred years, until 1514; the republics of Pskov and Novgorod also came under his control. These successes, together with his far-reaching schemes of capturing Moscow and crushing its overlords, the Tartars, led him subsequently to refuse to pay tribute to Jadwiga and her husband. But the defeat he suffered at the hands of the Tartar Khan led to another treaty between Poland and Lithuania in 1401, by which Witold was recognized as Grand Duke of Lithuania for life, but after his death the duchy was to revert forever to the Polish crown. In the adoption of this new treaty the Lithuanian boyars for the first time in their history took part in matters of state, and officially concurred in the stipulations of the treaty. By a special document the Polish nobles promised the Lithuanian boyars that after Jagiello's death no king would be elected without their knowledge and consent.

In the course of one of his wars with Jagiello, as payment for help Witold ceded to the Order of the Cross that part of the territories abutting on the Baltic which lie between the Niemen and the Dvina, known as Zmudz. When the union with Poland was restored he realized that he had made a bad bargain and demanded the return of the province. The warlike Master of the Order, Ulrich von Jun-

**The Defeat  
of the Order  
of the Cross**

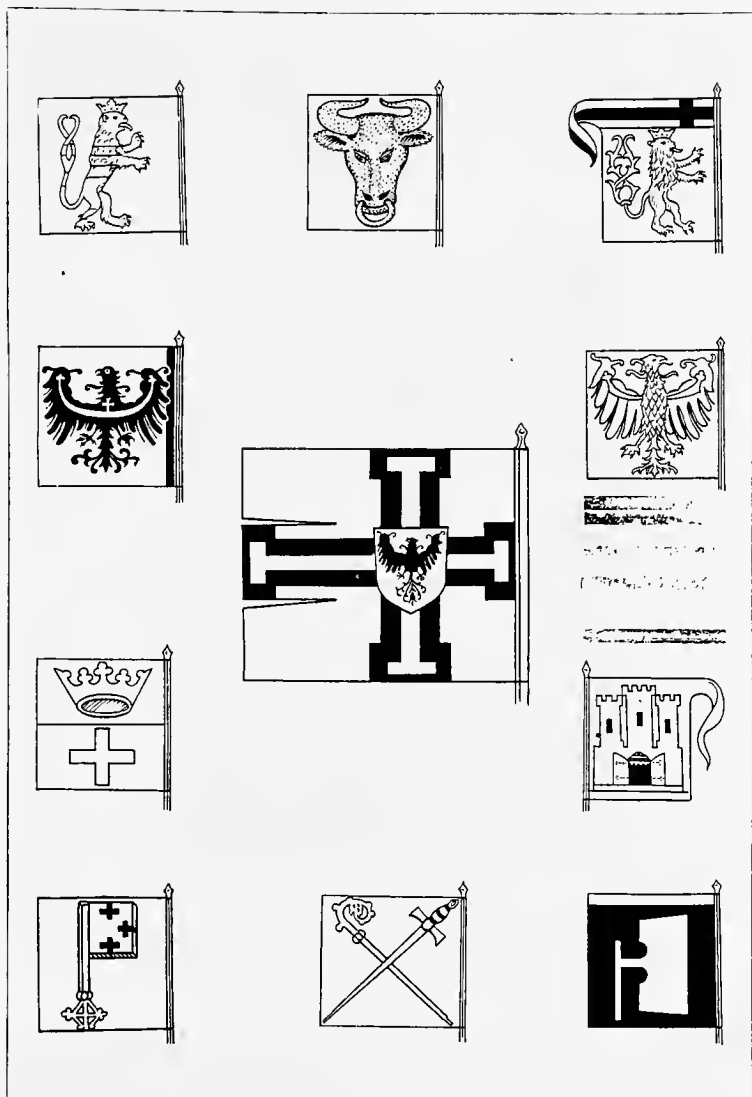


FIG. 43—SOME OF THE STANDARDS OF THE KNIGHTS OF THE CROSS CAPTURED IN THE BATTLE OF GRUNWALD

gingen, answered by sending an overwhelming expedition, joined by the best troops of Brandenburg, Hungary, Stettin and volunteers from all over Europe. They were met by an army of one hundred thousand Poles, Lithuanians and their vas-

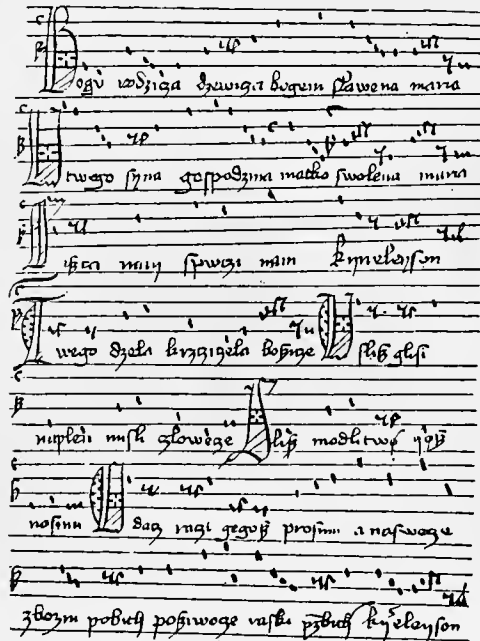


FIG. 44—"LOGARODZICA," THE EARLIEST KNOWN POLISH NATIONAL HYMN AND WAR SONG. IT WAS TO THE STRAINS OF THIS SONG THAT THE POLISH KNIGHTHOOD HURLED ITSELF AGAINST THE BLOODY ORDER OF THE CROSS AND OVERPOWERED IT

sals at Grunwald in the Mazurian Lakes region, a little south of the recent battlefield of Tannenberg, where the Russians met with such disastrous defeat at the hands of von Hindenburg. Five hundred years ago the same battlefield saw the crushing defeat of

the Teutons. The might and glory of the Order was forever shattered, and Poland soared up as one of the most powerful states of Europe, extending from the Baltic to the Black Sea, and from the Oder and the Carpathians to the Dnieper.

This stupendous victory welded more firmly the bonds uniting the peoples of Poland and Lithuania. In the year 1413 the representatives of the nobility and clergy of the two countries met at Horodlo, on the River Bug, in Volhynia, and confirmed the previous treaties between the two countries. It was agreed to introduce into Lithuania the Polish institutions and offices, and, in the future, to call joint political conventions of representatives of the two countries. The coats-of-arms of the Polish nobility was given to the Lithuanian boyars of the Roman Catholic faith to express by this outward sign of brotherhood the spirit permeating the union of the two nations, which was so beautifully worded in the sentences of the Horodlo treaty: "He shall receive no grace of salvation whom love does not sustain . . . . It is love that creates laws, rules nations, builds cities and leads the republic to her best destinies, perfects all virtues of the virtuous . . . . Therefore, we prelates, knights and nobility of the Polish crown by this document do unite our homes and future generations with the knighthood and nobility of Lithuania."



FIG. 45—GENERAL VIEW OF DANZIG

## CHAPTER VI.

### Oligarchal Rule in Poland

The sentiments voiced in the treaties with Lithuania were expressions of a lofty political ideal which the Lithuanian people, due to their political immaturity, were slow to appreciate at first. The far-sighted Witold of Lithuania realized the great importance of the union, as only thus united could Poland and Lithuania withstand the pressure exerted upon them by their neighbors. But his ambitions would not allow him to become entirely reconciled to an inferior rôle, and he never could tolerate having Poland play the master part. After the battle of Grunwald he suddenly withdrew from the field, and by this action prevented Jagiello from exploiting the victory in a way which the defeat suffered by the Knights justified. The city of Malborg, capital of the Order, remained in the hands of the Knights, who, by the breathing spell afforded through the retirement of the Lithuanians and Ruthenians, were able to gather their scattered forces. This was the reason that Jagiello could obtain from the Order only the recession of Zmudz, and an indemnity of one hundred thousand bushels of small Prague silver coins.

The Settlement of Difficulties with Lithuania



Subsequently, on account of Witold's ambition and the nefarious intrigues of the Knights, a new war with the Order broke out, which lasted for a number of years and the settlement of which was entrusted to the Church Council of Constance. For a long time Witold held the unruly princes of his domains in an iron grip and compelled them to respect the union, but toward the end of his life he again fell prey to the enticements of the German Emperor, who offered him a separate crown. The emperor looked with disfavor upon the union of the two countries, and in order to sever it, took advantage of the vanity and ambitions of the old prince. Only the energetic intervention of the magnates of Little Poland and the death of Witold prevented a disruption of the union.

The elements in Lithuania which were least benefited by the union were the Ruthenian princes and boyars belonging to the Greek Church, who had been denied the dignities, rights and privileges of the Roman Catholic nobility. The death of Witold in 1430 afforded opportunity for an open revolt. The Lithuanians and Ruthenians proclaimed Swidrygiello, the youngest brother of the King, Grand Duke of Lithuania, in violation of the existing treaties with Poland by which Lithuania, after the death of Witold, was to return to the sovereignty of Poland. To avoid possible hostilities Jagiello recognized Swidrygiello's title, but in spite of this, the latter, incited by the Emperor and the Order, declared war. He suffered a serious defeat at Lutsk in 1431. Meanwhile the Teutonic knights again invaded the province of Great Poland and burned twenty-four cities and over a thousand villages. Poland was then compelled to ask for a truce of two years.

Because of his ill success in arms and his policy of fostering the religious schism Swidrygiello was

forced from his throne by his subjects. He was replaced by Zygmunt, one of Witold's brothers, who, by the treaty of Grodno, in 1432, was recognized by Jagiello as Grand Duke of Lithuania, with the understanding, however, that Lithuania's independence would cease with Zygmunt's death. By the same Grodno treaty the nobles of Lithuania and Ruthenia, who were of the Greek faith, were admitted to full citizenship, and were given Polish escutcheons on equal terms with the Roman Catholic nobles. Considering the prevailing feelings and prejudices of the Roman Catholic world of the XVth century, one cannot but admire the spirit of the convention which, in this noble way, endeavored to lay solid foundations for the extension of the Polish state and to base them upon principles of justice and equality.

By the trend of events narrated in this and the subsequent chapters, these political ideals of justice and equality were in time narrowed down in their application to but one class—the nobility, a term which in time became synonymous with citizenship in Poland, and which did not necessarily imply ownership of land.

**The Growth  
of the Special  
Privileges  
of the Nobility**

The Polish nobility came into existence at a time when the Poles were in a comparatively early stage of social development, when the clan was the basic unit of the social structure. With the introduction of escutcheons, whole clans were admitted to nobility. In this manner, unlike the other European nations, where nobility developed in a relatively later stage of social evolution, a great many elements of a low economic and social status became nobles, and this also accounts for the fact that there were proportionately more nobles in Poland than in Western Europe, and that there were no differences in the grades of

nobility as found among other nations. The subsequent additions to the nobility were also numerous and were accomplished either through adoption or the conferring of nobiliary honors. The former method, which required the consent of the clan, was the usual practice until the XIVth century, when it was replaced by that of nobilitation by the king, who, in an earlier period, conferred his own escutcheon upon the candidate, admitting him, as it were, to his own clan. At a later date various coats-of-arms were bestowed at the nobilitation ceremonies. All those who had an escutcheon were nobles. The possession of land was not a necessary prerequisite to a title of nobility, but those of the nobility who were land owners in some instances enjoyed special privileges.

In the time of Wladyslav Jagiello the nobility became strongly differentiated from the other classes of society, and the magnates among the nobility acquired almost absolute power in matters of state. Many causes were responsible for the development of an oligarchic monarchy in Poland at that time. The King was an uneducated foreigner who had to rely upon native advisers to gain popularity. Unscrupulous and powerful magnates took advantage of this circumstance to secure for themselves privileges in addition to those granted to them and to the nobility in general by the Koszyce Pact with King Ludwig in 1374, and subsequently by King Jagiello at the time of his coronation in 1386. Moreover, the almost incessant wars which Jagiello was obliged to carry on required great sacrifices in men and wealth. To obtain them he had to make frequent requests of the nobles and magnates who, in return for their services, demanded concessions and privileges. The war taxes weighed heavily upon them, and, as many of the nobility were poor, the constantly increasing tax

levies tended to impoverish them still further. This accounts for the fact that in spite of the broadened political privileges gained, the rank and file of the nobility were unable to assert themselves in the



(J. Mateyko)

FIG. 46—CARDINAL ZEIGNIEW OLESNICKI

government. In the local conventions called by them from time to time they demanded reforms and participation in the affairs of the country on the basis of the principle of "no taxation without representation."

Bending to their will, the king would frequently submit his more important projects to the approval of these conventions. The custom took firm root, and the nobility did not miss a single opportunity of insisting upon their rights and of endeavoring to obtain further privileges.

On the eve of an expedition against the Teutonic Knights in 1422, the nobility assembled at Czerwinsk and obtained, in return for the promise of participation in the expedition, several economic and fiscal privileges, and the recognition of the principle that a nobleman's property cannot be confiscated without due process of law. In 1430, only two centuries after the Magna Charta, and almost a century before the English "habeas corpus law" was enacted, the Polish nobles secured at Jedlnia, in consideration of the recognition of the claims of Jagiello's sons to the throne of Poland, the famous privilege: "Neminem captivabimus, nisi jure victum," according to the terms of which no nobleman could be arrested except upon the verdict of a court or when caught in the act of committing murder, arson or theft. The same Jedlnia Act required the consent of the nobles to the coinage of money by the king.

The privileges gained by the nobles, which resulted in restrictions of the regal power, were also aimed at the magnates, who usurped all the high state offices and exercised undue power over legislation. This circumstance led the clergy to side with the nobles against the magnates. With the help of the nobles the clergy soon secured control over the destinies of the country, its government, education and foreign policy.

Jagiello was married four times, and only by his last wife was there male issue. The first son, Wladys-

**The As-  
cendency of  
Ecclesiastical  
Power**

lay, was born ten years before Jagiello's death. Upon the ascent to the throne of Poland by the youthful king, the regency of the country was placed in the hands of Zbigniew Oleśnicki, Bishop of Cracow, and later Cardinal, a man of power and ambition, who had already played a very conspicuous part in the affairs of the country at the close of Jagiello's reign. During the regency he became practically omnipotent. It was because of this ecclesiastic rule in Poland that the union with Bohemia, eagerly sought by the Hussites, did not come to pass. As is well known, the Huss movement in Bohemia was partly religious and economic, but principally nationalistic. It was the uprising of the middle and lower classes of Bohemia against the German rule and the supremacy of German influences. The upper strata of the Bohemian nation were at that time completely Germanized and had assumed German names. The ruling dynasty of the kingdom was that of Luxemburg. When Huss was treacherously burned at the stake in the year of the Council of Constance, 1415, an open revolution broke out in Bohemia, which lasted for a period of over fifteen years. The Catholic clergy were banished and Hussitic services introduced. The Taborites, or radical wing of the Hussites, destroyed many castles and churches. In 1419 the Bohemian King died and the throne was to pass to his brother, Emperor Siegmund. The Hussites then turned to Jagiello with an offer of the crown of Bohemia. The Polish clergy immediately raised a cry against it. The Archbishop of Gnesen, Nicholas Tromba, who, at the Council of Constance, was a candidate for the Papal tiara, called a synod at Kalisz, which resolved to bend every effort to crush the spread of the Huss doctrines in Poland and to deal sharply with the heretics. At the same time Emperor Siegmund, in order to gain Polish sup-

port, approached the Polish sovereign widower, offering the hand of his sister-in-law, with a dowry of the much-coveted Province of Silesia. The marriage did not come to pass. Neither did the union with Bohemia. Submitting to the pressure of the powerful clergy, Jagiello reluctantly refused the Bohemian crown. The Czechs then turned to Witold, who accepted the invitation on condition that they make peace with the Church. He converted King Jagiello to his views, and soon an armed expedition, under the leadership of Zygmunt Korybut, the king's nephew, was ready. This action led the Pope, Martin V, to proclaim a crusade against Poland, and the Emperor started to form a coalition against Jagiello and Witold. In view of this coercion and also in view of the fact that Korybut did not succeed in reconciling the Czechs to the Church, Witold was compelled to resign from his plans.

Due to the ceaseless work of the clergy the reaction against the Hussites in Poland reached its apogee in the edict of Wielun, 1424, which commanded all the Poles residing in Bohemia to return to Poland, and those of the Poles who were suspected of sympathies with the heretics were turned over to ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Bishop Oleśnicki, who was responsible for the edict, was also instrumental in bringing about the meeting of the Emperor with Jagiello and Witold, at which they promised to recall the armed expedition from Bohemia. Soon afterward Emperor Siegmund died and again the Czechs turned to Poland with an offer of the crown. At that time Oleśnicki was regent, Wladyslav III, the youthful son of Jagiello, being King of Poland. It goes without saying that the offer was again declined. A large portion of the nobility, under the leadership

**The Suppres-  
sion of  
Hussitism  
in Poland**

of Spytek of Melsztyn, Abraham of Zbonz and others, protesting against what they considered a short-sighted policy, bound themselves into an armed confederacy. They were defeated and their followers dispersed. After their defeat, Hussitism in Poland came to a speedy end, but the dissatisfaction with the ecclesiastical régime, which was responsible for increased taxation, for a disastrous war with Turkey, and which failed to exploit the possibility of a union with Bohemia, grew and bore fruit with the ascent of Kazimir Jagiellonczyk, the second of Jagiello's sons, to the throne of Poland.

The above mentioned war with Turkey was a direct consequence of Oleśnicki's plan to secure the crown of St. Stephen's for King Wladyslav III, during whose childhood he had managed the affairs of the country. The union with Hungary was to compensate the loss of Bohemia and to pacify the minds of those who were dissatisfied with his policy regarding the Czechs. Moreover, the union would have given an opportunity of rendering services to Christianity by expeditions against the infidel Turks, who, for almost a century, had established themselves in Europe and were threatening western civilization. Hungary had been carrying on constant wars against the Ottomans, and of late John Hunyadi had achieved great fame in his campaigns against them. The union with Hungary under the existing circumstances was most unpopular among the Polish magnates, who foresaw the burdens it would impose and the difficulties into which it might lead the country. The contrary view, however, championed by Oleśnicki, prevailed and soon after his coronation the youthful Wladyslav III organized a crusade to liberate the Serbs, Bosnians and

**The Turkish  
Campaign for  
the Liberation  
of the Balkan  
Slavs**



other Balkan peoples from the Turkish yoke. Large Polish forces joined the Hungarians. The first campaign in 1443 was very successful. After his disastrous defeat at Nish the Sultan Amurad asked for peace and offered as a price the return of Serbia, Albania and the other provinces which the Turks had



(J. Mateyko)

FIG. 47—WLADYSLAV III (1434-1444)

taken from Hungary; he also offered to evacuate a large number of fortresses and to release all war prisoners, and an indemnity of one hundred thousand florins in gold. The terms were so extraordinary that no one believed that the Sultan could ever respect them, but with the advice of Hunyadi and other conservative men, peace was agreed upon at Szegedin on August 1, 1444. The news was received with joy in Poland. The home affairs of the country demanded the king's attention. A special assembly of nobles was immediately called at Piotrkow. Unfortunately,

however, the Papal legate, Cardinal Julian de Cesarinis, was able to persuade the warrior boy-king that his oath of peace with the infidels was not binding, and that in the interest of the Church war should be resumed immediately. On the 24th of September, less than two months after the treaty of Szegedin, Wladyslav was again in the field. The only ally which kept his promise to help in this expedition was Wallachia. The Greeks and the Serbs did not send the promised assistance. Overwhelming Turkish forces surrounded the Christian army at Varna on November 10, 1444, and almost entirely annihilated it. The Polish King met his death on the battlefield. "He was the only king in a Christian state," says the Polish historian Bartoszewicz, "who desired disinterestedly to save Christianity." But he succeeded only in dragging his country into countless difficulties.

The deceased king's brother, Kazimir Jagiellonczyk, who had been discharging the office of Grand Duke of Lithuania, was very slow in ascending the Polish throne to which he was elected by the nobility, assembled in April, 1445, at Sieradz. The chief reasons for his procrastination were his ambition to restore to Lithuania the provinces of Volhynia and Podolia, which were administered by Polish Governors, and his disinclination to subscribe to the liberties and privileges of the clergy and nobility. When, after many fruitless presentations, the king remained recalcitrant and insisted that the two provinces be put under Lithuanian control, and that he be not compelled to sign the *pacta conventa*, the magnates conditionally elected Boleslav of Mazovia. Thus threatened, Kazimir accepted the crown on June 18, 1447, without, how-

The Sub-  
ordination of  
the Church  
to the State



(J. Mateyko)

FIG. 48—KAZIMIR JAGIELLONCZYK (1447-1492)

ever, for the time being, taking an oath for the preservation of the privileges granted by his predecessors.

His first act after the coronation was to curb the power of the clergy by subordinating the church to the state. This effort found a sympathetic echo among the nobles, and was in accord with the then modern precepts of Humanism, which, in spite of the medieval teachings of the Cracow University, were taking root in Poland, and had a warm supporter in the energetic and wise young king. The gentry was at odds with the Church at the time over the ways the tithes were collected. In view of the enormous depreciation of currency it was to the advantage of the nobles to pay the tithes in specie. For the same reason the Church insisted that the tax be paid in kind. The struggle over this issue lasted for many decades. The efforts of the Polish ruler were strengthened by the then existing schism in the Church. As is well known, the cause that led to the schism was the question of the superiority of the Council over the Pope. The Council of Basel, 1431-1449, holding an affirmative view on the subject, declared Pope Eugene IV, who was of the opposite opinion, deprived of his dignity and elected Felix V in his place. Bishop Oleśnicki, who at that time was regent of Poland, concurred in the view laid down by the Council of Basel, but proclaimed the country's neutrality with reference to the two popes, an attitude which prevailed until the ascent of Kazimir Jagiellonczyk. The new king saw in the schism an opportunity to secure the coveted privileges, and informed Pope Nicholas VI, Eugene's successor, of his readiness to recognize him, provided the right of nomination to ninety benefices in the arch-diocese of Gnesen be granted to him, as well as a part of the church

tithes, which he needed for a war with the Tartars. This recognition of the Pope Nicholas VI, in opposition to the Cracow University and to Bishop Oleśnicki, as well as the king's success in securing from the Pope the desired concessions, were a great blow to the ecclesiastical power in Poland. The victory was clinched when the king, after an obstinate fight established, in 1460, his appointee at the See of Cracow. The nomination of bishops then became a recognized attribute of the Polish sovereign.

The fight of the king with the Church was gratifying to the nobles, but they were restless over the fact that no recognition of their own privileges was forthcoming. Bound, on one hand, by his promise to return the provinces of Volhynia and Podolia to Lithuania, and, on the other, pressed by the Poles to take an oath on their liberties, the king tarried with the convocation of the Diet, fearing that the existing tension between Lithuania and Poland might lead to a disruption of the union. He was also desirous of postponing the sanction of the Polish liberties to which he was politically and temperamentally averse, and which tended to saddle an oligarchic rule upon the country.

The Lithuanian claims were finally granted by the Poles, but in practice, only Volhynia came under Lithuanian control, Podolia remaining with Poland. The king seized upon the retention of Podolia as an excuse for opposing the Poles, who were clamoring for a recognition of their privileges. A strong opposition arose with Bishop Oleśnicki at its head. Only in 1453, six years after his coronation, did the king finally swear to respect and preserve the liberties granted by his predecessors. He also submitted to the demand for an advisory council of four digni-

**The Struggle  
with the  
Oligarchy**

taries, without whose consent he should undertake nothing of importance. The king's submission to this demand was a signal victory for the magnates. The privileges sanctioned by the king, though embracing the whole of the nobility, redounded chiefly to the benefit of the wealthy potentates, and the great mass of common nobility remained without relief in their economic difficulties, caused by the constant wars and the lack of security against the iniquities of the lords.

In his fight against the aristocratic oligarchy the king could not rely upon the cities as did the rulers of other parts of Europe. The cities, which elsewhere in Europe constituted the buttress of the kings against the feudal lords, were, in Poland, losing their strength after the fall of Constantinople and were, in addition, inhabited in a large proportion by Germans, Jews and Armenians, who took no great interest in the matters of state and remained foreign to the country in which they lived and traded for generations. The great mass of citizen-nobles constituted, therefore, the only element which could be utilized by the king to curb the oligarchy. External circumstances expedited the extension of the rights and privileges of the Polish knighthood.

The Prussians, suffering from the heavy fiscal burdens placed upon them by the Knights of the

**Prussia's  
Request for  
Admission  
into the Polish  
State**

Cross, and seeing greater economic advantages for themselves by joining Poland, turned to Kazimir with a request that he accept them under his sovereignty. The union of the Prussian nobility and of the cities, known as the

Lizard Union from the emblem it chose, repeatedly petitioned the king to admit their country into the fold of the Polish state, which guaranteed to its citi-

zens liberty, safety and prosperity. The king's final consent to their request, against the advice of Bishop Oleśnicki, led to a war with the Order. At the call of the crown in 1454, great hosts of the nobles of Great Poland assembled at Cerekwica, not far from the city of Chojnice. Here they demanded of the king an extension of their rights which, in view of the impending war, was granted. Very soon afterward, a similar charter was granted to the nobility of Little Poland, assembled in camp near the city of Nieszawa. The statutes of Nieszawa, 1454, were made to apply to the nobility of the whole of Poland, and constituted the beginning of a regular constitution in Poland. These statutes became in reality the organic law of the country regulating the relationship of the various classes constituting the Polish nation. They abolished the usage of common law in the courts of justice and introduced the general application of the Wislica statutes as amended since the time of Kazimir the Great. They also exempted the nobility from the jurisdiction of the king's courts except in cases of murder, arson, theft and rape. Henceforth all cases came before judges nominated by the nobility and appointed by the king. The statutes limited the rights of the peasants, of the townspeople and of the Jews. They provided that no war could be declared by the king without the consent of the local land assemblies of the nobility, and that no new constitution or any law which would apply to the nobility could be promulgated by the king without the consent of the local land assemblies. The king was requested to attend the assemblies, either in person or by proxy. The local land conventions were to elect plenipotentiaries to represent them in the larger or general gatherings, the time and place of which was to be designated by the king. These gen-

eral assemblies, jointly with the king, had the power to make laws for the whole country. Representatives of the general assemblies were to convene at Piotrkow at stated intervals to advise the king in matters relating to state business. The dignitaries, without whose advice the king was not permitted to undertake anything of importance, constituted the continuation of the ancient Colloquium, which later developed into the Senate.

The war with the Order of the Cross, which caused this internal revolution in Polish affairs, lasted for twelve years, 1454-1466, and thanks to the unfaltering support of the Prussian towns and nobility, ended in a complete triumph of the Polish arms. By the treaty of Thorn, 1466, Pomerania, Chelmno and Michalow and the western part of Prussia with the cities of Malborg and Warmia, went to Poland. The eastern part of Prussia, with its capital Królewiec (Königsberg) remained in the hands of the Order as a fief of Poland. The Great Master of the Order pledged himself to recognize no other sovereigns except the Pope and the Polish King, and to form no alliance or declare war without the consent of the King of Poland. In return, he received a seat in the Polish Council of the Crown. The victory of Poland over the Order was hailed with joy by the Prussian nobles. They preferred the political liberties of Poland to the iron rule of the Order and manifested their sympathies by assuming Polish names. The barons von der Baysen changed their family name to Bażenski, the barons von Unruh to Niepokojszczycki, the counts von Hutten to Czapski, the von Oppelins to Bronikowski and so along the line.

By the crushing of the Order and by the free access to the Baltic and the possession of such ports as that of Gdańsk (Danzig), Poland became a great



political power, with inherent possibilities for an enormous economic expansion, which was so unfortunately thwarted by the ensuing wars.

The war with the Order made it impossible for Kazimir Jagiellonczyk to press his claims to the thrones of Bohemia and Hungary, after the childless death of Wladyslav Hapsburg, son of Emperor Albrecht, whose beautiful sister he had married. The Hungarians proclaimed Matthew Korwin, the son of John Hunyadi, as their

**The Extension  
of Polish  
Influence to  
Hungary and  
Bohemia**

king, and the Bohemians chose George of Podiebrad, a Hussite. The dissatisfied Catholic element in Bohemia turned to Poland. Kazimir intervened, and as a consequence his son ascended the throne of Bohemia. Soon afterward Hungary, at the death of Matthew Korwin, who left no legal sons, united with Bohemia under the same sceptre. Polish influence was, in this way, established over a wide area and in foreign lands, but at the same time it was rapidly waning in the old native province of Silesia. The clergy of that province, guarding against the spread of Hussitism which exercised such a peculiar fascination over the western Slavs, were Germanizing the autochthonous population by all available means. The Bishop of Breslau threatened with dispossession those of his Polish peasant tenants who would not in the course of five years adopt German customs and the German speech.

A break with the Lithuanians was also impending in spite of the perils which threatened both Poland and Lithuania from the Turks in the south and from the growing aggressiveness of Moscow on the east. The Turks settled on the Moldavian coast of the Black Sea in 1480, and occupied Akerman and

**The Turkish  
and Muscovite  
Perils**

Kilia, strong fortresses guarding the mouths of the Dniester and Danube, and endangered Polish trans-continental commerce and the Polish political sovereignty in Moldavia. On the east, the expanding autocracy of Moscow had already throttled the free Russian republics of Pskov and Novgorod, and was exhibiting disquieting designs for further conquests. Lithuania became restless.

At the time when the foreign policy with reference to the newly arising conditions on the east was being shaped, Kazimir died in Grodno on June 7, 1492, after a reign of forty-five years, rich in great events, men and glory. His character and achievements gave him an illustrious name and a prominent place in Polish History.

It was during the reign of Kazimir that Humanism gained a firm footing in Poland and a host of talented poets, historians and political thinkers sprang up. The beginnings of Humanistic currents in Poland date as far back as the second decade of the XVth century. In a short while the new turn in literature and philosophy found numerous adepts on the banks of the Vistula. A literary society known as "Sodalitas literaria vistulana" was organized at Cracow in 1489 composed of young enthusiastic poets and writers. The classic authors were studied profoundly and numerous literary productions paved the way for the future development of national art and literature. The Polish writers soon became masters of the classic style and earned their laurels from the Popes, as did Klemens Janicki (1516-1543). The tradition of Latin letters continued well into the XVIIth century, although the Polish language in literature had by that time superseded Latin almost completely. For his beautiful lyrics Matthew Sarbiewski (1595-1640), a

Humanism in  
Poland

professor at the University of Wilno, received the laurel wreath at the Capitol of Rome, and for centuries after his death his works in neo-Latin were studied beside the Roman classics in the principal colleges of Europe.

One of the earliest Humanists in Poland was George of Sanok who contributed a great deal toward the awakening of interest in the ancient authors and in their philosophy of life. He was soon overshadowed by a series of remarkable thinkers and writers. The struggle for supremacy between the King and the Church and the unsettled social conditions created a body of original political thought. Senator Jan Ostrorog (1420-1501) wrote a remarkable treatise advocating the subjection of ecclesiastical power to that of the State. He advised the curbing of the excessive prerogatives of the nobility and urged the nationalization of cities, the equalization of laws and the abolition of certain privileges. The favorable reception which Ostrorog's theories received in contemporary Poland is an indication of political maturity of the Polish nobility, and also shows how deeply the principles of sound political thinking had become imbedded in Polish life. Poland's political experience radiated abroad. The work "De optimo Senatore" by Bishop Goślicki, of Posen (known in Latin as Goslicius), was widely read and commented upon all over Europe.

Just as the struggle of the Crown with the Church called forth a whole literature on political and social philosophy, so the controversy with the Knights of the Cross, submitted to the Popes and Church Councils for adjudication, gave rise to juristic studies and historical research. The able defense of Poland's claim against the Order presented in the "Tractatus de potestate Papae et Imperatoris re-

spectu Infidelium” at the Council of Constance in 1415 by Paul of Brudzew, rector of the Cracow University made the author famous in Europe. This is but one of the numerous treatises prepared by Polish scholars on the subject. Towering above all other writers stands the historian Jan Dlugosz (1415-1480), who is considered superior to the celebrated historians,



FIG. 49—JAN DLUGOSZ (LONGINUS)

Commineus and Guicciardini. The “History of Poland” by Dlugosz, one time secretary of Cardinal Oleśnicki, is one of the most profound historical works of the XVth century. The erudition of the author, the painstaking examination of the sources, his searching criticism and gift of analysis and observation, his masterful classifications and method of presentation mark an era in history writing and laid solid foundations for all future national histories of Poland.

The end of the XVth century records Poland not only as one of the largest empires of the continent but as a country with a well developed and pronounced culture of her own.





FIG. 50—POLISH WALL PAPER OF THE XVI CENTURY

## CHAPTER VII.

### The Republic of Nobles

Immediately after the death of Kazimir Jagiellonczyk, John I Olbracht was elected King of Poland, 1492-1501. The Lithuanians elected his younger brother, Alexander, as Grand Duke of Lithuania in violation of the existing agreements. The new king was educated in accordance with the principles of Humanism, and, like his father, was determined to resist the power of the secular and temporal lords, and in these efforts sided with the nobility, whose idol he had become. The first two Diets which he convened during his reign, in 1493 and 1496, both at Piotrkow, amplified the statutes of Nieszawa. By the new law the nobility were exempted from tariff duties and other fiscal burdens, the peasants were restricted in their right to leave their villages, and the landlords were given the power to represent their peasants in the courts. Thereafter no peasant could appear in court unaccompanied by his landlord. This last provision, amplified by further statutes, finally threw the whole peasantry into complete dependence upon the private jurisdiction of the landowners. The peasants lost

**The Beginning  
of Serfdom**

their right to leave their settlements without the permission of the landowners, and the family could send but one of their boys to study in a city. By a further regulation they were not permitted to leave the country for seasonal work in neighboring states where higher wages prevailed.



(J. Matejko)

FIG. 51—JAN I OLBRACHT (1492-1501)

This movement to restrict the peasants coincides with the opening of the Baltic and the accession of the large Hanseatic port of Gdańsk (Danzig), through which a great opportunity presented itself for selling Polish grain and other agricultural products in Europe. To be able to produce grain for export the landowners needed a reliable and cheap labor force. Even prior to this time, as a result of the enormous depreciation of currency that took place in Poland, and similarly throughout Europe, in the XVth and XVIth centuries a tendency had arisen among the landlords to demand rent in the form of

services and produce rather than in specie, as had been the custom since the days of the first German settlements. Payment in services and other restrictions formed the foundation of serfdom. The year 1496 is regarded as the beginning of legal serfdom in Poland, leading to a patrimonial form of agrarian life, with the manor as the centre of every economic unit, and the landlord the source of supreme law and power. The same year ushered in the era of gradual decline of Polish cities. From this brief account it may be observed that the economic development of Poland was in complete contrast to that of contemporary England.

As has been mentioned before, the cities and towns of early Poland served chiefly as stations for transitory foreign commerce. Such was the original character of Kruszwica, Cracow, Lemberg, Posen and Breslau. In a later period when the Germans settlers changed the mode of Polish urban life and made them the foci of various crafts and industries, the cities became more closely fused with the entire social and economic fabric of the state. The cities, producing domestic utensils, cloth, beer and other articles of daily use, began to exchange them for the grain and other farm products of their immediate vicinity. In the XIIIth and XIVth centuries the Polish cities produced broadcloths, metalware, wire, tin sheets, swords, knives, paper, furniture, glassware, bricks and pottery in considerable quantities. In 1357 a whole street in the City of Cracow was inhabited by glass-workers, and at Posen a glass factory was established at the beginning of the XIIIth century.

Aside from the local merchants, the Polish cities had merchants who engaged in foreign commerce.

**The Growth  
and Decline of  
the Polish  
Cities**



They acted as intermediaries between the north and south, and the east and the west. Salt, silks, spices, wine, lemons, precious stones, trinkets and articles of a similar nature were imported, and cloth, grain, tallow, bristles, hides, furs, naval stores, lumber and other raw products were exported. Cities like Lemberg were important commercial centers for foreign

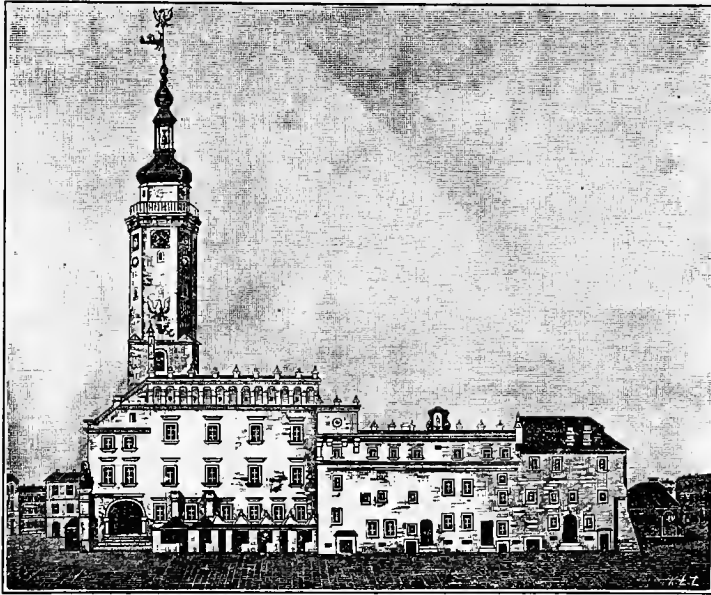
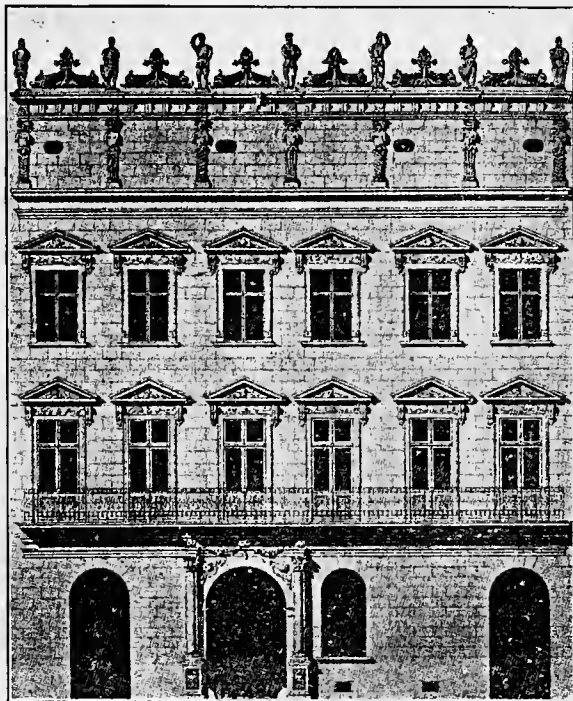


FIG. 52—THE CITY HALL OF LEMBERG IN THE XVI CENTURY

trade. Here were agents from many marts, such as Venice, Holland and Constantinople. The earliest exports of grain went to Holland, England and France. At the initiative of Emperor Emanuel Paleolog, regular exports of Polish grain to Constantinople began in the XIVth century. This was responsible for the energetic colonization movement in

fertile Ruthenia during the reign of Kazimir the Great. The Levant trade had always been a very important item in the commercial business of the country, and the fall of Constantinople proved to be disastrous to the prosperity of the ancient and most



(W. Lozinski)

FIG. 53—A HOUSE OF A WEALTHY POLISH BURGESS OF LEMBERG,  
CONSTANTINE KORNIAKT

important Polish cities. The difficulties put in the way of the Polish merchants by the Order of the Cross controlling the Baltic seacoast were relieved after the Jagiellon victory at Grunwald, in 1410, as considerable concessions were then obtained. In 1466

Prussia, with its seaports, became a part of Poland, and the whole course of the Vistula came back under

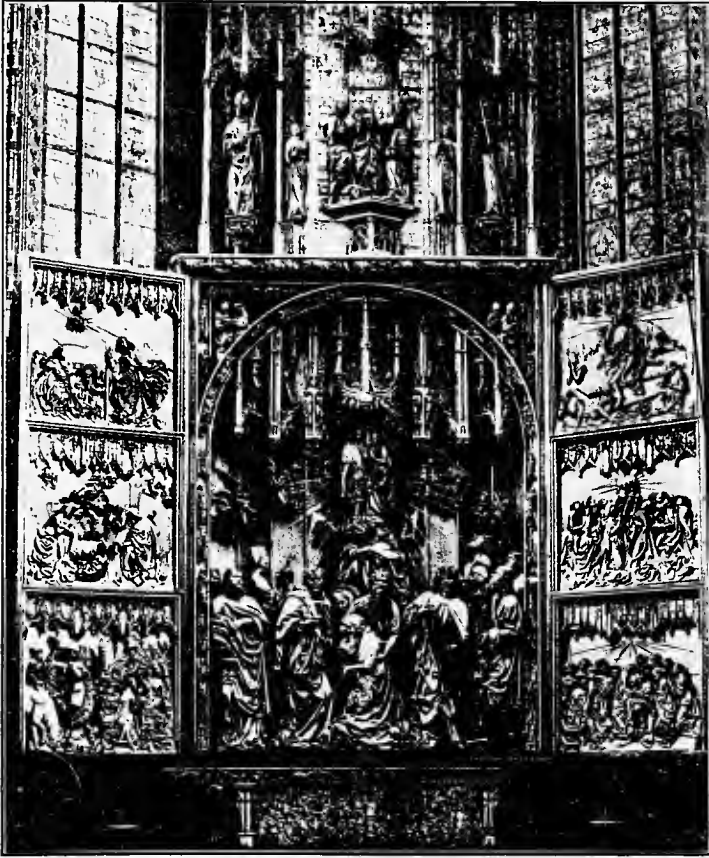


FIG. 54—THE TRIPTYCH OF THE HIGH ALTAR AT THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY VIRGIN MARY AT CRACOW. THE WORK OF VIT STWOSZ

the control of Poland. It afforded a great boom to commerce and agriculture, particularly since under the progressive law promulgated by Kazimir Jagiel-

lonczyk, in 1447, all navigable rivers were declared the property of the Crown and therefore public property, free for general use. Large freight fleets sailed back and forth upon the Vistula, carrying endless cargoes of wheat, rye, hemp, tar, honey, wax, bristles, fats, lumber, skins and furs to Danzig. The acquisition of Danzig and such other ports as Klaypeda (Memel) and Królewiec (Königsberg) resulting in an enormous increase in exports, caused a revolution in the economic and political life of the country. Its effect upon the organization of agriculture and



FIG. 55—VIT STWOSZ, THE FAMOUS POLISH SCULPTOR OF THE XV CENTURY.

the lot of the peasant has been mentioned. The nearer the district was to the Vistula and the easier the access to that Nile of Poland, the sooner were changes visible, and the earlier did the peasant lose his individual liberty and become a serf.

The enormous growth of exports produced a marked effect upon the cities. Due to the introduction of credit on a most extensive scale, they grew in wealth, and numerous families acquired enormous riches. At one time five European sovereigns were entertained by a merchant in Cracow. Private pal-

aces, artistic public buildings and beautiful churches adorned the towns. Art flourished. Wit Stwosz, the great Polish sculptor of the time, who designed the triptych of the high altar in the Church of the Holy Virgin Mary, was not a mere accident. He was a product of his milieu. Many foreign, particularly Italian, architects were brought over to design public and private buildings. In daily life the burghers wore



FIG. 56—MERCHANTS OF CRACOW OF THE XVI CENTURY

sumptuous dress of silk and lace, fine furs, gold, jewelry and precious stones. "Poor, indeed, was the master artisan or merchant who did not use silver tableware at home and whose wife did not possess a bonnet ornamented with pearls." The many gold, silver and bronze candelabra, chandeliers, candlesticks and other domestic utensils left from that period, still found in churches, museums and in private families

as heirlooms, bring testimony to the prosperity and high standards of the cities of the XIVth and XVth centuries. The chroniclers and other writers give us absorbingly interesting descriptions of city life.

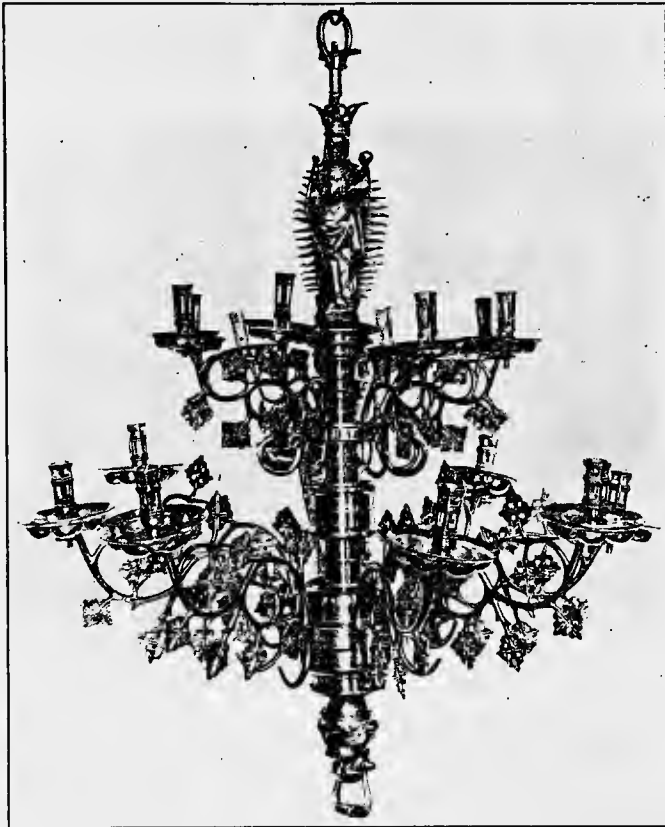


FIG. 57—AN ANCIENT POLISH CHANDELIER

The cities were clean and salubrious. Life was quiet, industrious and moral, particularly in the earlier centuries. Private property was regarded as

a sanctity, and the smallest theft was punished severely, sometimes by death. Heavy punishment was similarly visited upon dissolute women.

The houses in the cities were built of stone or brick and covered with tile roofs. In the XVIth century all new houses were required to be built of stone, eliminating the waste and danger of fires. To help the poorer inhabitants to rear more expensive structures the city fathers exempted their properties from



FIG. 58—AN ENAMELLED PENDANT, WORK OF THE POLISH JEWELLERS' GUILD OF THE XVII CENTURY

all taxation for long periods of time, frequently for twenty years or more. At the end of the XVth and the beginning of the XVIth centuries all the principal cities established municipal waterworks, and pipes carried the water to every house. Sanitary regulations were numerous and strict. Since the XIIIth or XIVth century there was not a city in all Poland which did not have a hospital, an almshouse and a free public bath. In the larger cities physicians were employed to visit regularly the hospitals and to super-

wise the drug stores. In cases of contagious disease home quarantine was maintained, and during epidemics large numbers of physicians were employed by the city, and indigent persons received free food to sustain their vitality and resistance. By law, graves were dug three yards deep.

The fire regulations were very definite. Many cities awarded special prizes to those who were most proficient in extinguishing fires. Chimney sweepers were retained in every town, and in many cities the

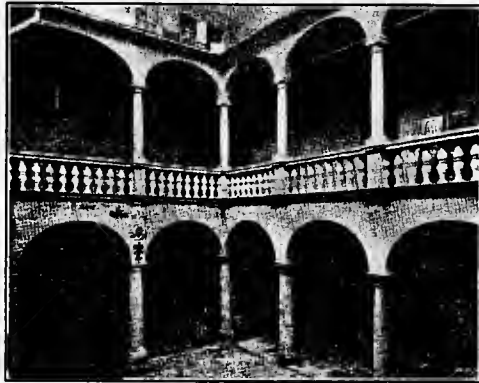


FIG. 59—A COURTYARD OF AN OLD POLISH HOUSE IN CRACOW

building of narrow streets was prohibited. The streets were well paved and kept clean. Residents were not permitted to put garbage in front of the houses, and refuse of all kinds was regularly collected and carted away to the dumping grounds outside of the city limits.

The development of Polish commerce in the XVth century is said to have been greatly stimulated by the excellent postal service enjoyed by the cities during this period. In 1583 the postal monopoly was farmed out by the king to Sebastian Montelupi, a rich



merchant of Lemberg, who organized a remarkably regular postal exchange with foreign countries. During his administration the larger cities received their mail regularly every week, and the rates charged were uniform and moderate, in accordance with a schedule based on distance zones.

The causes of the decline of the Polish cities were numerous. The fall of Constantinople and the



FIG. 60—AN ANCIENT SYNAGOGUE AT CRACOW

discovery of sea routes to the Orient have already been mentioned. The heterogeneous character of the population, which, in addition to economic differences, created class and racial struggles within the municipalities and made impossible harmony and strength, was another important factor. This disintegration of municipal harmony was taken advantage of by the powerful magnates and by the officers of the Crown, who had jurisdiction over the Jews

and over those parts of the community which were not within the corporate limits, to extend their powers and prerogatives.

With the disruption of the patriarchal relations between the masters of the guilds and the journeymen and apprentices, the cities witnessed many strikes and riots. The municipal government became demoralized and its competence gradually curtailed.



FIG. 61.—THE OLD CITY HALL OF ZAMOSC

The artisans were too much concerned with their trades and class struggles, and the merchants too much absorbed in their commercial transactions, to pay much attention to the political events that were taking place in the country and to the concentration of power in the hands of the nobles. Meanwhile, pernicious legislation was being enacted, which cut the arteries of city prosperity and development. The very heterogeneity of the city populace, consisting of

from one-eighth to one-fifth of Germans or of their nationally undigested descendants, of a still larger proportion of Jews, and an admixture of other foreign



FIG. 62—THE SEAL OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF CRACOW IN THE XIV CENTURY



FIG. 63—THE SEAL OF THE TOWN COURT OF CRACOW IN THE XIV CENTURY

*Kazimithae Civitatis Sscabinorum Cracoviae Civitatis Sscabinorum*

elements, such as Scotchmen, Frenchmen, Italians and Armenians—this heterogeneity was also responsible for the indifference of the cities in the destinies



FIG. 64— THE SEAL OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF LEMBERG IN THE XIV CENTURY

of the country and for the neglect to exercise the right they possessed to representation in the national diet.

The law exempting nobles from paying export duties when shipping their products abroad gave to the landlords great advantages over the merchants.



FIG. 65—THE CITY HALL OF GDANSK (DANZIG)

Similarly injurious to commerce was the privilege given to the nobles of importing foreign wares for personal use, duty free. The merchant's usefulness became thereby curtailed in a considerable degree.

With a view of monopolizing all the land of the country, the nobility secured the passage of a law in the memorable year 1496 forbidding burghers to own

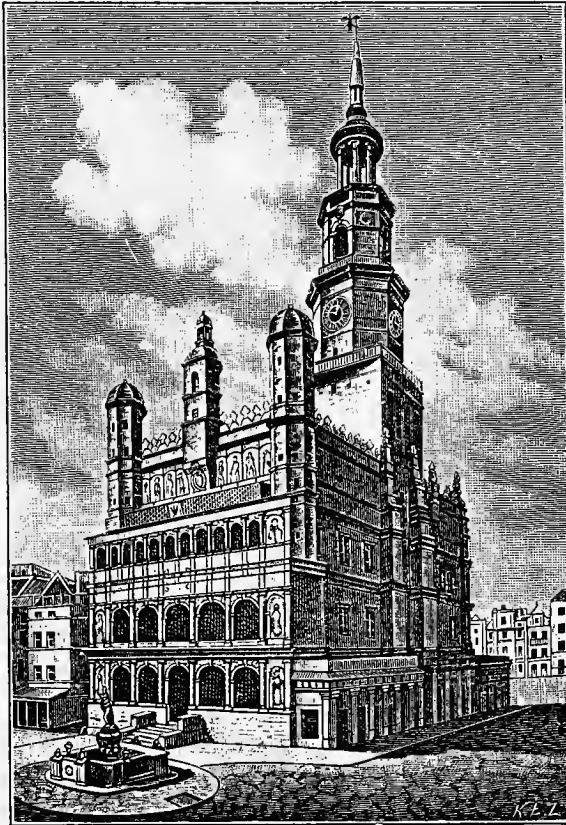


FIG. 66—CITY HALL OF POSEN

land outside of the city limits. Thus the source of the merchants' supply of large quantities of farm products for export was eliminated. Further legislation of this sort, which went so far as to prohibit a burgher from occupying an ecclesiastical office higher than

that of a canon, coupled with the keen foreign competition the merchants had to encounter, interior city disorders, jealousies and competition among the cities, and perpetual and devastating wars, were additional causes for the rather precipitous decline of the once flourishing Polish cities with their splendid

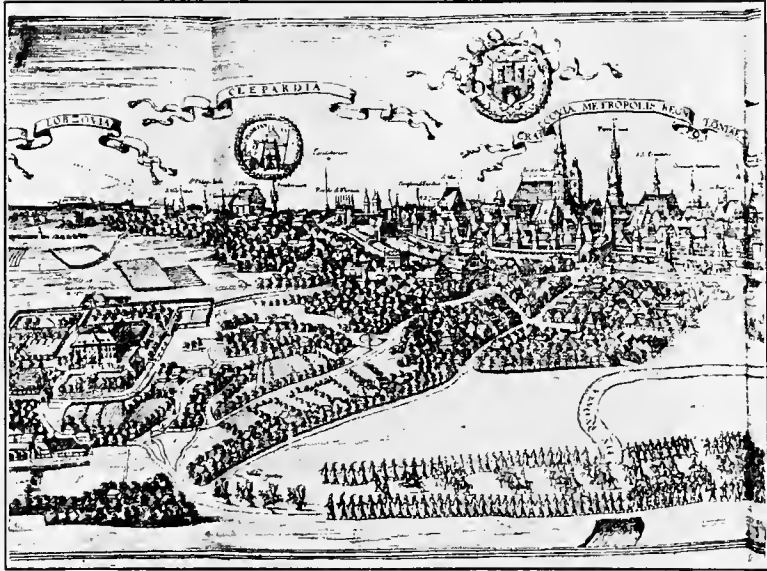


FIG. 67.—VIEW OF ANCIENT CRACOW, PART I  
From Georg Braun's "Civitates Orbis Terrarum," 1491

civilization. In the XVIIth century the cities had already become but a shadow of their previous glory.

It was during the reign of John Olbracht that the nobles secured extraordinary privileges and economic advantages. Satisfied with their gains, they voted the necessary money for the war planned by the king. Jointly with his brother Wladyslav, King of Hungary and Bohemia, John Olbracht organized a

The Growth  
of Political  
Power of the  
Nobility

campaign against Turkey to reconquer the coast of the Black Sea and to overawe the vacillating Hospodars of Moldavia. The campaign resulted in a complete collapse of the plans of the king and the annihilation of an army of 80,000 men. The defeated ruler then proceeded to organize a crusade against Turkey



FIG. 68—VIEW OF ANCIENT CRACOW, PART II  
From Georg Braun's "Civitates Orbis Terrarum," 1491

jointly with the German Emperor, the Hungarian King and the Pope, but he died suddenly in the midst of the preparations.

At the time of the king's death Lithuania was in the throes of a war of her own with Muscovy. Nine years of independence had convinced the Lithuanians of their error in striving to sever the bonds uniting them with Poland, and hence the news of the election of Alexander, Grand Duke of Lithuania, to the throne

of Poland, was received with great joy by them. The pact uniting Lithuania with Poland was renewed. Henceforth Lithuania and Poland were to form one inseparable unit. The elections of the king were to be held in common, all alliances and privileges were to be made binding for the two countries, the money was to be the same, and Polish kings were to become automatically, upon their election, Grand Dukes of



FIG. 69—TIN BEAKERS AND CUPS OF THE CRACOW GUILDS

Lithuania. The separatist tendencies among the Lithuanians came to an end with the death of John Olbracht and the ascent of Alexander. The new king, unlike his father and brother, was favorably inclined toward the oligarchy. Upon his becoming Grand Duke of Lithuania in 1492 he had granted a privilege to the Lithuanian potentates by which all the activi-



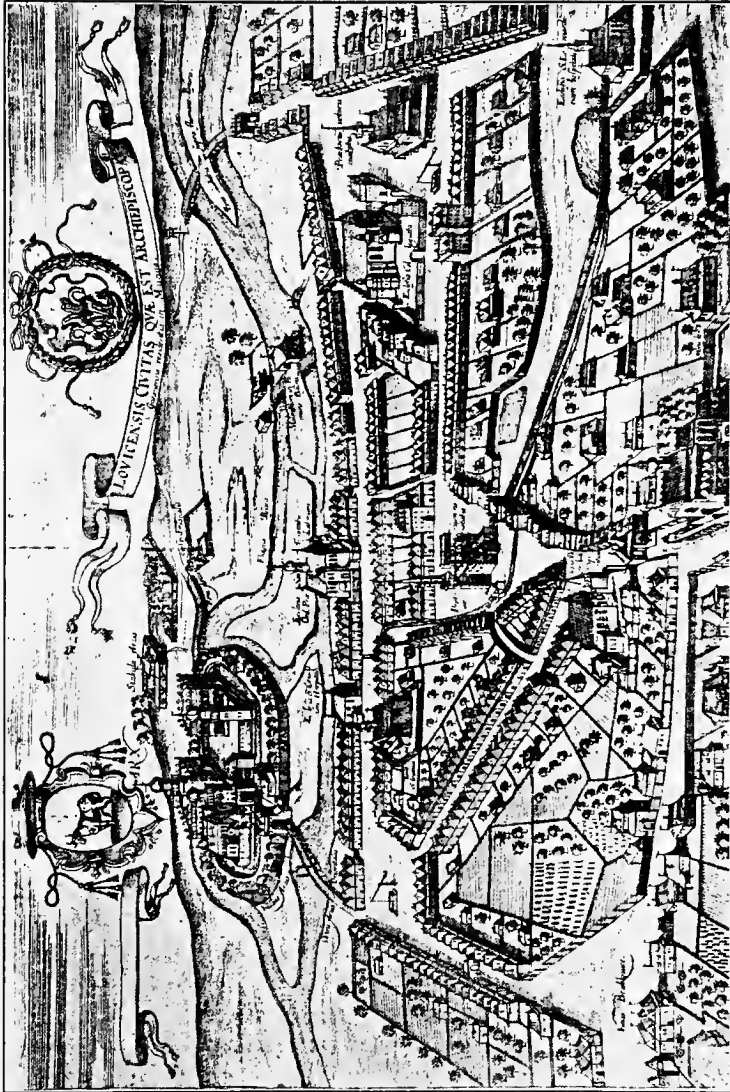


FIG. 70.—VIEW OF THE CITY OF LOWICZ. From Georg Braun's "Civitates Orbis Terrarum," 1491

ties of the Grand Duke came under the control of the Council of Magnates. Upon his coronation as King of Poland in 1501 the Polish magnates obtained from him a similar privilege. By this act the rather extensive powers of the king were in a large measure obliterated, and his rôle was reduced to that of the President of the Senate. This important grant is known as the Mielnik privilege. By the provisions



(J. Mateyko)

FIG. 71—ALEXANDER (1501-1506)

of this act the Senate could, in the name of the people, refuse obedience to the king in instances of "tyrannical behavior" on his part. The nobility, disorganized through great losses in their ranks suffered in the war with Turkey, was unable to resist the return to power of the magnates, but tried to oppose them by the employment of such means as the refusal to pay taxes or to serve in the army. These circum-

stances led to a state of almost complete disorganization in matters of internal administration, intensified by an economic crisis and the gathering black clouds on the boundaries of the country. The Order of the Cross ceased to pay homage to the king, the Tartars and Wallachians were ravaging the southern provinces of the country, and intervention in the war carried on between Lithuania and Moscow grew near. In view of the situation the king convoked the Diet which met regularly every year, until order was restored and conditions regulated. In order to offset the extraordinary powers of the Senate the nobility forced through, at the Diet held at Piotrkow in 1504, a law called the "Incompatibilia," which defined the powers and duties of the various crown offices and specified which of these were "incompatible," i. e., which of them could not be held by the same person at the same time.

The next year at the Diet which met at Radom, a statute was passed known by its two initial words as "Nihil novi." This statute provided that nothing new could be undertaken without the unanimous consent of the three estates: the King, the Senate and the representatives of the land assemblies of the nobility. This statute also provided that no nobleman should engage in trade or commerce, under the penalty of forfeiting his right to nobility. The nobility opposed the establishment of a regular army, fearing that it might become a powerful weapon in the hands of the king, but solemnly declared their duty and readiness, as land owners, to defend the country from foreign enemies. With few exceptions the representatives of the cities were entirely eliminated from the Diets.

Soon after the signing of the new statute Alexander died, and his brother, Zygmunt I, the youngest



FIG. 72—ZYGMENT I (1506-1548)

son of Kazimir Jagiellonczyk, was elected King of Poland and Lithuania. There was general feeling that Prince Michael Gliniski, who was known to have plans for establishing an independent kingdom of Ruthenia, was responsible for the death of King Alexander, and, fearing that dissensions might arise if a new monarch were not elected at once, the Lithuanians proclaimed Zygmunt as their sovereign even before the Poles had a chance to express their preference. Poland soon followed the wise course taken by the Lithuanians and proclaimed Zygmunt King of Poland. The reign of Zygmunt I (1506-1548) known as the Old, because he was forty when he ascended the throne, abounded in great events in internal as well as external affairs. It was in his reign that the nobility finally established itself as the dominant factor in Polish life to the detriment of the cities and peasantry, in spite of the king's leanings toward a strong government by a selected group backed by a well disciplined regular army and a responsible force of administrative officials. In the first part of his reign the king distinguished himself by his ability and character. Many intricate problems were satisfactorily solved, the exchequer was replenished, jurisdiction regulated, a state mint established, and a large number of the mortgaged crown estates redeemed. In the second part of his reign, as an elderly man, he succumbed to the influences of his Italian wife, Bona Sforza, a woman of low instincts, treacherous and greedy, and ready to exploit her position in order to increase her private fortune. No methods were too mean to be employed in gaining her ends. Through her pernicious influence corruption crept into public life, high offices were given to incompetent favorites and state revenues used to swell private fortunes. A tide of indignation against corruption

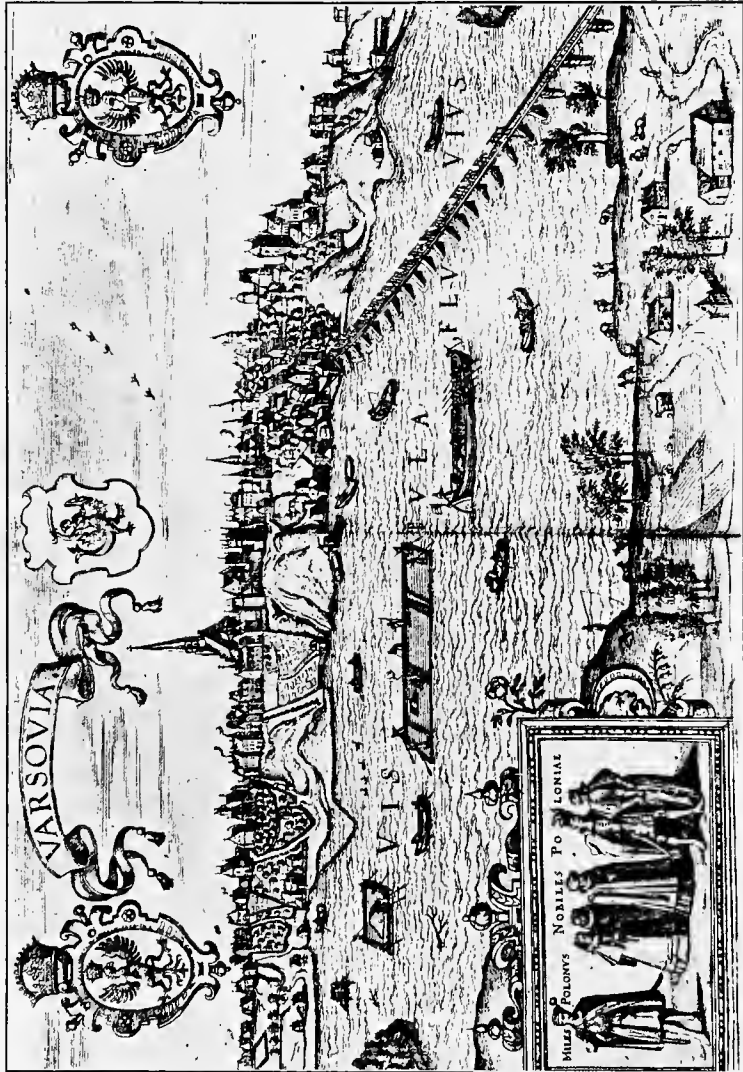


FIG. 73.—A VIEW OF THE CITY OF WARSAW. From Georg Braun's "Civitates Orbis Terrarum," 1491

and the squandering of the royal domains swept through the country, and an open revolt broke out under the leadership of the powerful and impetuous Peter Zborowski.

While important administrative reforms were being introduced many other influences were at work

**Mazovia** to make Zygmunt's reign memorable. Humanism had made triumphant inroads into Polish thought despite the attempts of the Cracow University to stem it, and laid the foundation for the mighty swing by which the Protestant reformation made its appearance in Poland. At that time the complete fusion of Mazovia with Poland in 1529 took place after the extinction of the Piast Mazurian dynasty. Previously Mazovia had been a vassal principality with an autonomous government, completely independent of the Polish government. The entrance into Polish political life of the Mazurs, who at that time were much inferior in education and economic and political development to the rest of Poland, made itself felt immediately because of their steadfast adherence to the Church and ancient custom, and their aversion to progressive tendencies. Only one year after their entry into the Diet added burdens were put upon the peasants, and henceforth serfdom became more strongly entrenched.

At the same time that Mazovia, with its capital of Warsaw, came into the fold of the Polish state, a precious Polish possession, that of **The Duchy of East Prussia** Prussia, was, through the shortsightedness of the King and his Council, drifting away from Poland. At the time when the Reformation was making great headway in the northern states of Germany, Albrecht Hohenzollern-Anspach, Grand Master of the Order of the Cross, de-

cided to abandon the Roman Church, and, with the consent of the Polish King, became the secular prince of the vassal province of East Prussia. One of the reasons which led the king to give his consent to this recognition was the ferment the Reformation was causing in West or Royal Prussia, and the rioting at Danzig and elsewhere. He feared that a



(J. Mateyko)

FIG. 74—THE DUKE OF PRUSSIA SWEARING ALLEGIANCE TO THE KING OF POLAND AT CRACOW, 1525

refusal might lead Albrecht to bring the whole of Prussia into an armed contest with the Crown. He preferred to settle the matter amicably, and by the Treaty of Cracow, Albrecht was recognized as hereditary Prince of East or Ducal Prussia, under the sovereignty of Poland, with a right to the first seat in



the Polish Senate. After signing the treaty, Albrecht paid public homage to the Polish King at the market place of Cracow in 1525. The Pope and the German Emperor protested, and it is only to be regretted that instead of confiscating the territories of the Order after its secularization, as he had a right to do, according to the terms of the Treaty of Thorn, the Polish King chose the other policy, which proved to be one of the greatest blunders in Polish history. The whole course of Polish, and perhaps of European history, would have been different had not Zygmunt been bent upon this policy, which, in addition to the reason given above, he was persuaded to follow because of the wars he was carrying on with Muscovy. The second of these conflicts with that power ended in 1522, and resulted in the loss of Smolensk, an important strategic point which, from that date until 1611, remained in Muscovy's hands. Further reason for endeavoring to avert a possible Prussian rebellion was the political anarchy in Hungary and the fear of a war with Turkey, which constantly threatened Poland.

The southern frontier of the country had also to be guarded against the Tartars of Crimea who perpetually harassed Poland's borderlands. Many castles and fortresses were built by Zygmunt to hold them back, among them being the famous fortress of Bar. Of the Polish generals who distinguished themselves in defence of the country during the reign of Zygmunt I, the name of Jan Tarnowski stands out most prominently. It was he who defeated Petryllo, the Moldavian hospodar whose expedition was undertaken at the promptings of Muscovy. Tarnowski's victory over the Moldavians at Obertin in 1531 is one of the beacon lights in the remarkable military annals of Poland. No single

Ukraine

victory, however, could put an end to the Moldavian and Tartar raids which were a curse to the civilization of that region, and rendered the proper development of the fertile black soil of Ukraine almost impossible. Flourishing settlements were annihilated over and over again by fire and sword. This condition was one of the causes that retarded the Polonization of the



FIG. 75—JAN TARNOWSKI, GRAND HETMAN OF THE CROWN.  
Soldier and Statesman. Author of a Famous Military Work  
"Consilium Rationis Bellicae."

native semi-civilized people. Another was the lack of aggressiveness on the part of the Poles. In deference to the feelings of the native population, Roman Catholic churches or Polish schools were seldom built in these regions, and the descendants of Polish settlers, finding no buttress in Polish institutions, often lost their language and religion, accepting those of the Ruthenians. Moreover, the constant fighting with

the Tartar, Turkish and Moldavian raiders lowered standards of civilization and developed a warlike, self-reliant but impetuous and almost unmanageable frontier race.

The exalted conception of political freedom and the universal respect the Poles have always entertained for the rights of other nationalities proved to be a source of political weakness as exhibited in the state polity with reference to Prussia and Ukraine. In her political ideals Poland was a pioneer among the nations and hard, indeed, is the lot of the pioneer and leader! She, like France at a later period, bled profusely that new and higher forms of life, which she worked out in her experimental laboratory, might replace the hoary moulds that had been hampering the progress of mankind.

To enable the peaceful development of Ukraine and Podolia a regular army was kept in a chain of border towns and attempts were made to draft into service the half-civilized refugees from everywhere, but mostly from Ukraine, who formed a kind of bandit republic around the cataracts of the lower Dnieper. The citizens of that republic, known by the Tartar name of Cossacks, lived by piracy and highway robbery. Polish generals were sometimes successful in utilizing this republic of outlaws, robbers and plunderers for staying Turkish and Tartar expeditions.

The other neighbor who interfered with the development of the frontier territories of Poland was Muscovy which, since the times of Ivan III, exerted constant pressure in her efforts to establish a foothold in the west, encouraged by the German Emperor and German princes, who disliked the growth of Poland.

Threatened on all sides, the country made every effort to change its fiscal basis and to establish an adequate system of taxation for purposes of defence. Following the example of other countries of Europe, the King endeavored to form a regular army. When plans miscarried, he proposed another measure, whereby the country was to be subdivided into five sections, each section contributing its knighthood once in five years for a year's service at the frontiers of the country. Those who wished to be excused from service could do so on the payment of a stipulated tax. The excellent measure was passed by the Diet, but was rendered practically inoperative by the impossibility of agreement as to the methods of property appraisals and the preservation of registers and tax lists. The great reforms planned by the King and his Chancellor, John Laski, the Archbishop of Gnesen, and supported by a great body of patriots, fell through because of the shortsightedness and stinginess of a small group of obstructionists.

What is true of democracies even now applies in a greater measure to Poland of that period. The large mass of the citizenry was preoccupied with their daily tasks and duties and could not devote much time and thought to the affairs of government. The Polish nobility never shirked their duties in the defense of the country but it was impossible for them to keep in close touch with government matters, particularly in those days when the means of transmission of intelligence were meagre and undeveloped. This laissez faire attitude gave opportunity to the selfish and unscrupulous elements to defeat the purposes of legislation and reforms and to use them for the benefit of their individual interests.

Lack of  
Adequate  
Military Pre-  
paredness

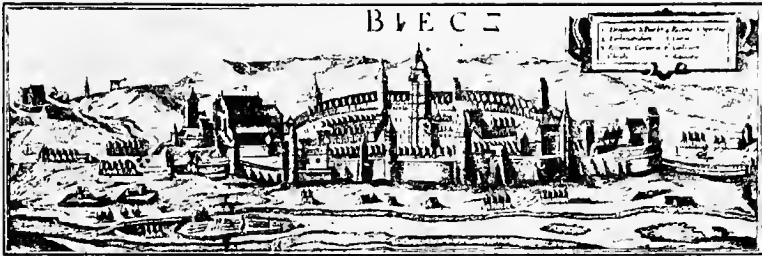


FIG. 76—GENERAL VIEW OF BIECZ.  
From Georg Braun's "Civitates Orbis Terrarum," 1491

## CHAPTER VIII.

### The Protestant Reformation and the Golden Age in Poland

The efforts of Zygmunt the Old and of the patriots to change the fiscal system of the country, and to introduce satisfactory administrative and military reforms, were considerably retarded by the progress of the Protestant Reformation which, at that time, absorbed the attention of the country and occupied the minds of the people to the exclusion of all other matters. Luther's "heresy" was immediately and sympathetically echoed in Poland after its promulgation in Germany. The ground was well prepared for it. Religious, political and economic conditions similar to those which made it popular in the German states existed in Poland. The Polish clergy led as dissolute a life as did the clergy elsewhere in Europe. The indignation of the nobles at the freedom the clergy enjoyed from taxation and other burdens was intense. Strong was also their opposition to the church tithes as well as their resentment at Papal interference in matters of state. The renowned writer of the time of Kazimir Jagiellonczyk, Jan Ostrorog, in his dissertation, "Monumentum pro reipublicae ordinatione congestum," expressed the prevailing

**The Pre-  
cursors of the  
Reformation**

opinion when he wrote in 1473: "The Polish King recognized nobody's supremacy save that of God; instead of assuring the new Pope of his obedience he will sufficiently fulfill his duty if he congratulate him, and at the same time remind him that he should rule the Church justly. It is below the dignity of the king to write to the Pope with humility and humbleness. . . . The clergy are obliged to help the state; one should not be indignant when the king orders the melting of church utensils for public needs. All payments for the benefit of the Pope should be abolished. Poland needs all the funds she can spare for the war with invaders and for the preservation of internal order. The proclamation of jubilee Papal bulls as well as fees for funerals, marriages, etc., should be prohibited. The king should nominate the bishops. In order to decrease the large body of *fainéants*, the number of cloisters should be restricted, the admission of foreigners to them prohibited, and sermons in the German language restricted." Such were the predominant sentiments of the time, in true keeping with the teachings of Humanism, which spread in Poland through constant contact with Germany and Italy, in the principles of which several generations preceding the Reformation had been reared, and in accordance with which they shaped their views and opinions. The memory of the Huss movement had not completely died out in Poland, and the similarity of Luther's teachings with Hussitism made them popular. Moreover, the political demands of the nobility, striving for complete emancipation from ecclesiastical jurisdiction and for the establishment of a national Church, with the king or a synod at the head, formed a fertile soil for the reception of the Reformation, the seeds of which took firm root in all parts of Poland with the exception of Mazovia.

That Poland was not free from "heretics" at all times since the XIVth century can be inferred from the fact that as early as 1326 the famous Pope John XXII "was compelled" to appoint a special inquisitor for Poland in the person of Peter of Kolomea, a Dominican. There is, however, no documentary evidence of any work of the inquisitors in Poland.

The Lutheran movement began in Prussia and in the larger Polish cities, such as Cracow, where the German element was considerable. One of the first and most ardent representatives of Luther in Poland was Jan Seklucyan. But Lutheranism was not as popular as Calvinism, for the reason

**The  
Growth of the  
Reformation  
Movement**

that the latter was considered more appropriate for a free republic, and was more pleasing because of its recognition of laymen in church councils. In addition to these two schools a great variety of other teachings found ready followers in Poland. Hundreds of reformers, fleeing persecution in their own countries, came to Poland, where they were accorded complete freedom of action and speech. The Queen's confessor, Francis Lismanin, an Italian, was one of the most active workers in the court circles. Two other Italians, Francis Stankar and Lelius Socino, and a Pole, Peter of Goniondz, preached against the Trinity and organized a sect known under different names: Socinians, Arians or Antitrinitarians. The various sects found their patrons among the powerful magnates. The relatives of the once famous Bishop and Cardinal Oleśnicki became the followers of Zwingli, and the Radziwills of Lithuania adopted Calvinism, as did most of the magnates and nobles of Little Poland. In Ruthenia, under the leadership of the magnate Stadnicki, the Antitrinitarians became supreme. Ancient Hussitism revived, and under the

name of the Bohemian Brotherhood conquered almost the whole of Great Poland. There were also many independent Polish reformers. The Primate's nephew, the younger John Laski, achieved considerable renown not only in Poland, but in Germany, Denmark and even in far-distant England. Here he enjoyed the protection of King Edward VI, and became an intimate friend of Primate Cranmer, in whose house he lived while in England.\*



FIG. 77—JAN LASKI, RELIGIOUS REFORMER

With the growth of the movement the income and the power of the established Church diminished. Royal edicts against the heretics were not enforced and Church anathemas were disregarded. Priests

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\* A great deal of very interesting information about the Reformation in Poland is to be found in the two volumes of Count Valerian Krasinski's "Sketch of the Rise, Progress and Decline of the Reformation in Poland," published in London, 1838-1840.



who married were shielded by the nobles. Tithes were uncollectable and decrees of ecclesiastical courts unheeded. Animosity and spitefulness went so far that because he wore his cap during the mass preceding the session of the Diet of 1552, Deputy Rafal Leszczyński was chosen president of the chamber. No discussion on any matter was allowed at this remarkable Diet until the Church agreed to suspend its right to civil jurisdiction. The bishops for a time remained obstinate, but finally were compelled to pledge the suspension of church trials over the nobles as well as over their peasants until the matter be settled with the Pope by a special delegation sent to Rome. Some of the deputies went so far as to demand the exclusion of the bishops from the Senate, the confiscation of all church estates for the purpose of national defense, the abolition of the celibacy of the clergy, and like measures. Laws were passed forbidding the execution of Church decrees by the government and the collection of St. Peter's pence. The non-conformists were not, however, able to obtain equal rights with the Catholic clergy in teaching religious doctrines, but received equal rights in filling crown offices.

The Reformation spread like wildfire among the upper classes and in the cities. Many churches were converted into Protestant places of worship, images burnt, many priests of high and low rank abandoned the Church, and young ladies of the best families did not hesitate to marry priest-apostates. The life of the nobles and the city patriciate was thoroughly revolutionized. When the Papal legate, Alois Lippomano, appeared at the Diet of Warsaw in 1556, he was hailed with the cry: "Ecce progenies viperarum."

The masses of the peasantry and of the city plebs, however, remained almost untouched by the new religious currents, and stubbornly resisted all attempts to convert them to the new order of things. This was the cause of the ultimate collapse of the movement which, however, by the stimulation it gave to independent thought and by the utilization of the Polish tongue instead of the mediæval Latin for purposes of propaganda, created the Golden Age in Polish life and literature.

**The Unpopularity of the Movement Among the Lower Classes**

The Gospels and the Bible were translated into Polish, and a large number of pamphlets and discussions intended for the great mass of the people to whom no other, except their native language, was intelligible, was printed in Polish. By that time even the burghers began to consider Polish as their native tongue, and although a considerable minority still continued to use German, yet in 1536 the City Council of Cracow proclaimed Polish as the language to be used in prayers and sermons in the churches of that town. The German and Latin books began to be supplanted by Polish prints.

**The Cultural Effects of the Reformation**

The art of printing found a very early application in Poland. In 1465, only a few years after the invention of the art, a German printer was invited to Cracow by the University. He printed two books: "Joannis de Turrecremata Cardinalis S. Sixti vulgariter nuncupati. Explanatio in Psalterium finit Cracis" and "Omnes libri Beati Augustini Aurelii." The earliest book containing a text in the Polish language was printed in Breslau in 1475 and is at the present time in the possession of the British Museum.

The first Slavic books were published at Cracow. Owing to the freedom and tolerance existing in Poland at the time and to the interest taken in scientific matters, the Polish capital became the center of cultural activity for a large area, comprising the Eastern and South Eastern nations of Europe. The earliest books for Hungary, Moldavia, Transylvania, Ruthenia and Lithuania were printed at Cracow. In 1490 a book store was opened in that city and a few years

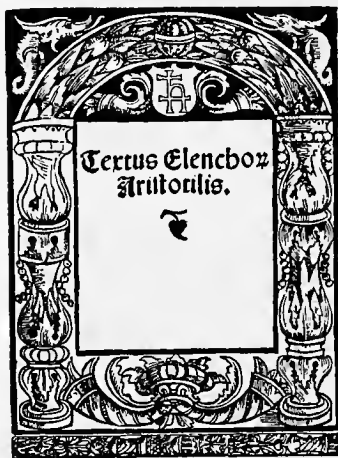


FIG. 78—TITLE PAGE OF A  
CRACOW PRINT OF THE  
BEGINNING OF THE  
XVI CENTURY

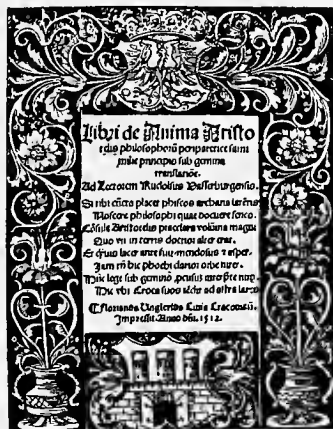


FIG. 79—TITLE PAGE OF A  
CRACOW PRINT OF 1612

later a permanent press was established. The large printing activity contributed to the spread of the doctrines of Humanism and of the Reformation and incidentally to the development of Polish literature.

The Cracow University was hostile both to the new religious tenets and to the profanation of science and literature by the employment of anything but the Latin language. It clung to its medieval concep-

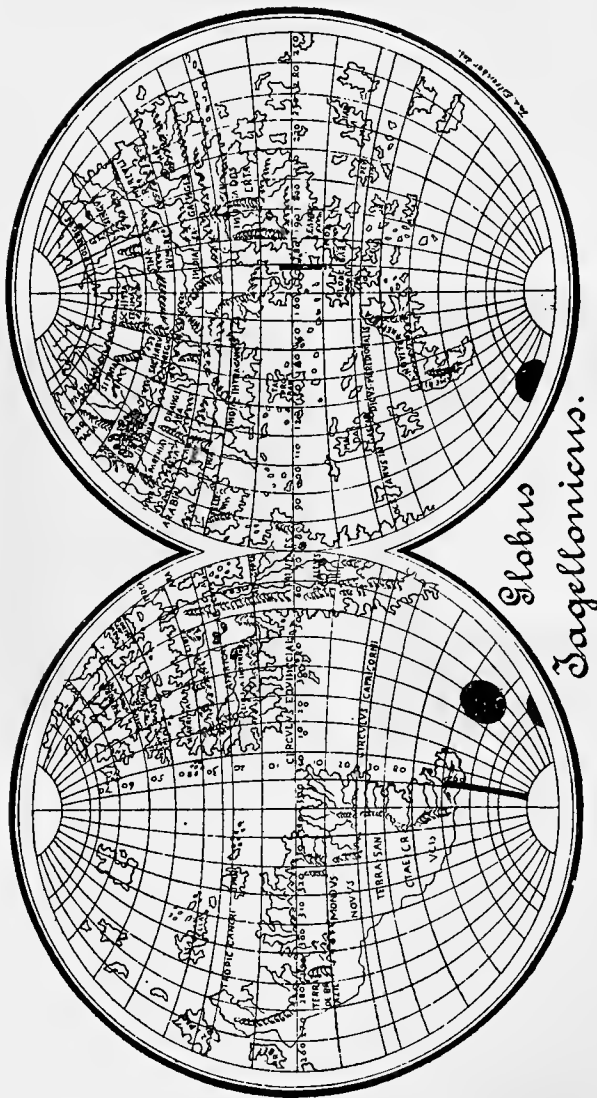


FIG. 80—THE FIRST KNOWN GLOBE TO MENTION THE NAME OF AMERICA, 1510.

tions but maintained a high order of scholarship in science and mathematics. At its request a globe was made in 1510 which is the first known globe to mention the name of America. The wrong placing of the new name serves but to emphasize the ancient origin of this remarkable Polish relic which preceded by five years the celebrated Frankfurt-Weimar orb of Schöner. The Globus Jagellonicus was first described by Prof. Thaddeus Estreicher in 1900 in the Transactions of the Cracow Academy of Sciences for that year. There he points out that the Polish globe is the earliest globe of the after Columbus era, that it is the earliest to indicate any part of the New World and the first to delineate the South American continent. It is also the first globe on which the continent of America is shown to be distinct from that of Asia. The fact that the University of Cracow possessed in 1510 or thereabouts a globe indicating the latest geographical discoveries throws indirect light on the keen interest taken by the Polish scholars of the time in the progress of science.

In this connection it may also be worth while to mention that it was the Cracow edition of Ptolemy, prepared in 1512 by Jan of Stobnica, a professor of the Jagiellon University, which first contained a map of North and South America, showing the connection of the two continents by an isthmus.

Eager as the University evidently was to keep abreast with the latest discoveries in science and geography, it was equally determined in its opposition to the new currents in philosophy and theology. No Humanists were tolerated on the faculty, and as a consequence the University lost in time its best professors and most of its students. The nobility and the burgesses sent their boys abroad, to Erfurt, to Padua, Venice, Pavia, Paris and elsewhere. The

young men returned full of enthusiasm and new ideas about life, government and religion. A host of talented writers appeared. Some discussed matters of state freely and criticised the existing conditions, pointing out, as did the highly gifted Andrew Frycz Modrzewski, the necessity of equalization of all the estates before the law, and the advantages of a prosperous and free peasantry. Others, like Orzechowski, thundered against the despotism of the nobility, the iniquities and the foreign character of the Church



FIG. 81—SIMON SZYMONOWICZ  
(1658-1629)



FIG. 82—SEBASTIAN KLONOWICZ  
(1650-1602)

and the great privileges of the Jews in matters of money lending and usury. A large number of historians, poets, dramatists and fiction writers sprang up among all classes of society. Klemens Janicki, the poet-leureate, was a peasant; Simon Szymonowicz, the author of beautiful bucolics, was of city birth; so were other distinguished writers, like Sebastian Klonowicz and the brothers Zimorowicz. Nicholas Rey, the greatest satirist of the time, was born in a

noble family, but of modest circumstances. Polish literature really had its beginning with Rey. His pictures of life, men and conditions are masterpieces of style, wit and perspicuity. They served as models to many future writers.



FIG. 83—NICHOLAS REY (1505-1569), THE FOUNDER OF POLISH NATIONAL LITERATURE AND AN ARDENT ADVOCATE OF CALVINISM IN POLAND

At this time Polish national consciousness reached its fullest realization in art as well as in science. Copernicus (1473-1543), one of the most revolutionary minds the world has known, who by his epoch-making researches freed science forever

from the shackles of theology, like all truly great men, was far from narrow specialization. That he published a remarkable work on money is well known to economic historians. But the treatise he wrote in support of his country's claims to the territories that



FIG. 84—NICHOLAS COPERNICUS

had been illegally occupied by the Order of the Cross is less generally known and it is precisely this patriotic trait in Copernicus which, aside from the everlasting glory he brought to Poland's name, has endeared him forever in the heart of his nation.



Just as Polish science of the XVIth century was crowned by the immortal works of Copernicus, so was the Polish Parnassus of that age glorified by the writings of John Kochanowski (1530-1584), the nobleman of Sandomir. Until this day his poems and dramas delight the most fastidious taste by their beauty, deep thought and fine senti-



FIG. 85—JOHN KOCHANOWSKI (1530-1584), THE FIRST GREAT NATIONAL POET OF POLAND

ment. The stimulus given to writing in Polish supplied by the religious reformers gained momentum as time advanced, and as early as 1548, at the funeral of King Zygmunt the Old, the Bishop of Cracow, for the first time in history, used Polish at so solemn an occasion. King Zygmunt August and his sisters

spoke the most elegant Polish. Martin Bielski wrote a history of Poland in Polish. Latin was being supplanted, but of course not completely. It was still the medium of expression of the philosophical and scientific minds of Poland, who were plentiful in that glorious period. Joseph Struś, the king's physician, was widely known in Europe by his writings. His work on "The Pulse," published in Posen, created a great stir in the medical world of the time. James Przyluski published a monumental and masterful codification of the laws of Poland, with commentaries. Simon Marcius Czystochlebski wrote a work concerning pedagogical problems, and Martin Kromer became the worthy successor of John Dlugosz, the famous Polish historian of the time of Kazimir Jagiellonczyk.

A high type of culture evolved. Freed from the shackles of feudalism and scholasticism, enriched by the toil of a serf-peasantry, the Poles of the upper classes, with their exuberant nature and impressionable minds, created in the XVIth century a distinct and high civilization of their own, akin in many ways to that of the Latin and the Teuton worlds, yet different from both of these by virtue of a different racial, geographic and social environment.

The Reformation in Poland was doomed to failure because the large mass of the peasantry was inimical to the reforms, as were the poorer nobles who in mentality differed very little from the peasants. Another cause for the ultimate failure of the movement was the weakness of the Protestant element caused by their differentiation into a number of denominations combatting each other. The Protestant leaders, realizing the dangers of a divided front, bent every effort toward uniting the various factions into one large

**The Protes-  
tant Sects**

body, and to working jointly for the establishment of a national church, similar to the Church of England. They finally succeeded, in 1570, in uniting the less radical wings. This union was known as the Concord of Sandomir. The Anti-Trinitarians did not join in it.

While the non-Conformists were quarreling, the Roman Church, after the Council of Trent, picked up its old self-confidence and courage and launched a vigorous counter-movement under the leadership of Hosius, Bishop of Warmia, and the Papal Nuncio, John Francis Commendon. It was chiefly due to the indefatigable energy of these two men that the crumbling edifice of the Roman Church in Poland was saved from destruction.

In the meantime the nobility was bringing strong pressure to bear upon the new king, demanding the limitation of the rights of the clergy.

**Collapse  
of the Effort  
to Establish  
a National  
Church**

Submitting to it, Zygmunt II August proclaimed, in 1562, the Statute of Tolerance, which, among other things, deprived the ecclesiastical courts of the power to enforce their decrees. This step led the Pope to enter into negotiations with Ivan the Terrible, the great enemy of Poland, whereby Ivan was to use his military power to punish the Polish nation for its tolerance of heretics. Indignation rose high, and a break seemed to be imminent after the Papal Nuncio refused to grant the king a divorce from his third wife, Catherine Hapsburg. Preparations were being made for the convocation of a religious council, for which the reformers were busily preparing, and to which they invited Calvin. The Pope protested against the holding of this council, and the king, ill and hesitating, fearing a break with the Pope, vetoed the proposal establishing an independent Church of Poland. In the same year, 1565,

the first Jesuits brought over by Bishop Hosius appeared in Poland, and an era of feverish activity against the heresy began. The established Church was able to rally the great masses and at the local elections to force through representatives favoring the Church. As their numbers increased in the Diet they were able, aided faithfully by the Mazurs, to stem the progress of the plans for "the improvement of the Republic" championed by the "Dissidents," the name by which the non-Conformists were known in Poland.



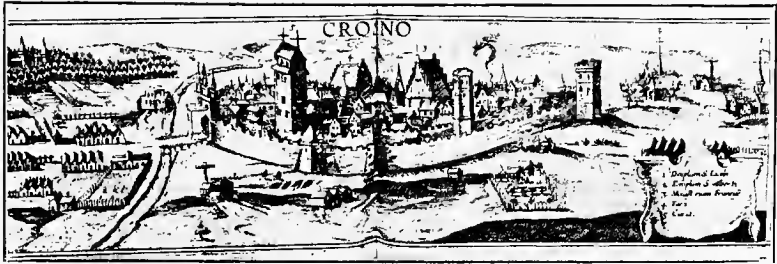


FIG. 86—VIEW OF KROSNO. From G. Braun's "Civitates orbis terrarum," 1491

## CHAPTER IX.

### The End of the Jagiellon Dynasty and the Beginning of the Era of Popular Election of Kings

Eighteen years before the death of Zygmunt the Old, the Diet consented to recognize his son by the second marriage as successor to the throne, with the understanding, however, that henceforth elections of the king would not be restricted to the Diet but would be "viritim," i. e., open to the whole body of citizen-nobles.

**Zygmunt II**  
**August,**  
**1548-1572.**

In 1548 Zygmunt II August became King of Poland. No sooner did his coronation take place than he came into a serious encounter with the Diet on account of his marriage with Barbara Radziwill, which, when heir to the throne, he had contracted without the knowledge and consent of the Senate. It was in violation of the constitution and his divorce was demanded. The king, who loved his wife tenderly, refused to submit to the demand of the magnates whose personal jealousies inflamed by the machinations of Bona, the Queen Dowager, and her camarilla, were the chief motives for the humiliation of the king and his wife. A deadlock, lasting two years, ensued. The opposition finally surrendered

and Barbara was crowned queen in 1550. In his fight against the Senate the new king had exhibited



FIG. 87--ZYGMENT II AUGUST (1548-1572) (J. Mateyko)

a great determination and strength of character,

attributes which unfortunately were not his in subsequent dealings. He failed in leadership in matters



FIG. 88—QUEEN BARBARA RADZIWILL

which were then shaking the body politic to its foun-

dation. His devious course with reference to the Reformation has been traced in the last chapter. The example of Henry VIII of England and the separation of the Church in the Scandinavian countries fired the imagination of the Protestant leaders in Poland, who were persistently clamoring for an independent Church and demanding action on the part of the king. Time-honored tradition and reasons of state prompted caution. The undecided king, the centre of conflicting currents, discouraged by the lack of unity in the Protestant camp and influenced by the strong representations of Pope Paul IV, dodged the issue, deferring its consideration from Diet to Diet, not strong enough to face it squarely and to throw its lot with one side or the other.

Zygmunt II August similarly evaded the requests of the nobles for administrative reforms. It was only in 1562 that the king consented to the consideration of the program for the "Betterment of the Republic." As on a previous occasion the Deputies, so now the Senators, in their patriotic enthusiasm expressed themselves ready to give up the charters or "the donation lists," as they were called, granted to them by former monarchs and which entitled them to large estates in the royal domains.

The Jagiellons had found it necessary, in the course of events, to distribute their large domains among the lords as well as among the minor nobles to secure the necessary support for their foreign and domestic policies. By this time the royal domain had become very insignificant and as a consequence the state treasury, which depended almost exclusively upon the proceeds from those domains, was almost

**Restitution  
of Alienated  
Crown Lands**



depleted. At the memorable session of the Diet of 1562 a law was passed whereby all land grants issued after the year 1504 were declared void and lands ordered to revert to the Crown. Three-fourths of the revenues from the returned domain were to be used for the maintenance of the king and of all the Crown offices and officials, and one-fourth was to be devoted to the maintenance of a regular army for the defense of the country. The measure was of great political and administrative value. Henceforth no grants of Crown domains could be made; the king could, however, bestow the life use of some of them as "panis bene merentium" upon those who distinguished themselves by faithful service. Unfortunately, this soon became a source of corruption.

The Diet of 1562, which met for putting through measures for bettering the status of the Republic, enacted most pernicious legislation regarding the economic life of the country. It abolished all restrictions on the free export of raw products and the free import of manufactured goods, and prohibited free export of domestic manufactures. The blighting effects this measure had upon industry were soon visible. The agrarian nobles profited by the lucrative exchange of their produce for the manufactured articles of foreign countries, but the Polish cities, already impoverished and not only deprived of protection afforded by a tariff but prohibited from exporting abroad, rapidly declined and faded into "rotten boroughs." The last possibility of the Polish King ever attempting to join with the cities against the nobles was thus removed. It was also in the time of Zygmunt II August that the struggle with Muscovy, which since that time has practically never

Cities Ruined  
by Unwise  
Economic  
Legislation

ceased, took on very serious aspects. Averse to war, the Polish King still was drawn into it by the disquieting aggressiveness of Ivan the Terrible, the first Czar of Muscovy, who endeavored to "break a window" into the Baltic. The Poles were quick to see the danger coming from the east. Zygmunt August, appraising the situation correctly, saw in Muscovy the most formidable foe of the Polish state. The Polish ambassador at Rome informed the king that Ivan's agents were busy forming a coalition against Poland with the Pope at the head. The Pope, desirous of curbing the Reformation in Poland, welcomed Ivan's plans, designed to punish the heretics. To offset Ivan's plans the king took steps to assure himself of the friendship of the Hapsburgs and consented to marry Catherine, the daughter of Ferdinand I and sister of his first wife, two years after the death of the beloved Barbara Radziwill, his second wife.

War with Muscovy came as a result of the claims of sovereignty of the Knights of the Sword over the Archbishop of Riga. The Knights of the Sword, amalgamated since 1237 with the Knights of the Cross, were the masters of that strip of the Baltic littoral which comprised Courland, Esthonia and Livonia, the last being known in Poland by the name of Inflanty. Ivan decided to exploit the feud. He sent an army against the Knights and took a few cities. The Grand Master of the Order, receiving no support from the German Emperor, resigned and Gothard von Kettler took his place. The Swedish King, joining Ivan, overrode Esthonia, and the Danish fleet occupied the seacoast of Courland and the Island of Osel. The Letts revolted against their Teutonic oppressors. Kettler and the Bishop of

**The War  
with Ivan the  
Terrible,  
1562-1571**

Riga, seeing that they would be unable to defend the country, turned to Poland for help and offered Livonia to the Polish crown. Kettler, following the example of the last Grand Master of the Order of the Cross, threw off his religious vows and became a secular prince of Courland and a vassal of Poland. After the extinction of his house, Courland was to become an integral part of Poland.

Meanwhile, Livonia came under Polish sovereignty with a wide local autonomy. The accession of that province was very valuable. It gave Poland the estuary of the Dvina, with the City of Riga and other convenient ports on the Baltic.

**The Acquisition of Inflanty or Livonia, 1561**

Sweden and Denmark, content with their large acquisitions, soon entered into peace negotiations with Poland. Ivan, however, seeing in Poland's aggrandizement a blow to his ambition, resorted to arms and the war begun by him lasted a whole decade. The King of Poland protested to Queen Elizabeth of England against the illicit trade in arms which the English sailors were carrying on and threatened with death penalty those of them who might be caught indulging in it. In this document Poland sounded the following remarkable note of warning: "The Muscovite, who is not only our opponent of to-day but the eternal enemy of all free nations, should not be allowed to supply himself with cannons, bullets and munitions or with artisans who manufacture arms hitherto unknown to those barbarians." \* In 1571 peace was finally concluded, according to the terms of which a part of Livonia and the Lithuanian city of Polotsk went to Muscovy.

\* Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace "Russia," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1911, Vol. XXIII, p. 896.

While the war with Ivan was going on the ruling family of East Prussia became extinct and the country was, according to the treaty of 1525, to revert to the Polish crown. Owing, however, to the engagement with Muscovy and the still unsettled terms with the Scandinavian countries, Joachim Hohenzollern, the Elector of Brandenburg, was able to prevail upon Poland to allow him to establish himself permanently in East Prussia and thus to unite it with Brandenburg by a dynastic union. Polish diplomacy failed to recognize the grave danger of this expansion of Brandenburg. Every effort was then strained to stay the Muscovite menace and to establish a closer union with Lithuania and Ruthenia for more effective defense against the Muscovite aggression, the far-reaching consequences of which were not then fully discernible to west European diplomacy despite the Polish warning.

The need of a closer union was the more urgent because the king was childless, and upon his death a strife was certain to ensue. The Jagiellons had hereditary rights in Lithuania and Ruthenia, but none in Poland. The two countries had separate parliaments, armies, money and institutions. The laws of the two countries also were not exactly the same; different also were the systems of taxation and of land tenure. The need of a more unified and homogeneous organization was frequently pointed out by the Polish statesmen and was favored by the nobles of Lithuania and Ruthenia, as it would give them the enjoyment of greater privileges and possibilities and opportunities for a broader social and economic development. The two countries had a similar economic basis and one and the same

**The Hereditary Union of East Prussia with Brandenburg, 1563.**

**The Union of Lublin, 1569**

system of water routes. Moreover, Polish colonization at the time reached the Dnieper, and the Polish, Lithuanian and Ruthenian families became considerably interrelated by marriage and lost their separatist race consciousness. The Polish language had become the common property of the nobles of the three nations. The opposition was limited almost exclusively to the magnates, who were loath to lose the great prerogatives they enjoyed under the less democratic laws of Lithuania. Throughout Polish history, until this very day, this element of large landowners of Poland, Lithuania and Ruthenia has consistently opposed all reforms which aim at the democratization of the country. They would rather see the country disrupted than see it democratic.

At the time of Zygmunt II August the body politic was still healthy enough to curb the anarchy of the magnates and when the Lithuanian and Ruthenian lords, after repeated attempts and persuasions on the part of the king and the patriots, which continued for several years, remained obstinate and left the convention, the king, amidst great enthusiasm, most solemnly declared the union accomplished "in contumacium." This took place in 1569 in the City of Lublin, and hence the union is known by the name of that ancient and historic town. It was a great political achievement and was characterized as the union of "the free with the free, and of the equal with the equal." It established equal rights and equal duties for all nationalities throughout the whole of the vast domains of the Republic stretching from the Baltic to the Black Sea, and from the Oder to the Dnieper. In order to place the two countries on a constitutional equality, the king abdicated his hereditary rights in Lithuania, an act which was in pathetic contrast to his recognition of the Hohenzollerns to

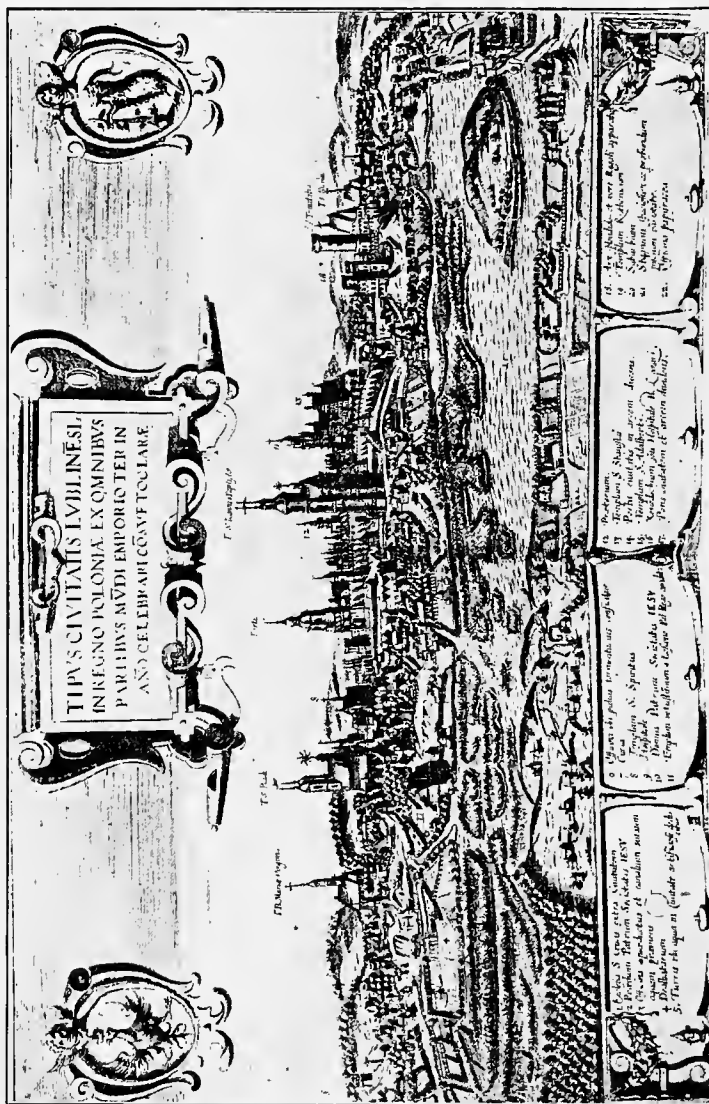


FIG. 89—VIEW OF THE CITY OF LUBLIN. From Georg Braun's "Civitates orbis terrarum," 1491.

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 IN REGNO POLONIAE EX OMNIBVS  
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 64. The Church of St. Thecla  
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hereditary rights in East Prussia. Henceforth Poland, known as Korona or the Crown, and Lithuania formed one inseparable body with one king "who is not born to office," but elected by the citizens of the two countries jointly, and with one Diet to which the representatives of all the lands of the Republic were elected on the same basis. The currency was made common for the two countries, and the laws of settlement and of land tenure identical. Volhynia, the province of Kieff, and Podlasie (the country watered by the Narew and the Bug) became integral parts of



FIG. 90.—THE MOUND ERECTED AT LEMBERG TO COMMEMORATE THE UNION OF LUBLIN.

Poland, as did West Prussia. The City of Danzig in West Prussia received subsequently a special constitution. Ruthenia, with the exception of the three provinces above mentioned, became an integral part of Lithuania. Livonia belonged to both Poland and Lithuania, and the Moldavian Hospodar remained a vassal of the Polish King. Lithuania was to have separate courts, a separate treasury and a separate army. The Diets were henceforth common and held at Warsaw, whither the king's residence was moved after the next election.

The union of Lublin was a work of compromise and far from perfection. It established, however, a common basis of law and government and served to solidify the two countries very substantially.

Three years after the establishment of the union, Zygmunt II August died, and the distinguished royal family of the Jagiellons came to an end after a reign of almost two centuries, 1386-1572. In the span of that reign Poland grew from a relatively unimportant principality into one of the greatest powers of Europe.

**The Death of  
the Last  
Jagiellon, 1572**

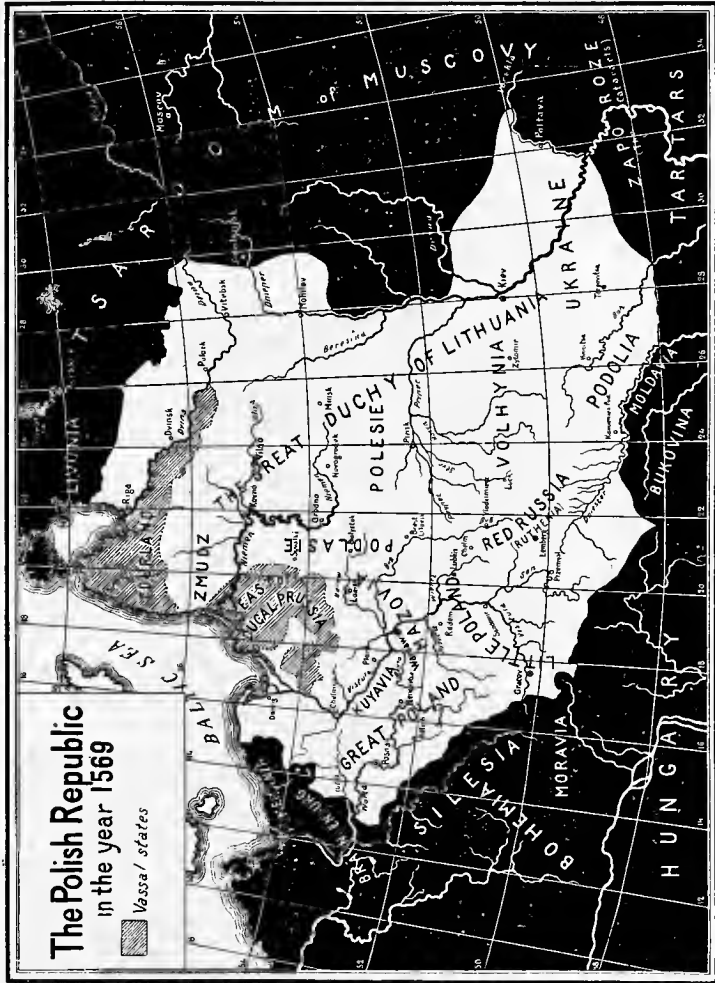
Immediately after the death of the last Jagiellon arose the important question, for which no provision existed in the constitution, regarding the status of the government during interregnum. All the state officers, administrative and judicial, acting in the name of the king, were deprived of the legal basis of their activities. Someone had to take the king's place until the election. Two men laid claims to the office of the interrex: the Archbishop of Gniezno and the President of the Diet. The contest was, in a way, a clash of the Catholic Church with the Reformers, as Firley, the President of the Diet, was a follower of Calvin. The jealousy of some of the other magnates prevented Firley's election. Archbishop Uchanski was declared to be the representative of the nation during the interregnum. This election established a precedent, and henceforth the Primate was the interrex pending the election of a new king.

It is to the credit of the patriotism and civic maturity of the nobles that the life of the country went on undisturbed during this period. As in the interregnum following Ludwig's death, 1382-1384, the local confederacies of the nobles formed in various provinces carried on the administrative local work, set up temporary courts and executives, and admirably preserved order and peace. Like the interrex, the

**The Cowl  
Confederacy**



confederacies, known as those of the cowl from the cowl worn as a sign of mourning, became recognized



constitutional institutions during interregnum. The device which was of value as a spontaneous measure

proved to be a clumsy and unwieldy one when made a regular instrument of government. Another precedent was established during the first interregnum, and that was the "convocation" session of the Diet, which always took place before the election of the king. The convocation Diet was held in Warsaw in January, 1573. At this Diet the methods to be followed at the elections were adopted.

The non-Conformists tried to undo the law passed in Zygmunt I's reign, establishing the so-called "viritim" or direct elections, proposing an indirect method by a body of chosen electors four times larger than the number of representatives in the Diet. The Catholics, whose power lay with the rank and file of the nobility, objected to the indirect methods as an usurpation of the "golden liberties" of the citizenry, and defeated the amendment in favor of the primitive methods suitable for a small town moot.

The place designated for the election was a field at the outskirts of the city of Warsaw. The choice of a city in the heart of Mazovia favored the Catholic Church, as, on account of the proximity of the city, the Mazurs could come in great numbers and sway the election.

Seeing that they were in a minority, the non-Conformists or Dissidents, formed a closer association known as the Warsaw confederacy, in which they pledged themselves to see to it that law and order were preserved and that complete freedom of conscience be guaranteed. This act of the confederacy, demanding freedom of religious belief, was submitted to the Convocation Diet and overwhelmingly carried, only the bishops voting against it. The act of the Warsaw

**"Viritim."  
Elections**

**The Warsaw  
Confederacy  
and the Statute  
of Religious  
Tolerance,  
1573**

Confederacy became the legal basis of the position of the non-Conformists in the future and one of the chief organic statutes of the Republic.

The election was held in April, 1573, and over forty thousand voters assembled. There were many candidates: Henri Valois, the brother of the French King Charles IX; Archduke Ernest Hapsburg, the younger son of Emperor Maximilian II; Tsar Ivan the Terrible; King John of Sweden; Prince Ste-

**The Election  
of Henri  
Valois, 1573**



(J. Mateyko)

FIG. 91—HENRI VALOIS, 1573-1574

fan Batory of Transylvania, and some Polish candidates. The French candidate carried the election, supported by the Church and by many among the non-Conformists who were in his favor, provided he pledge the support of the articles of their confedera-

tion guaranteeing freedom of faith. The *pacta conventa*, or the covenant which the elected king had to sign, specified a great many conditions to be fulfilled, among them, the building of a navy on the Baltic. He had also to swear to respect the liberties and privileges of the nobles.

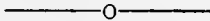
The new king, reared in an entirely different political atmosphere, did not consider himself bound by the provisions of the covenant and almost immediately aroused serious opposition by his highhanded methods. He was in Poland only five months when the news of his brother's death reached him, and very soon afterward the country was apprised that their monarch had fled to become King Henry III of France. His behavior was shocking and humiliating to the nation, whose cultural attainments at the time were at least equal, if not superior, to those of France. Morfill, in his book on Poland, gives a description of the Polish delegation sent to France to inform Henri Valois of his election, which throws an interesting light upon the educational accomplishments of the Poles at that period. He says: "On conversing with the Poles, the French were struck with their facility in speaking Latin, French, German and Italian. Some of them even spoke the French language with such facility that, according to a contemporary writer, they might have been taken for inhabitants of the banks of the Seine or the Loire, rather than men born in countries watered by the Vistula and Dnieper. The nobility of the Court of Charles IX were obliged to blush at their own ignorance, for there were only two, the Baron de Millan and the Marquis de Castellau Mauvissiere, who could answer them in Latin, and they had been expressly sent to maintain the honor of their order. The other nobles, when the new-

**The King's**

**Flight in 1574**

comers spoke to them in that language, could only reply by signs or stammering." \*

The experience with the universal direct elections and with foreign kings should have been taken for a bad omen, and the pre-election intrigues for an indication of how destructive the policy would eventually be for Poland, bound as she was on all sides by strong monarchies whose sovereigns sought the Polish crown for selfish and dynastic advantages. The elections opened a way for foreign enemies to take active part in Polish politics, and by intrigues and corruption to disorganize, demoralize and weaken the country. An enlightened body of patriots saw the dangers and tried to prevent them, but were defeated by the self-seeking magnates and the Church. A period of political decline was not slow to set in, despite the noble efforts of great statesmen and warriors who endeavored to steer the ship of state clear of the rocks of destruction for which she was headed, propelled by the exalted but impractical ideals of individual liberty on the part of the citizenry, and by the selfish designs of powerful and greedy neighbors aided in their destructive work by the ambitions and selfish particularism of certain Polish elements.



\* W. R. Morfill "Poland," N. Y., G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1908, p. 94.



FIG. 92—AN ALTAR CLOTH EMBROIDERED BY QUEEN ANNA JAGIELLON

## CHAPTER X.

### The Catholic Reaction

After the ignominious flight of King Henry new elections were ordered. In addition to the candidates of the preceding election a few more appeared, but the issue simmered down to a choice between the Austrian Emperor, Maximilian II, and Stefan Batory, Duke of Transylvania, who was married to Anna Jagiellon, sister of Zygmunt II August. The Senate elected the former, the nobles the latter, and no compromise could be reached. Both sides gathered forces for a bloody decision of the question. Batory was first to arrive at Cracow, while the city was held by his supporters, and was promptly crowned in 1576. The party of the Emperor was losing strength and soon capitulated. Batory was recognized throughout Poland and Lithuania with the exception of West Prussia. As a consequence a short war ensued, in the course of which Danzig suffered greatly for its obstinacy, and the rebellion came to a speedy end.

While the unanimous election of Henry Valois had been a keen disappointment, the divided election of Batory was to be a great success. The new King was a man of rare attainments and unusual abilities. Accomplished in the arts of diplomacy and warfare, he combined in one person the statesman and the general, blending wisdom and tact with knowledge and determination. He never transgressed any of his constitutional privileges and scrupulously respected

**The Reforms  
of Stefan  
Batory,  
1576-1586**



(J. Mateyko)

FIG. 93—STEFAN BATORY (1574-1586)

the rights of the nobles, but in return demanded a similarly unequivocal respect of the law on the part of others, and dealt very decisively and severely with those who exhibited anarchistic proclivities. Famous is the case of the brothers Zborowski, powerful and wealthy palatines, who combined ambition with restless spirit. Samuel Zborowski had been banished from the country by Henri Valois, but returned in Batory's time, and launched a furious campaign against the King and his able chancellor, John Zamoyski, in the course of which he even went so far as to invoke the aid of foreign monarchs. When overpowered by Batory he was promptly executed and his brother and co-worker exiled from the country. The palatines soon realized that it was not a figurehead who sat on the throne of Poland. George Oscik, the Lithuanian magnate who carried on treacherous negotiations with the Tsar of Muscovy, was, like Zborowski, dealt with summarily.

It is significant that one of Batory's first reforms concerned the judiciary. The King's Court, to which final appeals were taken, in the course of time became a most inefficient institution, clogged with accumulated business and too remote from the people in a time when means of communication were very scanty and poor. Batory established three tribunals which were to take the place of the King's Court of Appeals in civil matters. The tribunal at Piotrkow had jurisdiction over Great Poland, that of Lublin over Little Poland, and a separate tribunal was established for Lithuania. The King's Court continued to hear appeals in criminal cases. The judges of the tribunals were elected by the nobility. The King's consent to elective judges was not obtained until the Diet refused to vote the necessary funds for the war with Muscovy. The emancipation of the nobles from



royal jurisdiction abolished the last vestige of kingly power over them. Moreover, the King's Court had been the only institution in which the despised burghers were on a footing of equality with the nobles. In defense of the nobles with reference to their attitude toward other estates, it must be stated that they



FIG. 94—CHANCELLOR JAN ZAMOYSKI, 1541-1605,  
Great statesman and democrat, author of the famous work "De Senatu  
Romano" and founder of the Zamość Academy

exclusively bore many state and military burdens, and that they had not considered their estate as a close corporation. On the contrary, thanks to the influence of Chancellor John Zamoyski, one of the greatest and finest spirits of Poland, thousands from among the burghers and business people were ennobled. The

demand for elective judges was, however, against the political ideals of the King who well realized that what the country most needed was not more liberties, but a strong centralized power to guide it, and that any dissipation of such a centralized power was detrimental.

Aiming to establish a strong monarchical government, Batory singled out the Catholic Church for his particular favors. The principles of the Church favored the monarchical idea. The Catholic Church taught that the source of royal power was divine and that absolute monarchy was the best form of government, sanctioned by the Scriptures. The Jesuits were particularly gifted exponents of this theory and for that reason were greatly encouraged by the King. Despite Batory's strong leaning toward the Catholic Church he had, however, never submitted to the insistent demands made upon him to abrogate the Articles of the Warsaw Confederation, which he had sworn to maintain. Although he rejoiced to see the steady decline of the Reformation movement in Poland, he never broke his pledge of tolerance.

Batory's illustrious reign is noted not only for his successful curbing of anarchy, but also for his wise foreign policy and his success in bringing about the organization of a strong standing army, the origin of which dated back to the time of Zygmunt II August, when the Diet had voted one-fourth of the income from the crown lands for defensive military purposes. A strong army was needed for the execution of Batory's plans which aimed at the development of Ukraine and a free access to the Black Sea, made hitherto impossible by the constant raids of Turks and Tartars. It did not take him long to organize a large and efficient army. Peasants were



(Painting by J. Mateyko)

FIG. 86—KING STEFAN BATORY AT PSKOV

encouraged to join the infantry, and in compensation for their services their families were granted exemption from certain duties. Many of the peasants were raised to the rank of nobles in recognition of their valor. The Cossacks were drafted into the regular service and organized into regiments of light cavalry. While Batory was organizing the army, Ivan the Terrible invaded Livonia in 1577 and ruthlessly devastated the country. The Polish King was not quite ready to meet him, but very soon he rallied his forces and personally led them against the Muscovites. Not only were they driven out of Livonia, but were pursued eastward to Pskov. Ivan sued for peace but Batory, though hampered by a lack of financial support from the Diet, refused to negotiate. The Tsar then brought into play all his powers of Oriental treachery and diplomacy. He again assured the Pope that he contemplated joining the Roman Church and sending an expedition against Turkey. In return he asked support against the Polish King, whom he called the ally of the Infidel. The Pope dispatched Antonio Possevino, a famous Jesuit, who persuaded Batory that it was for the best interests of the Church to establish peace. The treaty which followed, 1582, deprived Ivan of all his previous possessions in Livonia and of the Duchy of Polotsk. Batory's dream of conquering Moscow and adding this vast territory to the Polish union was not realized at the time, but he never abandoned it.

To offset the influence of Great Britain, then supporting Muscovy, Batory conceived the plan of strengthening the league of the Baltic cities. Amidst preparations for a new campaign against Muscovy, which was to be followed by another against Turkey, this great monarch died, after a short illness, in

Grodno, on December 12, 1586, being only fifty-three years old.

The firm political structure he had reared by his



FIG. 96—THE TOMB OF STEFAN BATORY AT THE CATHEDRAL OF CRACOW

constructive genius and the strong government he had established with the aid of Zamoyski were soon to collapse, during the stormy and turbulent interregnum which followed his untimely death.

The Bigotry  
of Zygmunt  
Vasa,  
1587-1632

The interregnum, 1586-1587, ended in a war. The chief candidates for the Polish throne

were the Swedish Archduke Zygmunt Vasa, son of King John and Catherine Jagiellon, the second sister of Zygmunt II August, and Maximillian, brother of



(J. Mateyko)

FIG. 97—ZYGMUNT III (1587-1632)

the Emperor Rudolph II. A strong party of nobles under the leadership of John Zamoyski favored the Swedish candidate. The other was commanded by Zborowski, who raged with hatred toward the great

Chancellor of the late King. All the turbulent and boisterous elements held in leash by the strong hand of Batory gave vent to their reactionary impulses when kindled by partisan and political animosity. Riots broke out in many places. The discussions in the Convocation Diet were extremely animated and prolonged. The country was desirous of having the interregnum ended, but evidently no compromise could be reached. Finally, on the 19th of August, 1587, the Swedish Archduke was declared King by the Zamoyski faction. Three days later the Zborowskis announced the election of Maximillian. The choice of the Zamoyski faction prevailed, but the victory of the partisans of the Swedish Archduke proved to be a great disappointment at first and a veritable calamity in the end. The new King, though very young, was not that tabula rasa he was depicted by his tutor which would easily receive the impress the Poles wanted to make on it. On the contrary, he was possessed of a strong character and came to Poland with a ready political program which was entirely out of accord with the political tendencies of the party that had elected him. The new King was ultra-Catholic and regarded the propagation of the Faith as his chief mission. In this he naturally sided with the Hapsburgs of Austria and Spain. The party that had elected him, though comprised in a large majority of Catholics attached to the Church, was heir to the lofty principles of tolerance which characterized the Jagiellon polity, and for that reason chiefly was so vigorously opposed to the election of Maximillian, seeing in a union with the Hapsburgs a danger to the time-honored institutions of the Republic. Zygmunt very soon alienated his former supporters and began very ardently to foster Catholicism by all available means. He married one of the

Austrian princesses without asking the consent of the Senate. He thus closely bound himself to the Hapsburgs and violated the constitution which he had sworn to respect. To make matters worse, it was soon discovered that he was planning to abdicate the throne in favor of Ernest Hapsburg in return for the support of his claims in Sweden by the Emperor. The understanding also provided that Ernest was to release him from the pledge of ceding Esthonia to Poland, to which he had sworn in the *pacta conventa*. He was impeached, and though at the "Inquisitorial" (as it was called) session of the Diet he denied the charges, his prestige became undermined, 1592.

Meanwhile the Catholic reaction had been making great headway. The Jesuits began to exercise a powerful influence over the education and modes of thought of the people. Their pupils were brought up in a hitherto unheard-of fanaticism and in an abject servility to the mighty. The very conservative Polish historian, Professor Sokolowski so characterizes the results of the Jesuit endeavors:

**The Growth  
of Jesuit  
Influence**

"Superficiality and pompousness had become the chief characteristics of literature as well as of education; the authors and orators concealed their dearth of thought and lack of substance under a flood of classical quotations; the manly style of the time of Zygmunt II August dissolved itself into macaronism, seasoned with seeming earnestness. The style once so deftly ridiculed by Kochanowski (*Carmen Macaronicum*) received the right of citizenship in literature, and encyclopædic knowledge drowned all originality of thought and soberness of judgment."

The King encouraged far-reaching repressive measures and gave a personal example of intolerance by withholding all state offices from non-conformists or "dissidents," and by not heeding the complaints



made against the "heretical tumults." The Protestants were held up to scorn, subjected to maltreatment as enemies of their own country, and were made the victims of the street riots and pillage. Religious fanaticism, hitherto alien to the Polish character, was diligently instilled by a foreign King seeking to



(J. Matejko)

FIG. 98—PETER SKARGA, the great preacher of the time of Zygmunt III

advance his own interests through an exaggerated devotion to the Church. The Jesuits became a veritable power, and through their influence alone could one obtain offices and distinction. Great statesmen and patriots, like John Zamoyski and Peter Skarga,



(Painting by J. Matejko)

FIG. 99—SKARGA FORETELLING THE FALL OF POLAND

the King's chaplain, himself a Jesuit, and others, saw that the course pursued by the King was fatal to the country.

The dynastic difficulties of the King in his native country to the north plunged Poland into a series of disastrous wars. John III Vasa died in 1592. At



FIG. 100—HETMAN JAN KAROL CHODKIEWICZ

the news of his father's death Zygmunt went to Sweden. Many among the Poles hoped that he would never return. Unfortunately for Poland, Sweden fearing the fanatic, refused to recognize him, although he was crowned at Upsala. His uncle, the Duke of Sudermania, headed the opposition. When the latter ascended the throne as Charles IX, Zygmunt turned

to Poland with a request for support against his uncle. The Polish Diet refused the support, whereupon Zygmunt recalled the "pacta conventa" and magnanimously offered Esthonia to Poland in order to force an inevitable war upon an unwilling country. The Polish victory under Chodkiewicz at Kirchholm, in 1605, would have led to a great offensive campaign against Sweden had the nation's attention not been turned to an internal rebellion and a war with Muscovy.

The rebellion, known as that of Zebrzydowski, who was its leader, was an attempt to overthrow the King whose foreign policy was so inimical to the interests of the country, and who so persistently opposed every measure of sound internal reform.

**The Rebellion  
Against the  
King**

When a proposal of changing the method of elections was made, whereby the principle of majority vote was to supersede the unanimity of decision, the King vetoed the measure. It was apparent to everybody that "absolutum dominium" was the aim of the King, who disregarded all constitutional restrictions. In 1605 he again married a Hapsburg Princess and again without the consent of the Senate. The occasion produced the spark which caused the conflagration. The opposition, now deprived of the wise and conservative leadership of Zamoyski who had died, formed a confederacy and raised a considerable rebel army. Unfortunately they failed in their desperate attempt to get rid of the blighting influence of the royal enemy of Poland, and the victorious King could continue unhampered his disastrous policy of intrigue and selfishness. It was on account of his personal character that the Russian campaign, inaugurated most auspiciously, ended in a fiasco.

The self-styled Tsar of Russia, Demetrius, who followed the murdered Boris Godunov to the throne of Moscow, was a man of western sympathies and a friend of Poland. His wife and court were Polish. In 1606, while the Zebrzydowski rebellion was raging in Poland, the agents of Basil Shooyiski murdered

The War with  
Muscovy



FIG. 101—HETMAN STANISLAW ŻÓLKIEWSKI, the conqueror of Moscow

Demetrius and with him a large number of Poles residing in Moscow. This act led to war with Poland. The Polish hetman, or commander-in-chief, Stanislaw Żółkiewski, reached Moscow, took Shooyiski and his family as prisoners and entered into negotiations with the Council of Boyars. By a solemn treaty, the boyars recognized Wladyslaw, the son of the Polish King, as their Tsar and subsequently the

population of the capital took an oath of fealty. A splendid opportunity offered itself for Poland to civilize the vast domains of Muscovy. The fanatical and ambitious Zygmunt frustrated this great opportunity by recalling Żólkiewski and the crown troops from Moscow and by insisting on his personal claims to the crown of the Tsars. The population of the Muscovite capital abhorred the thought of a Jesuitic sovereign. Aided by the Orthodox clergy and other conservative elements of Moscow who feared the influence of the democratic institutions of Poland the opposition rose, and an anti-Polish movement was successfully launched. Patriarch Hermogen absolved the people from the sworn oath. At the news Zygmunt, having captured Smolensk, hastened to Moscow, but came too late. The private Polish troops stationed there could not curb the animated bands directed by the butcher Minin and the Prince Pojarski. Michael Romanoff was elected Tsar, and the dream of union with Russia under Polish leadership, conceived by Witold and running like a red thread through the political thought of the Jagiellon dynasty, came to a seeming end, though Wladyslav did not abandon his claims to the throne of the Tsars.

No sooner had the conflict with Muscovy terminated than the dark clouds of two new wars gathered on the horizon. The Cossacks, whom the Polish frontier palatines endeavored to harness, were not only rebelling against all restriction but their constant raids on Turkey both in Europe and Asia Minor brought on retaliatory expeditions by the Tartars, instigated by the Sultan. Polish palatines themselves, who owned estates larger than many a sovereign principality in central Europe,

**The Echoes  
of the Thirty  
Years' War**

were carrying on wars of their own with the Hospodars of Moldavia and also with the Turks and Tartars, and many a time placed the Polish government in a most awkward position. Advantage was taken by Turkey of one those local encounters to declare war on Poland. The campaign was undertaken chiefly with a view of striking at Austria which was then in the throes of the Thirty Years' War and in which she was indirectly assisted by Poland. The Polish King endeavored, but did not succeed, to bring Poland to the side of the Hapsburgs. He, however, permitted recruiting volunteers for the army of Ferdinand II, his brother-in-law. A great Turkish host invaded Poland in 1620 and defeated a valiant but small army under the leadership of the venerable Żółkiewski. The famous conqueror of Moscow fell in the battle of Cecora, not far from Jassy, and the Polish army was annihilated. This bloody and determined battle retarded the progress of the Turkish advance and by preventing the Ottoman armies from effecting a juncture with their allies, enabled the Emperor to win the famous battle of the White Hill. The Turks renewed their campaign on a larger scale in the following spring, but were halted by the desperate defense of Chocim on the Dniester. In 1621 peace was restored between Poland and the Porte.

Meanwhile, the successor of Charles IX of Sweden, the gifted Gustavus Adolphus, desirous of finally disposing of his cousin's claims, sent an expedition which, in 1617, occupied Livonia. A series of pour-parlers followed. The Poles were anxious for peace and refused any money to carry on further war, but the ambitious King would not consent to renounce his claims. The conflict continued intermittently. When the Swedish troops, however, overran West Prussia and threatened the city of Thorn, the Diet

granted the necessary funds to start a vigorous defense. In 1629 Hetman Stanislaw Koniecpolski defeated the Swedes, and by the intervention of England and France, both vitally interested in the success of Gustavus Adolphus, a six years' truce was established, the terms of which were most unfavorable for Poland. By this truce of Altmark Sweden was allowed to retain possession of her Livonian conquests, besides holding a large portion of the Baltic littoral, which gave her control of the principal trade routes of the Baltic and a considerable revenue derived from port tolls. The amount of these tolls in 1627 alone amounted to 500,000 rix-dollars.

Not a single measure championed by the King brought any gains to Poland. It was also in the reign of Zygmunt III that the unfortunate error of Polish diplomacy with reference to East Prussia was consummated. The recognition, by the last Jagiellon, of the right of the Brandenburg Electors to succession in East Prussia in the case of extinction of the Anspach line, was confirmed in the year 1618, when the Elector became the ruler of that part of Prussia.

The ineptitude and intolerance of Polish diplomacy of the Vasa period are also partly responsible for the failure to bring all the Ruthenians into a union with the prevailing religion in Poland. From the very first years of the political consolidation of Poland with Lithuania and Ruthenia it was the greatest concern of the statesmen of the united countries to bring the Ruthenians closer to the Catholic Church; and it was with this view that Jagiello and Witold delegated Catholic and Ruthenian bishops first to the Council of Constance 1414-1418, where the matter was not settled, and later to the Councils of Basel and Florence, 1431-1449. As is well known, the union

**The Uniate  
Church**



of the Eastern and Western churches was established in Florence in 1439, each church retaining its own rites and liturgy, but both recognizing the Roman Pope as the sole head of the Church. The union was not lasting anywhere except in Poland, where it remained in force practically throughout the XVth century. The Grand Duke of Moscow repudiated it from the very beginning, and in Greece it came to an end with the fall of Constantinople. It was a great fault on the part of Poland to allow the union to disintegrate and to permit the Ruthenians to go back again, jointly with the Muscovite Church, under the corruptive influence of Constantinople. This political blunder was in large measure due to the Reformation. With the advent of the Reformation the idea of the union became unpopular, the Protestants joining hands with the Ruthenians to undermine the established Church. With the Catholic reaction setting in at the close of the XVIth century the idea of the union again became a matter of considerable concern. The conditions in the Orthodox Church at the time were most revolting, and strongly resembled those of the Roman Church in Luther's days. The metropolitans and bishops were leading dissolute lives, and the common clergy were ignorant and equally immoral. High ecclesiastical offices could be obtained for money or by favoritism. Under the influence of the expurgated Catholic Church the conditions in the Ruthenian clergy began to change for the better, and, goaded on by Polish statesmen, the Ruthenian bishops convoked a synod at the Lithuanian city of Brześć (now known by the Russian name of Brest-Litovsk) in 1595 to discuss means of reform and the possibility of renewing the union with the Roman Church. The union of the two churches received at the time paramount importance

in view of the fact that Muscovy, in retaliation for the unscrupulous exploitation on the part of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, established its own church with the Tsar at the head (1589), and the fear of the possible gravitation of the Ruthenians toward Moscow became very real and entirely justified. As early as 1567, even before the separate Muscovite Church



FIG. 102.—THE UNIATE CATHEDRAL OF ST. JUR AT LEMBERG

was established, the metropolitan of Moscow, Nikon, called himself the Patriarch of Great and Little Russia. The proceedings of the synod and the ultimate schism proved conclusively that in certain groups there were decided leanings toward the Muscovite Church, and that they were ready to exert every effort to prevent a union with the prevailing Church

in Poland. A considerable element among the Ruthenian schismatics was also actuated by Protestant motives. As a result of the discordant interests only about two-thirds of the Ruthenians joined the union. The dioceses of Lemberg, Przemysl, Lutsk and Mohilev were left in the hands of the schismatics. All the others, not excluding that of Kieff, came into the Uniate Church. In a considerable measure the failure to rally greater support of the union was due to the shortsightedness and obstinacy of the Polish clergy in their refusal to admit the Ruthenian bishops to membership in the Polish Senate. The well-conceived but poorly executed Brześć union resulted in unfortunate division and strife in Ukraine, that had many lamentable results and which contributed in a degree to the precipitation of the Cossack rebellions and the ultimate loss of the Cossacks to Poland.

The regrettably long reign of Zygmunt III Vasa, 1587-1632, characterized by intolerance, intrigue and incompetency, is the turning point in Polish history. The era of political decline begins with him, brightened by moments of unequalled heroism and supreme political wisdom.





(J. Kossak pinx)

FIG 103—A PEASANT HORSE TEAM OF THE PROVINCE OF CRACOV

## CHAPTER XI.

### The Polish Constitution

The constitution of Poland was never written. It was a body of laws sanctioned by ancient custom and subsequent legislation. By the end of Zygmunt Vasa's reign it became a rigid state instrument, and underwent but few changes until the last quarter of the XVIIIth century.

The Commonwealth of Poland consisted of the Kingdom of Poland, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the domains of Prussia, Mazovia, Zmudz (Samogitia), Kieff, Volhynia, Podolia, Podlasie and Livonia or Inflanty. The victories over Muscovy in the XVIIth century placed a number of other territories under Polish sovereignty. In addition, Poland exercised sovereign power over Courland, East Prussia, Moldavia and Wallachia. Since the establishment of the union among the component states at Lublin in 1569 Poland had been a Republic, at the head of which stood an elective King.

**The Polish  
Republic**

The Piasts were hereditary rulers of Poland. By the will of the childless Kazimir the Great, the last Piast, the crown of Poland went to his nephew, Ludwig of Hungary. If Ludwig had left male heirs, their right to the Polish throne would have been undeniable. There was no law or custom, however, which would recognize a woman to hereditary right of succession. To secure this right for his daughters, Ludwig had to compromise, and granted the famous privilege of Koszyce in 1374. His daughter, or the grand niece of Kazimir the Great, was elected. If she had sons they would have inherited the right to the Polish throne. But Jadwiga died childless, and the status of her consort, Jagiello, was not clearly defined. In consequence, his sons, by a Ruthenian princess, were not recognized as royal heirs in Poland. With Jagiello's oldest son, therefore, begins the period of elective kings. It was only because the Poles desired to preserve the union with Lithuania, where the descendants of Jagiello had hereditary rights, and not because of any legal obligations, that they had elected kings of his house until the extinction of the dynasty.

The sons of the King had no more claims to the throne than anyone else.

Every nobleman of Poland, Lithuania and the other parts of the Republic had a right to vote. The representatives of the more important cities were members of the electorate, as were also Poland's vassals, with the exception of the Duke of Prussia, to whom this privilege was denied. Until the end of the Jagiellon dynasty the elections were indirect, through representatives in local assemblies and the Diet. After the reign of Zygmunt II August, "viritim" or direct elections in person prevailed. The viritim elections took place in

a suburb of Warsaw, where the knighthood and dignitaries formed two separate camps. Here the assembled electorate listened to the exhortations of the representatives of the candidates and their supporters. On the day set for the election the Senators

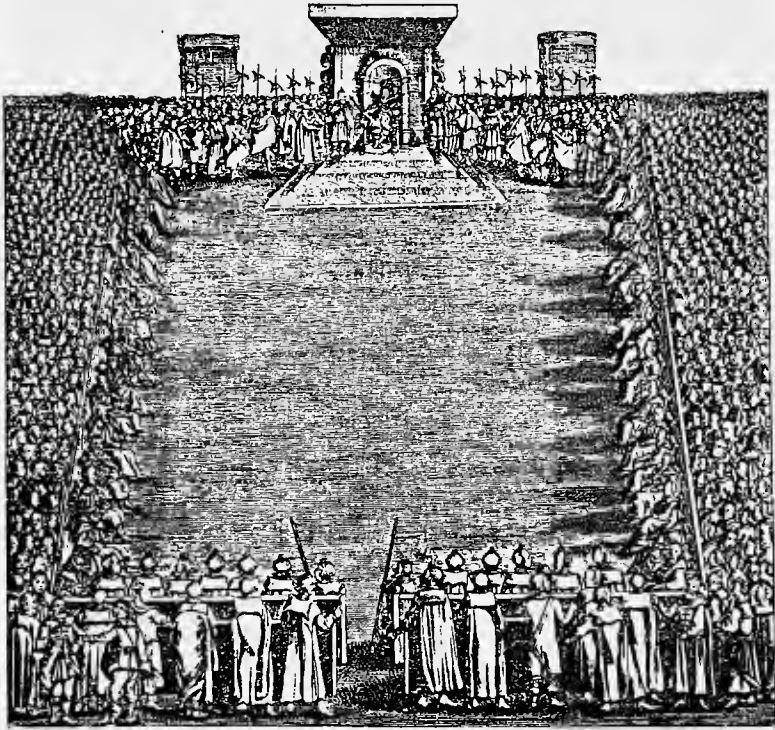


FIG. 104—AN ELECTION CAMP

and Deputies met with the nobility of their respective provinces and took a viva voce vote on the various candidates. Unanimous consent was necessary to make the election valid. The Primate announced the result of the election.

The elected candidate, first by his representatives and then in person, swore to uphold the constitutional privileges enumerated in the *pacta conventa*, which the pre-election or "convocation diet" had drawn up, whereupon a duly executed diploma of election was handed to him. He did not become, however, vested with monarchial authority until after the coronation which took place at Cracow. The coronation ceremony was followed by a special "coronation diet," at which the King confirmed the laws of the Commonwealth.

At first the King's power was considerable. He was the lawmaker, and although at a comparatively early period he regularly consulted his Council, he was not legally bound by its decisions. He could not, however, infringe upon the privileges and rights of the several estates. The law of 1505, known as "*Nihil novi*," limited his legislative power considerably and gave it to the Diet.

**The Powers  
and Duties of  
the King**

The King was the supreme judge until the elective tribunals were established in Batory's time, which, however, did not supersede him in civil matters. He was commander-in-chief of the army. He could call out the national militia, but only with the consent of the Diet, of which he was an integral part.

He convened the national and local diets at times instanced by law and at other times on extraordinary occasions. He specified the matters to be submitted for the consideration of the Diet. The resolutions and acts of the Diet, as well as court decrees, were issued in his name. He had power to appoint ambassadors to foreign countries, but could give them instructions in minor matters only. The ambassadors were responsible to the Diet. Similarly, the King could confer with foreign representatives only in the pres-

ence of the Council of the Senate. The King could not go abroad, marry or secure divorce, without the assent of the Senate. Although the King derived his power from the election, he was responsible to nobody. He was merely limited by the privileges which he granted, or which were granted by his predecessors and which he confirmed. After the extinction of the Jagiellon dynasty the electorate claimed the right to renounce allegiance to the King in case of his disregard of the law or of the articles of the covenant (*de non praestanda obedientia*).

The executive power of the State was vested in the King. He was, however, handicapped in the exercise of it by the life tenure of officials and by their independence. He had the sole right to appoint civil and military officers, but could not recall any officials unless guilt had been established before the Diet sitting as a court of justice. The right of appointing bishops was vested in the King, and he had the power to donate or mortgage crown lands.

All offices were life tenures. The chief offices which, with the exception of the Hetmans and the Under-Treasurer, entitled the incumbents to senatorial dignities were:

#### Offices

1. The Chancellor or Keeper of the Great Seal. Both ecclesiastical and temporal nobles could hold this office. The Chancellor was the representative of the King and the interpreter of his will and intentions. He read the speeches of the Crown, presented to the Diet the matters for consideration, negotiated with foreign ambassadors and acted as intermediary between the people and the king. All royal decrees, mandates and correspondence was prepared and signed by him.

2. The Under-Chancellor attended to minor af-



fairs and assumed the duties of the Chancellor in his absence.

3. The Grand Marshall had charge of the King's safety, and was at the head of the administration of the police and judicial departments of the capital and its vicinity. His jurisdiction was very large.

4. Two Under-Marshalls, assisting the Grand Marshall, were also regular officials.

5. The State Treasurer had charge over the royal exchequer. He was responsible for the collection of revenue and the expenditures approved by the Diet. His reports were regularly submitted to the Diet, and for every misuse of funds he was responsible with his private fortune. He was also in charge of the mint and of the royal domains.

6. An Under-Treasurer attended to the minor matters of the office.

7. and 8. One Grand Hetman commanded the Crown army and another the Lithuanian army. They were charged with the duty of defending the country against invasion and of guarding the Republic against internal disturbances.

9. The Field Hetman was a military official of a lower rank. His duty was to defend the frontiers of the country. He also substituted the Grand Hetman when necessary.

All the above mentioned dignitaries were ex-officio ministers of state.

There were many minor state or court offices, some of which during the course of time lost their significance and were retained merely for honorary designations.

Of the crown officers who discharged their duties outside of the capital, the following were the most important:

The "Woyevoda" was a provincial Governor with a very limited duty and responsibility. At first he acted as chairman of the provincial diet, but later this custom came into disuse. The Woyevoda led the militia of his province in case of war, looked after the weights and measures in towns, prescribed the prices of products, and had jurisdiction over Jews. The office entitled the holder to a seat in the Senate.

The "Castellan's" was one of the offices which, like that of the Woyevoda, had a historical tradition, but which in time proved to be a mere honorary title of the leader of the nobility of a district. In case of war he organized the citizens of the district and led them to the Woyevoda. The office gave the incumbent senatorial rank.

The actual executive work in the country was done by the Starostas. They enforced the decrees, and had charge over the law and order of their respective districts. They were also judges of the nobility in criminal matters, and sometimes, but very seldom, in civil cases also. The civil jurisdiction was almost wholly in the hands of special judges, appointed by the King from the lists of candidates presented by the nobility of the districts.

Some of the offices were considered incompatible, i. e., could not be held at the same time by one and the same person. No two provincial offices could be filled by one person; a crown dignitary could not hold a provincial office; the Hetman could not be a Marshall, neither could the Chancellor be Treasurer of the Crown.

The King, the Senators and the representatives of the knighthood constituted the Polish Diet or Parliament. The King was an integral part of the Diet, although his constant presence during the sessions was not re-

**Incompatibilia**

**The Diet**

quired. At the time of the death of Kazimir the Great, in 1370, there were as yet no general assemblies of the nobles. Each province or district discussed its local affairs in small conventions. Gradually inter-provincial congresses began to be called to discuss affairs of a more general nature. At first these congresses were rare, but at the beginning of the XVth century they became more frequent. One reason for them was the development of the mutuality of interests with the greater consolidation of the country; another, the more frequent requests of the king for advice and approval of his activities. The more limited his power became the more frequent were the meetings of the representatives of the various sections of the country. Hussitism, controversies over church tithes, elections of the king, and other such matters called for frequent national assemblies of the nobles of the country. As there was no regular Diet, they first formed confederacies. Sometimes the representatives of the local assemblies met with the king's council. In this way, to the ancient advisory council of the king, consisting of his relatives, ministers, bishops, woyevodas and castellans were added the more democratic elements. The newcomers regarded their presence in the Council as of right and not of royal grace. When their numbers grew, and they became the spokesmen of a definite economic and social class, they were differentiated from the bishops and dignitaries and were requested to meet separately from the original council, which in contradistinction to the chamber of the deputies of the local assemblies of the nobles, was designated as the Senate. The past history of the Senate determined its composition. It consisted of the archbishops and bishops, ministers of state, castellans and woyevodas. The high state offices created after the Senate was

definitely constituted (the middle of the XVth century) did not find representation in it. That is why the Under-Treasurer and the Hetmans had no seats in the Senate. The number of senators in the year 1569 was 140; their number increased to 150 during the reign of Wladyslav IV and John Kazimir. After the loss of Livonia the number of senators decreased by four.

The Deputies were elected by the land assemblies which were the legislative organs of the local autonomous government, and were bound to observe the mandates given to them. Some measures, like those referring to taxation, had to receive the unanimous consent of the Diet and then of the local assemblies. This procedure was in conformity with the old custom whereby the King's Council had to get the consent of every local assembly for a measure infringing upon the privileges of the nobles. The theory of the procedure was that the privileges of the nobles formed not only the objective law of the country, but the subjective right of every individual whom they concerned. For every contemplated change of the privileges the consent of all those whom the change concerned was therefore required. When the national assembly took the place of the local assemblies the unanimous consent of the representatives and their constituencies was still required for the validity of any measure which concerned the nobility as a class, or as individuals. When the House of Representatives was definitely differentiated from the King's Council, in 1493, the representation of the nobility was very slight. Usually a province or the administrative unit presided over by a woyevoda sent two representatives. By the middle of the XVIth century there were not more than two score of representatives in the House. During the reign of the

first two Zygmunts their numbers increased. The local assemblies sent six delegates each. In 1569 there were 95 representatives in the House. In the next century the number of deputies was increased to 172.

There was no specified place or time for the sessions of the Diet. The king summoned it whenever occasion arose. Sometimes it met twice a year, at other times once in several years. In the XVth century the sessions lasted for a few days; in the XVIth century deliberations lasted several months. Later on the Diet met regularly every second year, and the time limit was six weeks. Extraordinary sessions could be called between the regular sessions and were to last not more than two weeks. At first the Diets met chiefly in Piotrkow, later in Warsaw. Although unanimous consent was required for the validity of the measures, yet it was not very difficult to obtain it, despite the specific instructions of local assemblies. The public spirit animating the Diet conquered all technical difficulties. Later on attempts, such as that by John Zamoyski, were made to introduce the principles of modern parliamentarism. They failed on account of the reaction which set in after the collapse of the Protestant Reformation movement.

The "Liberum veto," whereby one deputy could dissolve a session of Parliament and render nugatory all its previous decisions, came into life in the middle of the XVIIth century, in the era of moral and political decline.

The Confederacies were unions formed by the nobility, or magnates, the Diet or the King, with the aim of achieving certain things which could not be obtained by ordinary means. They supplemented, as it were, the imperfect constitutional machinery. They first came

into being during the interregnum following the death of Ludwig in 1382, and took the place of the regular government which, acting in the name of the King, was without legal sanction during the interregnum. After the death of Zygmunt II August in 1572, and later, attempts were made to provide for regular authority during an interregnum but were frustrated. Confederacies were sometimes formed during the life of the king when the government did not or could not fulfill its duties.

The legal basis for the confederacies lay in the conception of the supreme sovereignty of the nobility. That was why a general confederacy, i. e., comprising the representation of the whole nobility, was considered superior to the king. They sometimes attempted to subject the king to their jurisdiction. Naturally the power of the confederacy depended on its strength. A confederacy, which failed on account of lack of strength, was a rebellion. Sometimes the king formed counter confederacies. When the king joined a confederacy it received legal sanction from the outset. The closest analogy in modern times to a Polish confederacy was the Ulster movement against Irish Home Rule. In Poland Sir Edward Carson would have been recognized as the Marshall of the confederacy. With several counsellors added, he would have constituted the executive board of the confederacy. The representatives of the various districts in the confederacy formed a Council similar to the Diet. When the confederacy was general, i. e., embracing the whole country, the enactments of the Council superseded those of the regular Diet. The decisions of the confederacy were taken by a majority vote. In view of the fact that the Diets required unanimous vote, the confederacies were at times the only way out of serious difficulties. In the long run,

however, they did more harm than good in undermining the already weak foundation on which public law rested in Poland.

Each estate or class of Polish population had a distinct legal position with its own courts vested with judicial authority. The district courts with elective judges were the lower courts of the nobility. The court met three times a year in a place designated by law and had jurisdiction over civil matters. The chamberlain's courts had cognizance over land boundary disputes. The starostas' courts had jurisdiction over criminal cases, and entertained civil suits in cases where one of the parties was a non-resident noble. For gathering evidence the courts had power to appoint special commissions. Appeals from all the above courts in civil matters could be taken to the tribunals, of which there were three: one for Great Poland, one for Little Poland and the third for Lithuania. Appeals in criminal cases were taken to the King's court. No appeal from a decision of the Tribunal could be taken to the King's court. At times the Diet acted as a court, but only in cases referred to it by the tribunals. Cases of *lèse majesté* and of high treason came into its competence. The trial could not last longer than the time specified for the session of the Diet, and a *liberum veto* could annul the court decrees.

In matters pertaining to land ownership and the collection of tithes the clergy had to resort to ordinary courts. In criminal offences of the clergy, and in matters pertaining to canon law, the bishops wielded judicial authority. The bishop's court was the court of first instance, the primate's court the second, and the nuncio's court the third.

The townspeople had their own courts based on German law, with elective judges and the mayor as

presiding officer. Appeals from these courts went to the King's court.

The peasants were dependent in their disputes upon the owner of the village. In those villages which were founded upon the German law, elective courts remained, but the chief of the village became in time an appointee of the owner of the manor and a tool in his hands.

The Jews had their own courts, but in cases against Gentiles jurisdiction was in the hands of the Governor's or Woyevoda's courts; appeals could be taken to the King's court. Sometimes the King's court acted as a court of first instance. Jews who settled in the villages came within the jurisdiction of the owner of the village without the right of appeal.

The state revenue was derived from various duties and taxes, and from the leasing of the crown domains. The land tax was a general tax, from which only the clergy, and later the nobility also, were exempt. The products of the salt and metal mines were taxed, as were also dwellings in the country and in the cities. Mint seigniorage, excise taxes, the various taxes levied in the cities on commerce, transportation, manufactures and crafts, and the Jewish capitation tax were the other kinds of state revenue. The tax rate was a variable quantity; in cases of need the Diet would double, treble and even quadruple the usual tax rate. Until the year 1717 the clergy were exempt from taxation. In extraordinary cases the Church would donate to the state treasury a "subsidium charitativum," the amount of which was fixed by the Church Council. After 1717 the Church paid a regular annual tax.

The expenditures went for the maintenance of the King and his court, for state administration



and foreign representation, and for the regular army. The collection of taxes and the disposition of the revenues were under the control of the Treasurer, responsible to the Diet. Some taxes went directly to certain officials on whose ability to collect them depended the size of their incomes; others were farmed out, and in some instances the army officers collected the taxes designated for the maintenance of the army.

In addition to state taxes there were provincial and town duties of all kinds levied by the proper authorities. The Church tithes were devoted exclusively to the maintenance of the clergy.

“Great democracies are not belligerent.” On account of the persistent refusals of the nobility to

**National  
Defence**

make suitable appropriations for national defence the standing army of Poland was very small. It was composed of natives and foreigners, who were paid a stipulated amount for their services. In return for the multifarious privileges the nobility was bound to serve in the national militia and to answer the call to arms whenever made by the king in conformity with a resolution of the Diet authorizing the levy. The nobles were obliged to appear fully equipped. A military census was taken every five years. In the XVIIth century about 300,000 men were registered in the national militia. The militia was composed entirely of heavy and light cavalry, hussars, uhlans and dragoons. The regular army had all kinds of arms, ordnance, cavalry and infantry; the latter having been put on a regular and efficient basis by King Stefan Batory.

In addition, private troops were maintained by the spiritual and temporal magnates. Most of the residences of the magnates were fortified castles.

The number of these castles was very large. Many of them were very spacious and beautiful in design. Since 1572 the Cossacks have been utilized for light cavalry purposes and stationed at the frontiers of the country. The "registered" (as they were called)



(Courtesy of Scribners' Sons)

(Drawn by W. T. Benda)

FIG. 105—A POLISH WINGED HUSSAR

Cossacks received pay for their services and were exempt from any control by civil authorities. They were subject to the jurisdiction of their Chief, who, in turn, was under the Polish Field Hetman. During the reign of Zygmunt II August, Biala Cerkiew was

the seat of the Cossack Chief, and the depository of their magazines and munitions. King Stefan Batory

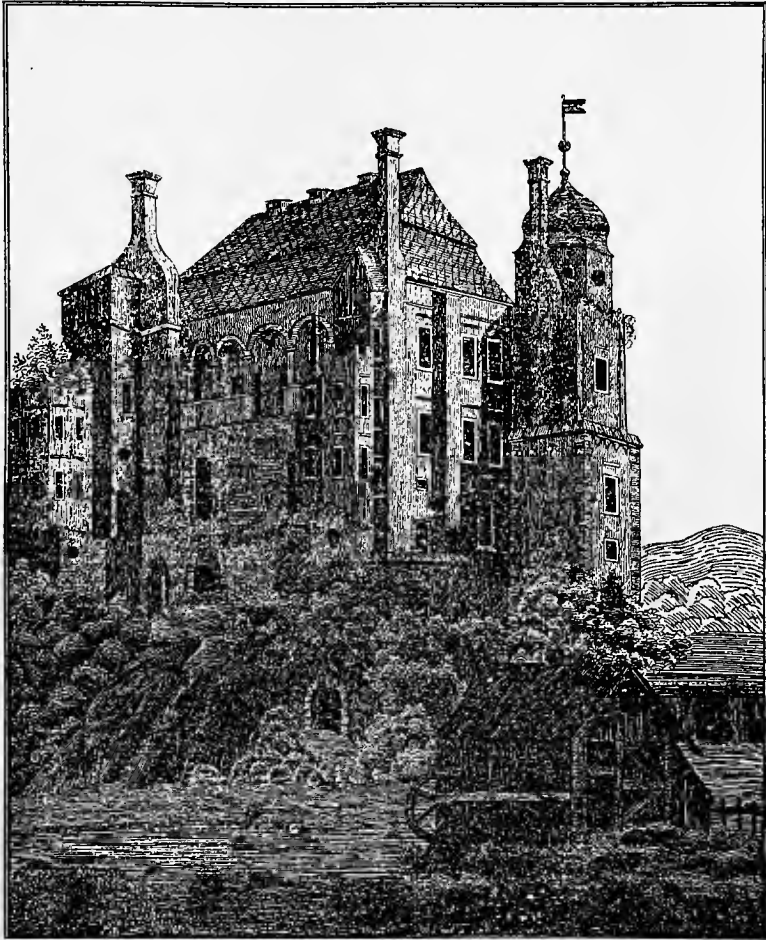


FIG. 106—THE CASTLE OF THE LESZCZYNSKI FAMILY AT GOLUCHOV

moved the capital of the registered Cossacks to Trachymirov, on the Dnieper, below the City of Kieff.

**The Nobles.** The nobles were the ruling class with the exclusive right to enjoy full citizenship. Nobility was hereditary in the male line, and an escutcheon was an outward sign of it. The power to ennoble resided originally in the King, but after the end of the XVIth century the approval of the Diet was required. As the class consciousness of the nobility grew, attempts were made

Legal Status  
of the Various  
Classes of the  
Population

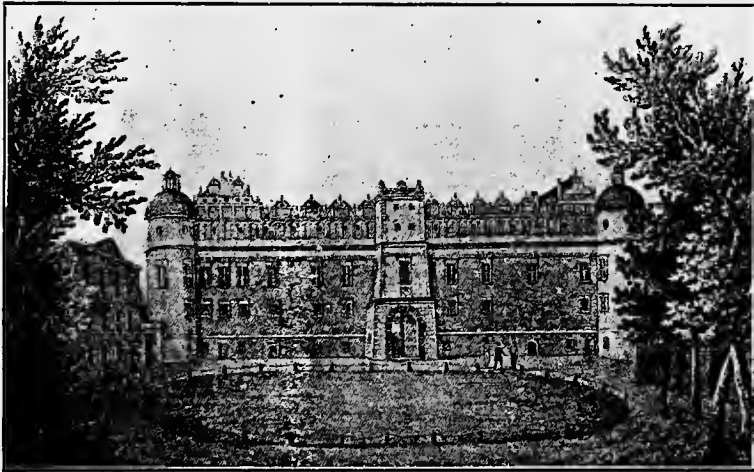


FIG. 107—THE CASTLE AT BARANOV

to restrict admission to the caste. Naturalization of foreign nobles, after 1641, similarly became a matter over which the Diet had sole control. In the XVIIth century a new conception, that of a scartabellate developed, whereby the newly ennobled persons enjoyed but certain privileges. Only their progeny in the third generation came into possession of full rights of citizenship. This was the only gradation in the ranks of the nobility who guarded jealously against

the rise in station of anyone by reason of hereditary title. By the act of 1638 no noble could accept or use a title which had not been registered in the acts of the Union of Lublin in 1569. The Polish Kings were prohibited from giving titles to Poles but were free to bestow them upon foreigners. Orders were not allowed in Poland. In violation of the law, the first was established in 1705, during the period of political disintegration.



FIG. 108—CASTLE AT KRASICZYN

The following were the special privileges and immunities enjoyed by the nobility exclusively: The right to acquire and own land in the country as well as real estate in cities, with all the wealth below the surface; the property of the nobles was exempt from confiscation without due process of law; only to the nobility was the door of the more exalted temporal and spiritual offices open; they were exempt from taxation, making only such contributions as they voluntarily imposed upon themselves, with the single exception of compulsory military duty in case of war. A noble was answerable only to his own

courts. For killing a person not of noble rank he was punishable by a fine only. He enjoyed the right of habeas corpus, had complete freedom of speech, was an elector of the King, and qualified to become a candidate for the royal office. Finally, he had a voice in the affairs of the country by electing delegates to the National Diet through the local assem-



FIG. 109—A VIEW OF THE CASTLE AT KRZYŻTOPÓR

blies. There was only one restriction to which the nobles had to submit, and that was the prohibition of being a merchant or an artisan. By settling in a city and engaging in this kind of work a noble forfeited all his rights to nobility.

**The Clergy.** Next to the nobility in order of enjoyment of special privileges and immunities were the Roman Catholic clergy. All the higher ecclesiastical offices were given exclusively to persons from

among the nobility, with the exception of the “doctoral canons,” to which only priests holding doctors’ degrees in theology, law and medicine could be appointed. Beginning with 1496 no cathedral chapter could have more than five plebeian members, all of whom were required to have doctors’ degrees. In the case of a dearth of properly qualified doctors of noble rank, priests from among other classes of society

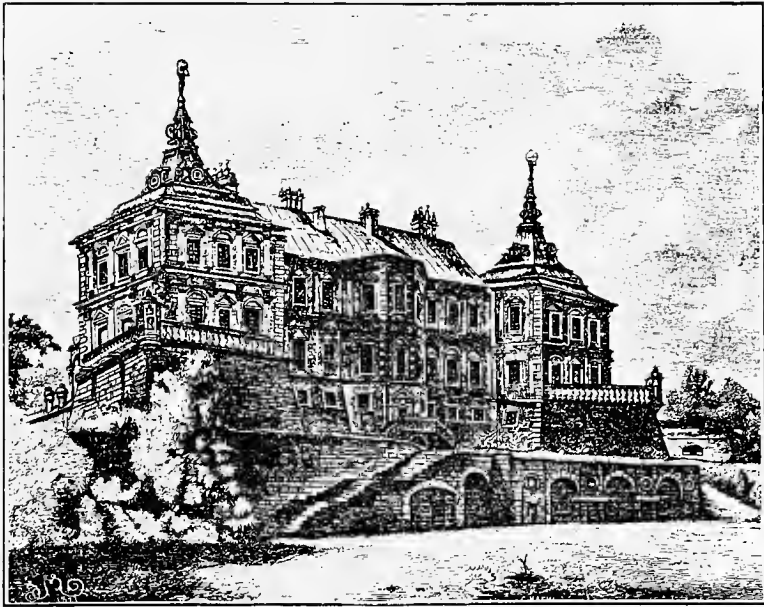


FIG. 110—THE CASTLE AT PODHORCE

could be appointed. Catholic diocesan bishops were ex-officio members of the Senate. Many high state offices, including that of the Chancellor, were open to the clergy, and as a rule were occupied by them alternatively, i. e., an office vacated by a temporal digni-

tary would in turn be occupied by a spiritual person, and vice versa.

The King appointed the bishops and canons, as well as the abbots and rectors. Kazimir the Great had attempted to influence the cathedral colleges in the election of bishops, Jagiello followed his example, and his second son, Kazimir Jagiellonczyk, obtained this right from the Pope, confirmed later by Sixtus V in 1589. The policy of Poland consistently endeav-

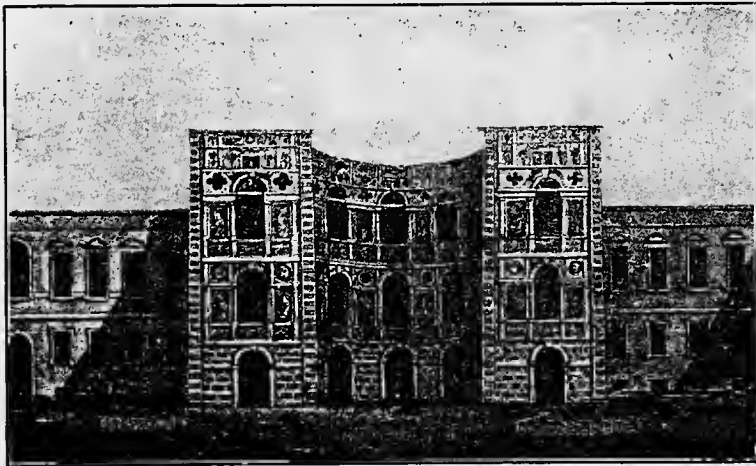


FIG. 111—THE FAÇADE OF THE CASTLE AT DWORNISKA

ored to submit the Church to State control. Those among the clergy who, by importunity or procurement, obtained appointments in Rome, and in this wise infringed upon the royal prerogatives, were liable to the penalty of exile and confiscation of personal property.

The nobility were tireless in opposing the tax exemptions of the clergy, the tithes and ecclesiastical jurisdiction. By a law of 1510 the Diet prohibited



bequests of land to the Church in order to stop the tremendous growth of "the dead hand," as the Church

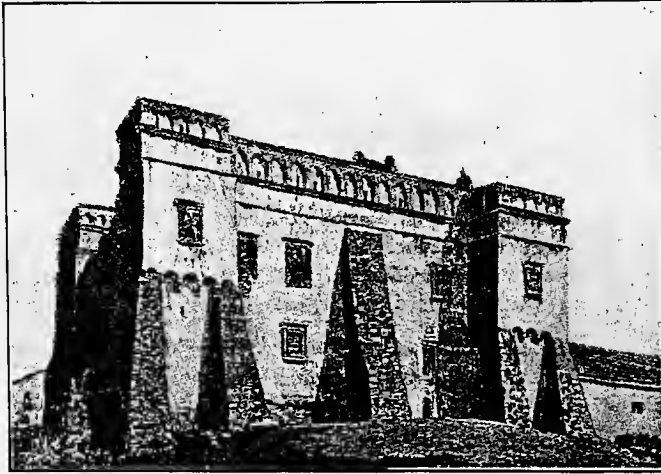


FIG. 112—A MANOR HOUSE OF THE XVII CENTURY AT SZYMBARK

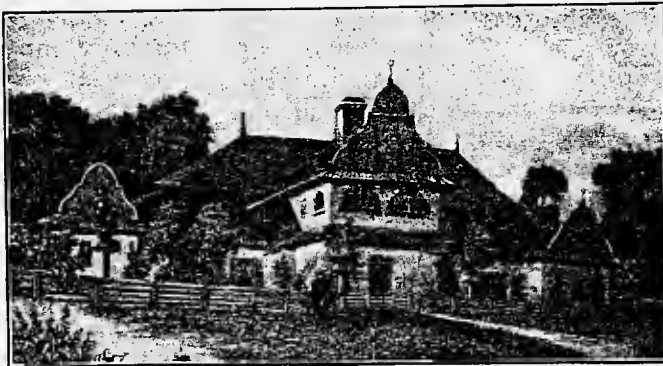


FIG. 113—A COUNTRY HOUSE OF A POLISH SQUIRE NEAR SIERADZ

estates were called. In 1562 the church courts were deprived of the right to enforce their decrees by

means of the executive power of the State, and in 1635 appeals to Rome were made illegal. In the XVIIth century restrictions were placed upon the building of monasteries and convents, and further restrictions placed upon bequests.

**The Dissidents.** The legal guarantees of equality of rights of dissidents with Catholics were contained in the provisions of the Warsaw Confederacy of 1573, and were sworn to by every new monarch. With the growth of the Catholic reaction they became more or less a dead letter, and dissidents were made the subjects of discrimination. No bishop of the Orthodox Church or even of the Uniate Church was recognized in the Senate, and State offices were very seldom filled by persons from among the non-Conformists. In 1632 the Diet prohibited the erection of new dissident churches in the cities of the Crown, and in 1717 this prohibition was extended to the rest of the country.

**The Arians,** or anti-trinitarians, were declared to be outside of the term "dissidents," and were banished from the country in 1658. The underlying motive for this radical method of dealing with the sect was political rather than religious.

**The Burghers.** The XVIth and XVIIth centuries saw the decline of the once prosperous and powerful Polish cities. Geographical and economic conditions as well as pernicious legislation were the causes of it. Gdansk (Danzig) only, and a few other maritime cities, continued to prosper. The direct interchange of the products of the manor for the foreign manufactures and luxuries, and the development of self-sufficing communities around the manor eliminated the need of cities, and their marts and fairs. The character of the city population changed. The old, prosperous and respectable families became ennobled and settled in the country; others emigrated. The

lower elements came into power, and, not appreciating the real causes of the decline of the cities, endeavored to put the blame upon the Jews and other foreign elements. The weakness and disorganization of the cities became reflected in their relation to other elements of the population and to the Government. The cities lost their former right to home rule and representation, and were subjected to the authority of state officials and private magnates. The woyevodas prescribed prices for city products, the rates of excise taxes, etc., and the Diet established rules as to profits and even as to private expenditures and the kind of dress to be worn (*lex sumptuaria*). The disintegration of city life was accelerated by special rights claimed by the nobility owning real estate within the city limits and by the clergy, who did not want to submit to the city administration and established special jurisdiction of their own. In this they were encouraged by the Diet which passed laws making certain persons and houses exempt from municipal law, and dependent solely upon provincial authorities and their jurisdiction.

The burgesses did not have access to any state offices nor to the higher spiritual positions. They were excluded from the national militia. Only the Prussian cities and the City of Cracow had a right to the acquisition and tenure of land outside the town limits.

Aside from the economic advantages the nobility planned to derive, by making themselves independent of the cities, the chief motive in destroying important and powerful cities was to remove every possibility of furnishing the King with an ally strong enough to overturn the existing order of things and to introduce absolute government in Poland. The cities declined very rapidly, and even the so-called

“storage laws” could not prevent this process. By these laws no merchant, foreign or domestic, could pass a “storage” city without offering his wares for sale on a specified day.



FIG. 114—TYPES OF PEASANTS FROM THE VICINITY OF LOWICZ

**The Peasants.** In the XVIth century there was not so much as a trace left of the independence of the peasant and his right to self-government. The laws limiting his freedom became more rigid, and the punishment for flight from the jurisdiction of his master more severe. The owner of the manor had jurisdiction over his peasants, and prescribed laws and

regulations for them; he could transfer them from place to place; he could take away certain leased parcels of land and give them others instead; he prescribed the amount of free labor the peasant had to render. There existed no state regulations as to the number of free days the peasant was obliged to give to his landlord, as to the number of beasts of burden he had to bring with him to help in the work, and as to the other duties he had to perform.



FIG. 115—POLISH MOUNTAINEERS OF ZAKOPANE, TATRA MOUNTAINS

In time the manor became an entirely independent economic unit. The peasant was obliged to buy all his necessities of life from the landlord and was compelled to sell all the products of his farm to the manor. The manor also established a monopoly of milling, bleaching and of spirits and beer production. The landlord compelled his peasants to purchase certain quantities of these drinks for various occasions, such as marriages and christenings. Similar conditions prevailed in church estates and crown

lands, except that in crown lands the peasant had a right to appeal to the royal referee's court for redress.

In spite of the loss of personal liberty, dating from 1496 in Poland and lasting longer than in the western countries of Europe, the Polish peasant was not a slave. He could not be sold, and he was not deprived of legal competence, although since 1573 he



FIG. 116—A PEASANT BRIDE OF SIERADZ

was the "peculium" of his overlord. He could hold property, both real and personal, and nobody could deprive him of it. He had hereditary rights to his land and could buy land from his landlord, to which his children had hereditary claims. His rights, however, were greatly restricted; he could not leave the landlord except with his consent, or, as in some places, by forfeiting a certain sum, but by law he

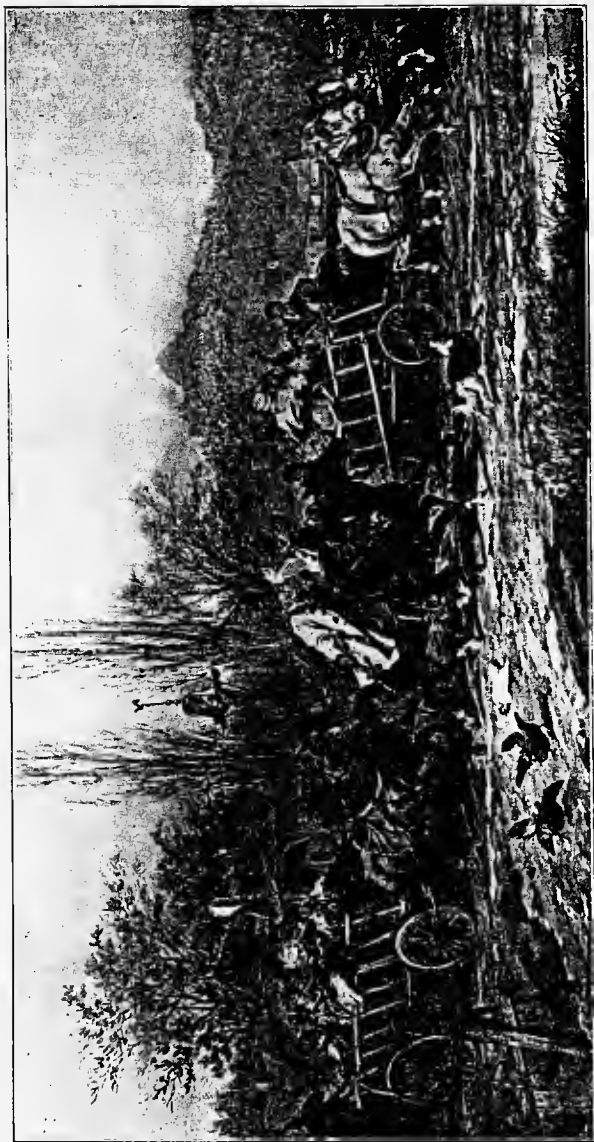
remained a free man. His legal status resembled that of minors or of women in those countries where they are not permitted by law to enter into any transactions without the consent of father or husband. The fact that in the XVIth and XVIIth centuries many peasants from foreign countries settled



FIG. 117—A PEASANT WOMAN OF LOWICZ

in Poland indicates that the lot of the peasant in Poland was better than that of his confrères in some of the west European countries.

**The Jews.** The Jews in Poland had complete autonomy in their internal affairs. In each city in which they were allowed to live there was a special



(Painting by J. Kossak)

FIG. 118—A CRACOVIAN PEASANT WEDDING PARTY



Jewish college called "Kahal," which governed the Jewish affairs of the community. In addition they had other colleges, such as that of neemunim to supervise or police the community; shamaim to collect taxes; gabbaim to attend to charities, and others. The members of the colleges were elected annually from among the taxpayers. Every year during the great fairs at Lublin and Jaroslav the representatives of the Jews from all the provinces of Poland assembled in synods to settle the internal affairs of the various communities and inter-communal matters; also to make joint representations to the King and to apportion the taxes levied upon them as a body. In time the Jewish autonomy became weaker, and they came more under the supervision of the woyevoda and his subordinates, but they always retained their right to appeal to the King's court for redress. In 1699 the King issued a special codification of all the privileges concerning Jews and by this document their status was clearly defined.

The Jews could not settle in the towns belonging to the Catholic Church, and in such cities of the Crown as Warsaw, for example, whose ancient charters forbade their settlement. To insure themselves against competition, the burghers made the Jews sign covenants limiting the scope of their pursuits. In some cities the Jews were prohibited from leasing real estate or handling customs and other tax collections. In those cities, however, where they had a right to settle, they could own real estate and houses. In the villages the Jews were subject to the jurisdiction of the landlord. On the whole, their disabilities in Poland were comparatively few, although from the very beginning the Jewish settlers were looked upon with disfavor by the peasants, and were made the subject of numerous complaints and blind vengeance,

particularly in times of economical crises or other calamities, like the Black Death of 1360. The laws of the country were designed to protect them against outrages and cruelties on the part of the native population, and were effective until the time of the Catholic reaction, when all non-Conformists, either Christian or Jews, became ostracized and subject to the "tumults" of the ignorant and fanatical street rabble. As a matter of fact, the Jews suffered less than the Protestants, and had more protection than the Christian non-Conformists.

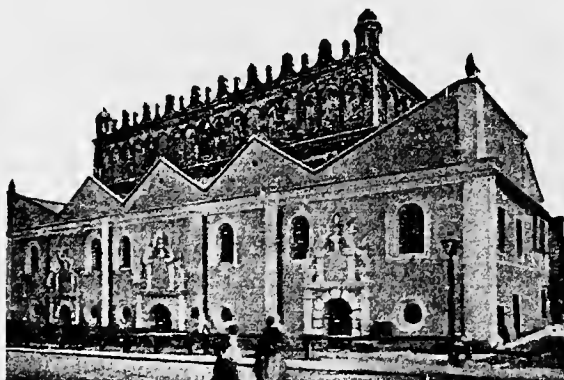


FIG. 119—A SYNAGOGUE FOUNDED BY KING SOBIESKI AT ŻÓLKIEV (Galicia)

Upon joining the Catholic Church the Jews received nobilitation and came into possession of the golden liberties of the nobility, the highest privilege the Republic could offer.

The liberality of the Polish law giving a wide autonomy to the Jewish population worked against the best interests of the Republic, as it was conducive to the perpetuation of a distinct race consciousness, and prevented the polonization and nationalization of an element of the population which had be-

come attached to the land of their adoption, where they found homes, work and protection at a time when they were cruelly persecuted almost everywhere else in Europe. Subsequent laws modelled after foreign patterns, which prohibited Jews from employing any help other than that of their coreligionists, from sending their children to Polish schools, from living outside of ghettos, and from wearing apparel like the rest of the population, helped to widen the gaps which the original grants of autonomous rule had established.

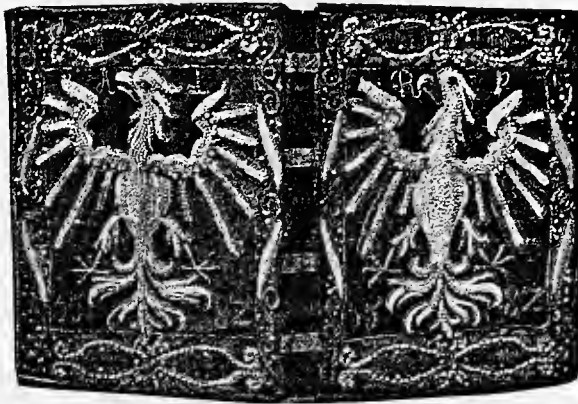


FIG. 120—BOOK COVER EMBROIDERED BY QUEEN ANNA JAGIELLON



FIG. 121—VIEW OF GDANSK., From G. Braun's "Civitates orbis terrarum," 1491

## CHAPTER XII.

### The Cossack Wars

It was an almost foregone conclusion that Wladyslav, the older son of Zygmunt III, would succeed his father to the throne. He was the antithesis of the older Vasa, and was as much loved by the people as his father had been hated. Though of a Swedish father and a German mother, he was a Pole in every respect other than race. He was sincere and openminded, cordial and easy going, democratic and sympathetic to arts and sciences, and tolerant in matters of religious belief. It was almost worth while to have endured Zygmunt for the compensation afforded by his son. His election was a matter of form. Unfortunately the era of anarchy had lasted too long to allow for a speedy rectification of conditions. Moreover, the nobles, despite their fondness for Wladyslav, had not failed further to restrict the King's powers. The Convocation Diet took from him the power to declare war except for defensive purposes, and ordered void all decisions which the King might make in conjunction with the Senate in the interim between the biennial sessions of the Diet, irrespective of how important and urgent the matters may have been if they were considered inimical to the interests of the nobles. In the pacta con-

Political  
and Economic  
Conditions  
of the Country  
in the First  
Half of the  
XVIIIth  
Century

venta they enjoined the King from levying the chimney tax and the acreage tax, the only two kinds of taxes the nobles paid, and which amounted to a mere bagatelle. The King was deprived of the power to enlist foreign soldiers without the consent of the



(Portrait by Rubens)

FIG. 122.—WLADYSLAV IV, 1632-1648

Senate and of the House of Deputies. The consent of the two Houses was also made necessary for the King's marriage. "So was accomplished the building of the edifice of the nobles' liberties; the royal power, completely fettered, became a plaything in the hands

not of the nobles, but of the oligarchy of the magnates. The small land assemblies and the "kinglets" (as the magnates were called), leading the masses of landowners on the leash of their own ambitions and interests, became the supreme majesty in the Republic."\*

The political tendency was toward decentralization, as at the local assemblies various convenient measures could be more easily passed than at the National Diet. The country became divided into a great many entirely independent administrative units. The provincial soldiery, paid by the local legislatures, took the place of the national army. Magnates, holding the local assemblies in the hollow of their hands, accumulated immense wealth by all sorts of injustices and extortions. Their holdings and power became disquietingly large. Some, like the Radziwills, owned 16 cities and 583 villages, and kept an armed retinue 6,000 strong. The Potockis owned 3,000,000 acres and 130,000 serfs. In national affairs they were able to exercise a powerful influence by direct representation in the Senate and by patronage among the representatives of the nobility in the Diet. The spirit of overbearing wantonness among the magnates was particularly strong in Lithuania and Ukraine. The frontier lords, less disturbed by sovereign authority and less protected from foreign invasions, developed an attitude of haughty independence and became intractable. It was in those provinces particularly that the exploitation of the peasant was most pronounced, though the peasant of Ukraine was, thanks to the incomparable fertility of the soil, better off economically than his brethren in Poland and Lithuania. Yet, because of the lawlessness of his overlords and their retainers, mostly im-

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\* Sokolowski, loc. cit. Vol. III, p. 214.

poverished Polish yeomen and squires, who differed from him in language and religion, his lot was unenviable, and for this reason most of the Cossacks were recruited from among the Ruthenians, who fled to the Sich on the Dnieper to become free highwaymen. In Poland proper, as all over Europe at that time, the peasant was attached to the soil and severely exploited.

With the growth of the Polish exports of grains the stimulus of enlarging land holdings greatly increased. As the manors of the nobles grew the peasants' holdings shrank proportionately, and the amount of free labor exacted from them mounted indefinitely. In 1633 a law was enacted whereby every settler who lived on a nobleman's estate for a year became his subject. The peasant in some cases was obliged to begin labor at the age of eight, but never later than at fifteen. He sometimes had to work five or six days a week, giving the use of his horses or oxen in time of harvests. There was, however, no definite slave class in Poland, as was the case in Germany and Muscovy, and the fact that German peasants continued to settle in Poland even as late as the XVIIIth century constitutes sufficient proof that the conditions of the peasants in Poland, bad as they may have been, still were better than in the adjoining countries.

The peasant had to buy his beasts of burden from the landlord. The crops could not be sold in any way except through him, and he could not buy anything except in the store of the manor. This strikingly resembles the "company stores" in some of the American factory towns. The landlord had, in addition, a monopoly of whiskey and beer sales, flour milling, linen bleaching, and so on. Certain in-

dustrial privileges of the lord were farmed out to Jewish money lenders, who became the subjects of hatred of the exploited peasant. In addition to local duties, the peasant had to bear many state and church burdens in the form of taxes and tithes. The landowner was the supreme judge, often unjust and cruel.

The lot of the town plebs was somewhat better, but town life had become demoralized since the old prosperity of the Polish towns vanished. Home rule had been superseded by crown or local land officials, who exacted from the population heavy contributions, in both lawful and unlawful ways. The quality of city products deteriorated with the rigid enforcement of the regulation of profits modeled after west European legislation: the maximum profit of a Polish merchant was put at seven per cent.; for a foreign merchant, five per cent.; and for a Jew, three per cent. The Diet went so far as to prescribe the limit of expenditures and the type of dress of city people. Many skilled artisans and merchants left the cities; their places were taken by petty Jewish mongers and cobblers. The rich burghers sought nobilitation and settled in the country. Incidentally it may be stated that nobilitation at the time became more difficult, the law of 1641 requiring unanimous consent of the Diet in each case of nobilitation.

In proportion as the economic prosperity of the cities declined their political rights became curtailed. In the XVIIth century the city of Cracow was the only city that had representation in the Diet. In times of grave crises some of the other cities were asked to send representatives. Few and unheeded were the voices of those statesmen who pointed out that fine cities were an embellishment for every country, and a source of economic and national strength.



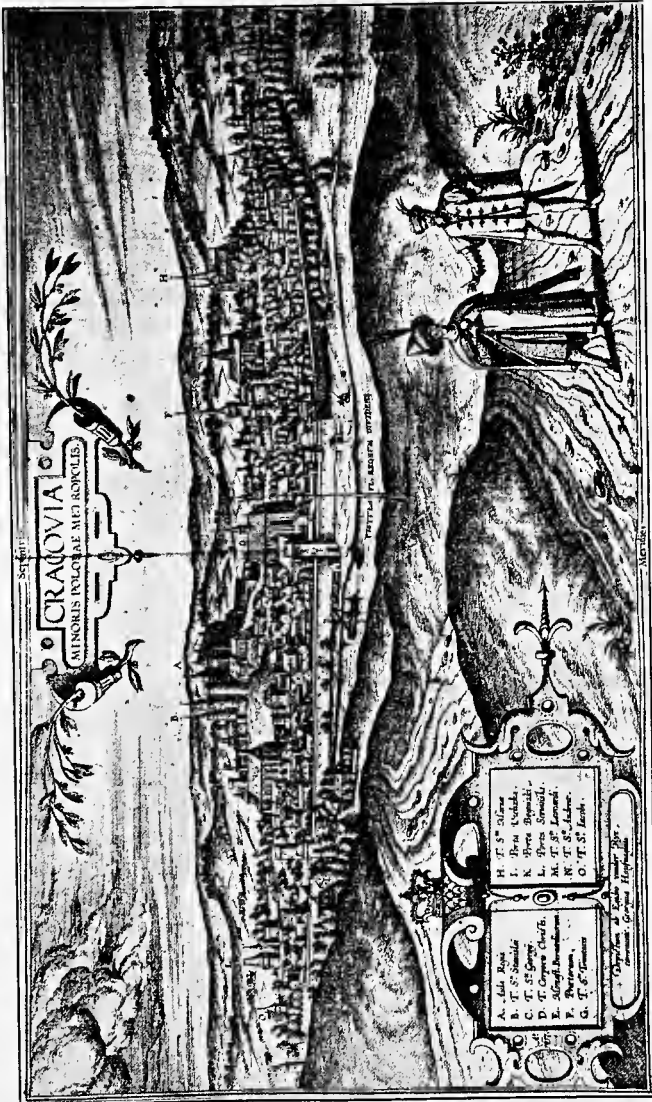


FIG. 123—A VIEW OF CRACOW  
From Georg Braun's "Civitates Orbis Terrarum," 1491.

The new King and the foremost political thinkers of the time realized that reforms were urgently needed. Conditions, however, over which the King had no control, prevented even the first attempts at reform. Prior to Wladyslav's election, Tsar Michael Romanoff broke the truce to which he had agreed in 1618. He anticipated a disorderly interregnum, and planned to profit by it and to regain some of the territories he had ceded to Poland. He miscalculated, however, the extent of Polish unpreparedness, and paid for it by a loss of the provinces of Seversk, Czernihov, Smolensk and a surrender of all claims to Livonia, Esthonia and Courland. In return Wladyslav resigned his claims to the throne of Muscovy. By Article IV of the treaty the King of Poland recognized the Grand Duke Michael Fedorovich as "Tsar of all the Muscovite Russias, without, however, giving him any right whatever over the Ruthenias which belong ab antiquo to Poland." The terms of the Polanov peace of 1634 marks the zenith of the achievements of the Polish sword in the east.

Synchronously with the war against Muscovy, Poland carried on a war with Turkey. The Muscovite defeats and the brilliant successes of the small Polish forces operating against the Turks under the command of Crown Hetman Stanislaw Koniecpolski cut short the war in 1634. Poland promised to restrain the Cossacks and Turkey agreed to curb the Tartars. The right of the Turkish Sultan to appoint the Moldavian hospodars was recognized, with the proviso, however, that the appointments be made from a list of candidates submitted by the Polish King.

The successful completion of the two campaigns brought great glory to the martial King. The coun-

**The Entangle-  
ments of  
Foreign Policy**

try now expected a lasting peace, but a turn of circumstances favored a retaliatory war on Sweden for the restoration of lost territories. In the year of Wladyslav's election, Gustavus Adolphus perished in the battle at Lützen and his youthful daughter ascended the Swedish throne. This was during the Thirty Years' War, when the power of the Protestant forces was beginning, temporarily, to wane, and the time



FIG. 124—STANISLAV KONIECPOLSKI, Grand Hetman of the Crown, distinguished for his military accomplishments and for his genius of organization

seemed to be most propitious for a war on exhausted Sweden. To offset this possibility and to draw Poland into the war on the side of Sweden, Richelieu strained every means which his ingenuity could devise. Among other compensations he offered in return for help against the Emperor was the long lost

and wealthy province of Silesia. England and Holland added the weight of their influence to bring Poland into line. The King, whose foreign policy was entirely different from that of his father, and who was, in fact, pronouncedly anti-Hapsburgian, was inclined to side with Richelieu, but the *raison d'état* demanded immediate action against Sweden. The Diet, however, though not sparing compliments for the King's virtues and valor, preferred peace to any far-reaching political schemes, and lent but a deaf ear to the King's demands for war appropriations. With



FIG. 125—CARTOUCH WITH THE VASA EAGLE

such an attitude on the part of the knighthood no far-reaching plans could be attempted. A temporary agreement was made with Sweden whereby peace was to be preserved for twenty-six years; the Swedes were to return all the territories which they occupied in Prussia and the Polish vessels which they captured on the Baltic. All towns and castles, however, which

they occupied in Livonia, were to remain in their hands, and the question of Wladyslav's hereditary rights to the Swedish crown was left in abeyance. This agreement was signed on September 12, 1635, at Sturmdorf, and hence it is known by that name. The unsatisfactory settlement of a situation which contained possibilities of epochal importance illustrates the pettiness of the nobles of that reactionary period, who were concerned with nothing except good, easy living and the enjoyment of unlimited rights. They were constantly suspecting the King of Machiavelian designs to introduce despotism, and were unable to rise to an understanding of any involved problem of foreign policy. They were, moreover, deprived of a sense of collective national pride, as the following humiliating incident may well illustrate. The King, desirous of developing new sources of revenue, which were required for the most fundamental needs of the state, and which the avaricious gentry would not grant, proposed maritime import duties at the Polish ports of entry. Such duties were being levied in all the neighboring countries and in the Polish ports during Swedish occupation. After long debates the Diet finally approved the measure. The city of Danzig, however, fearing that such a measure might deflect trade from its doors, refused to allow the collection of the taxes at the port and threatened armed resistance. Wladyslav replied by dispatching four warships to the recalcitrant city. The city invited Danish intervention in the matter, and the Danish Admiral, having captured the Polish war ships and torn down the royal insignia and flags, entered the city amidst demonstrative ovations by the populace. Wladyslav had a right to expect that the Diet would be stirred

with indignation over this act of rebellion and treason, and would authorize appropriate steps against the city. Something entirely different happened. The suspicious nobles saw in the King's act an attempt to subjugate Danzig, to organize a powerful navy on the Baltic and to establish with its aid *absolutum dominium* in Poland. The adjudication of the matter in the courts was a hollow mockery and an insult to the King and to the national honor of a great country. The incident also frustrated the King's efforts to build up a Polish fleet on the Baltic.

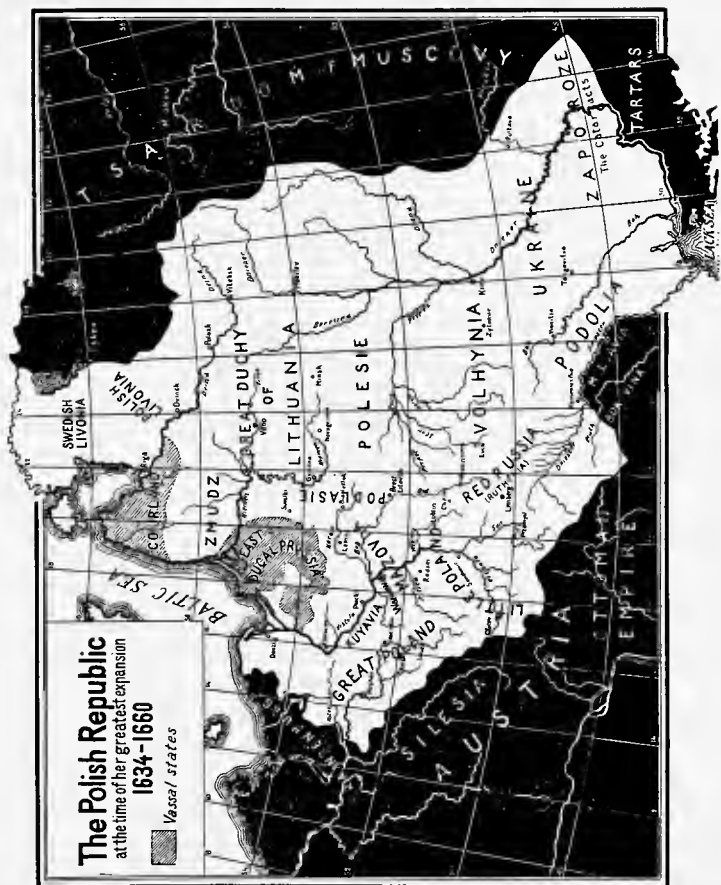
In spite of the nobles' desire for peace at any price the country was plunged into a most bloody and devastating war with the Cossacks, which, because it had the character of a social and religious revolution, was thoroughly destructive, and fought with terrific furor and rage.

Conditions on  
the Ukrainian  
Frontier

Ukraine, an enormous prairie watered by the Dnieper and its tributaries, was a country "flowing with milk and honey." With the union of Lithuania and Poland it came under Polish sovereignty, but its population, because of the inaggressiveness of the Polish character and the Uniate Church, became but very slightly Polonized.\* The growth of the power of the palatines and the unscrupulousness of their agents created a grave social discontent among the Ukrainian peasants which was kept alive and nourished by the church agents of Muscovy. They were

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\* Some historians, like Prof. Bobrzynski and others, consider the establishment of the Uniate Church prejudicial to the interests of the Polish State. Because this Church became united with the prevailing Church, the Polish government did nothing to encourage the establishment of Roman Catholic churches in Ukraine and, as a consequence, thousands of the descendants of Polish settlers became Ruthenized. Rome hoping to conquer, eventually, Russia by means of the Uniate Church was similarly quiescent in its activities in that region.



even successful in inspiring the hitherto indifferent Cossacks with religious fervor. The Patriarch of Jerusalem, Theophan, sent by the Russian Tsar on a journey through Ukraine, told the people about the holy fire that every year on the eve of the Resurrection descends from heaven upon the tomb of the Saviour, which is in the possession of the true Christians, i. e., those who belong to the Greek Church. He did not fail, also, to lay strictures upon the Roman Church, and to advise the Ukrainians to abstain from wars upon Muscovy, whose rulers and people follow the path of the true Church of Christ and are hated for it by the Poles.

Frontier populations are usually hard to manage. It is particularly so when the frontiers are extensive and inadequately protected against the constant raids of such nomadic half savages as had been roving on the abutting seas and steppes. Small wonder that constant warfare was more or less of a normal condition on the Ukrainian frontier. The southernmost plains of Ukraine adjoining the Black Sea, known as "Dzikie Pola" or Wild Steppes, became the habitat of the Cossacks and the Tartars, where they could organize their bands, and whence they could undertake their raiding expeditions into Poland and Turkey. By the treaty of 1634 Poland was bound to restrain the Cossacks from such raids on the domains of the Padishah. This implied supervision over them, which the Cossacks resented. When the Polish Diet voted to build a strong fortress on the first Dnieper Cataract, near the main seat of Cossackdom, open rebellions broke out among the Ukrainian peasants. The fortress, known by the name of Kudak, was built in 1635 by a French engineer, Beauplan, on the Dnieper, where the Russian city of Ekaterinoslav is now



situated. Immediately upon its completion and before a sufficient garrison was stationed in the fort the Cossacks stormed and demolished it. This and several other rebellions were put down by the Field Hetman Nicholas Potocki, with the aid of one of the Ukraine palatines, Jeremiah Wiśniowiecki, an intense foe of the Cossacks, and a man of indomitable courage and of an adventurous character, a scion of one of the oldest princely families of Lithuania, and owner of extensive territories in Ukraine. In retaliation for the rebellion, the Diet of 1638 passed a law divesting the Cossacks of "all their old prerogatives and other decora," and decreeing that "those of the rabble whom the fortunes of war had spared, be turned into peasantry." Even the "registered" or salaried Cossacks who had hitherto been faithful were deprived of the privilege to elect their own chief, whose residence city was taken and placed in charge of a Crown official. Rebellions followed, which were subdued, and the Kudak fortress rebuilt and strengthened. The Cossacks sent delegates to the King and the Senate asking for the restoration of some of their privileges and renouncing certain others, such as the right to elect their own Hetmans. The Senate and the Diet were shortsighted and refused to grant any concessions. The Ukrainian palatines were particularly active in preventing any concessions being granted to the Cossacks. It was in their interest to convert them into serf labor. A contemporary writer, the Bishop Piasecki of Przemyśl, said that "this change in the life of the Cossacks was a private gain and a loss to the Republic." The oligarchy of magnates was, however, supreme. They terrorized the King and subordinated the public weal to their private interests. It may be of interest to record here the fact

that it was during this period that the women of Poland and Lithuania for the first time in their history collectively memorialized the Diet demanding better protection against exploitation, and the restriction of the rights of fathers and an enlargement of the rights of mothers.



FIG. 126—QUEEN MARIE LOUISE de GONZAGUE

Wladyslav well realized the folly and perilousness of the course adopted with reference to the Cossacks. The policy of Zygmunt August and of Batory of utilizing the Cossacks for a war with Turkey, and befriending rather than alienating them, appealed to

him much more. To achieve this it was necessary first to administer a severe blow to Turkey which had been fomenting disturbances.. Accordingly, he began, with the aid of Hetman Koniecpolski, to organize an army, expending upon it the private fortune of his second wife, Marie Louise Gonzague, the French Duchess of Mantois, and negotiated an alliance with Venice and the Pope, and also with the Cossack leaders. Although the Porte was a source of constant danger and the Tartar raids almost incessant, yet because the campaign was planned by the King without the knowledge and consent of the magnates and their retainers, they voted against it in 1646, preferring, as they thought, immediate peace to questionable political advantages in the future.

Equally unsuccessful were the King's endeavors to bring about the organization of a special patriarchate for the Ruthenian schismatics in order to make them independent of either Constantinople or Moscow.

Chmielnicki's  
Rebellion,  
1648

The Pope Urban VIIIth objected to it, but the Polish bishops assembled in Warsaw in 1643, supported the King and invited all the schismatics to a friendly conference the next year in Thorn. This "colloquium charitativum," which made Wladyslav famous in Europe and inspired Martin Opitz to write a poem in honor of the King, did not bring about the desired results. The King, busy organizing a campaign against Turkey, which the new Pope, Innocent X, was to finance to a considerable degree, left the matter in the hands of the Apostolic See, and failed thereby to bring about the organization of an independent Ruthenian Church. Owing to the above mentioned opposition of the Senators and Deputies the campaign against Turkey did not come to pass, but [a terrific Cossack revolution broke out under the

leadership of Bohdan Chmielnicki, a poor but ambitious Polish nobleman who in his action was, to a great extent, actuated by revenge for the outrage suffered



FIG. 127—BOHDAN CHMIELNICKI, the leader of the Cossacks

at the hands of a Crown dignitary, who abducted his wife and burned his manor. Social and religious causes were responsible for the uprising, which was

not directed against the King, who was loved by the Cossacks, but against "the magnates, the Jews and the Jesuits." The Ukrainian peasants and the Cossacks forced into serf labor rose almost to a man. Upon receipt of the news of the rebellion the King dispatched a commission to discuss and straighten out the differences with Chmielnicki. Before the commission arrived the Polish Field Hetman sent, contrary to the orders of the King, a body of troops against Chmielnicki, who were defeated by him in two encounters. [It was at that time that the brilliant and wise Wladyslav died on May 20, 1648, during the journey he had undertaken to pacify Ukraine by his personal influence and intervention. The nobles unjustly suspected him of instigating the revolution in order to overpower them and to deprive them of their liberties.]

The Cossack revolution was the main issue at the pre-election Diet. There were two parties: one led by Chancellor George Ossolinski, was for compromise with the Cossacks; the other, headed by Jeremiah Wiśniowiecki, was for a ruthless war of extermination of the "rabble." The peace party prevailed, and a commission was elected to carry on the negotiations, but failed, first because of the unfortunate choice of the commissioners, and second, because the revolution had received such a momentum that it was difficult to stem it. To make matters worse, the unmanageable Wiśniowiecki, who had an insanely intense hatred of the Cossacks, organized a private and successful expedition against them. Soon the regular army and the militia had to be sent to support his individual endeavors, but the army was defeated, and an immense host of infuriated Ukraine peasants began to move into Poland. Lemberg held out

**The Further  
Cossack Wars**

against a long siege, but finally surrendered. Chmielnicki then moved on to the fortress of Zamość, near Lublin. The situation became very serious. In the meantime Wladyslav's brother, Jan II Kazimir, an ex-Cardinal and Jesuit, released from his Church vows by



FIG. 123—GEORGE OSSOLINSKI (1595-1650) GRAND HETMAN OF THE CROWN

the Pope, was elected King. Chmielnicki favored Jan Kazimir, and upon his election resolved to withdraw into Ukraine. Through the good offices of Adam Kisiel, the Governor (Woyevoda) of Kieff, a Ruthenian and a schismatic, who, from the beginning had urged peaceful negotiations, the Cossacks obtained many

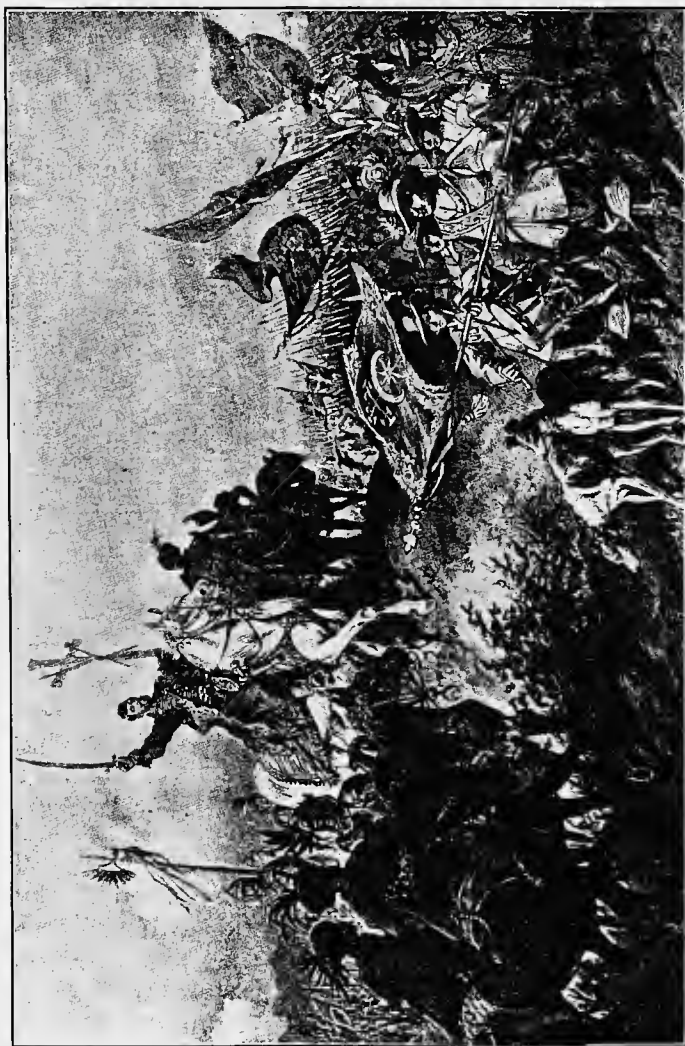
concessions: the recognition of their independence of anyone except the King, the restoration of ancient privileges and the recognition of Chmielnicki as their hetman. [Their demands for the abolition of the Church union and the banishment of the Jesuits could not be granted. Both sides remained dissatisfied.] The Ukrainian nobles and the magnates bitterly resented the action of the Diet in granting any



(J. Mateyko)

FIG. 129—JAN II KAZIMIR (1648-1668)

concessions, and continued their raids upon the despised rebels. Wiśniowiecki openly defied the Diet and the treaty with the Cossacks, and gathered forces for further expeditions. Soon the Diet reversed itself and sent an army to support him. "Jarema" Wiśniowiecki was elected Generalissimo of all the forces. Chmielnicki joined hands with the Tartars, who under the leadership of the Crimean Khan Islam



(Painting by J. Kossak)

FIG. 130—"JAAREMA" WIŚNIEWIECKI



Girey, came to drive the Polish troops out of Ukraine. Wiśniowiecki brilliantly defended the fortress of Zbaraz on the river Gniezna, a tributary of the Sereth, in Podolia, but the army, under the leadership of the King, was surrounded and routed. The Cossacks agreed to stop the revolution on condition that the provinces of Kieff, Bratslav and Czernihov were made into an autonomous Cossack state; that all registered Cossacks be given equal rights and privileges with those of the Polish nobles; that all Jesuits and Jews be sent out of the Cossack state; that the Ruthenian metropolitan be given a seat in the Polish senate; and that all crown officials in the Cossack state be chosen from among the schismatics (opponents of the Church union). The consideration of the matter of the abolition of the Church union they consented to defer until the next session of the Diet. These demands, large as they were, however, did not satisfy the followers of Chmielnicki, and were deemed to be insufficient, particularly since the registered Cossacks were to be limited to but 40,000. The other tens of thousands of Cossacks and the hundreds of thousands of peasants who revolted against oppression and exploitation could not be forced back into their old conditions of subjection. On the other hand, the loss of a very large portion of Ukraine was not cherished by the magnates, neither was the Polish clergy ready to admit the Ruthenian metropolitan into the Senate. In 1651 the third Cossack war began. It was carried on with great determination on both sides. Chmielnicki sought support everywhere. He declared himself the champion of the Greek Church in a holy war against Rome, and brought over the Patriarch Eudox of Antiochia to help in fanning the flames of religious hatred. He carried on negotiations with the Tsar of

Muscovy, the Hospodor of Wallachia and the Duke of Transylvania, and declared himself the vassal of the Sultan, who recognized him as Duke of Ukraine. The Polish King gathered a big army, won a brilliant three days' battle at Beresteczko on the Styr, in Volhynia, and was confident of final success when the news of a revolution of the peasantry in Poland reached him. The agents of Chmielnicki were disseminating the seeds of unrest throughout the length and breadth of the Republic. The ground was well prepared for a serious uprising. The peasants began to plunder and burn the manors, and murder their masters, whom they hated. The uprising was directed by one Kostka Napierski, said by some to be the illegitimate son of Wladyslav IV, and assumed disquieting proportions. When the news of it reached the nobles in camp, many of them, led by the traitors Christopher Opalinski and Jerome Radziejowski, left the King, whom they bitterly disliked, and willfully returned home. The rebellion was soon suppressed, but the victory over the Cossacks and Tartars could not be exploited in the manner its magnitude justified. By the terms of the new peace agreed upon at Biala Cerkiev, in 1651, the number of registered or state supported Cossacks was reduced to 20,000; the self-governed Cossack territory was limited to the Province of Kieff alone; the schismatics were to have equal rights with the Uniates; and the Jews were to be allowed to reside in Ukraine.

The new treaty was resented by the nobles. The King, like his predecessor, was accused of favoring the Cossacks and endeavoring to accomplish a coup d'état with their help. The same men who abandoned him at Beresteczko and who made it impossible for him to pursue the enemy were at the head of the

malcontents. The terms of the treaty at Biala Cerkiev were not ratified by the Diet of 1652, which disbanded without accomplishing anything, as a result of the insistence of one deputy that it was unconstitutional to prolong the Diet beyond the time specified by law. This deputy, Wladyslav Sicinski, prompted by the haughty potentate Janus Radziwill, covered himself with the fame of Herostratus in Poland. Some historians claim that he is unjustly regarded as the first man to have had invoked the *liberum veto*. In 1637 George Lubomirski broke up the Diet by his personal opposition. Prior to that Diets were dissolved by recalcitrant minorities. In 1607 the famous preacher Peter Skarga was instrumental in bringing about the disruption of the Diet because the dissidents were given equal rights with those of Roman Catholics. However, Sicinski's action is generally regarded as the beginning of the cursed "*liberum veto*," which proved to be a legal sanction of anarchy. The situation became grave. Chmielnicki was still in command of an immense army and was preparing for another invasion. A fortunate circumstance only saved Poland from a catastrophe at the time. Chmielnicki contemplated establishing an independent Cossack state, and for family reasons began a war with the Hospodar of Moldavia, which ended in a marriage of the Moldavian Princess with Chmielnicki's son. Fearing such a strengthening of Moldavia, the two neighboring Princes of Transylvania and Wallachia joined Poland against the Cossacks. When the Turkish Sultan also turned against Chmielnicki truce was established in 1653.

Finding that the Turkish Sultan could not be relied on to the extent he anticipated, Chmielnicki turned to the Muscovite Tsar, and offered to him his

allegiance and that of Cossackdom. By the treaty of Pereyaslavl, in 1654, Ukraine became a part of the Muscovite empire under the name of Little Russia. The Cossacks received a great measure of freedom in internal affairs, and the right to elect their own hetmans and chiefs. The number of registered Cossacks was raised to 60,000, and the church metropolis of Kieff was left independent of the Patriarch of Moscow. Chmielnicki's act led to an inevitable war between Poland and Russia, lasting from 1654 to 1656. The Tsar's armies entered Lithuania and Ukraine. The encounters were exceedingly bloody, and the vengeance wrought on the Cossacks and peasants was terrible. When the Tartars joined the Poles against the Russians and the Cossacks the country was turned into a veritable inferno. According to some historians over 100,000 people were slaughtered, 1,000 churches burned and 120 cities razed. "Fire and sword" swept the beautiful Ukraine country and destroyed all the civilization which the hard work of the preceding centuries had built. The rivers of blood and destruction flowing in Ukraine turned into a Polish "Deluge" when the Swedish armies swooped down upon Poland from the north.





FIG. 131—HARVEST

(J. Kossak pinx.)

## CHAPTER XIII.

### The Passing of Poland's Position as a Great Power.

The peace of Westphalia (1648) greatly enhanced the power of Sweden by giving to her control of a considerable stretch of Baltic seaboard, including the estuaries of the Oder, Elbe and Weser. Soon afterward Sweden, desirous to emulate the prosperous commerce of Holland and England, prepared for the extension of her control of the sea, and plans were laid for a campaign against Poland weakened by the bloody Cossack rebellions and the war with Muscovy. The new Swedish King, Charles X Gustavus, in whose favor the extravagant and philosophically inclined Christine had abdicated, desired, moreover, to dispose finally of the claims of the Polish King to the Swedish throne and chose the time when Poland was least able to defend herself against foreign aggression. Knowing the martial qualities of the Poles he hesitated at the opening of the hostilities. The pendulum finally swung against Poland when an outlawed Polish magnate, Jerome Radziejowski, went to the Swedish monarch with tales of the hatred borne by the people against King John Kazimir and of the great opposition party awaiting

The Causes  
of the War  
with Sweden,  
1655-1660

only an opportunity of uniting with Sweden, and urged that the time was most propitious for making a triumphal entry into Poland.

Although the truce of Stumdorf was not to have expired until 1661 and regardless of international law and a specific agreement, the first Swedish host under Wittemberg appeared in the northwestern part of Poland in 1655 when the country was in the throes of the Cossack and Russian wars. The nobility of Great Poland assembled in camp at Uyscie, on the Netze, under the leadership of the traitor woyewodas Christopher Opalinski, of Posen, and Charles Grudzinski, of Kalisz. In spite of the superiority of numbers and a favorable position, the Polish army capitulated without firing a shot and swore allegiance to Charles, after having receiving solemn assurance that none of their privileges and religious beliefs would be violated. Meanwhile, another army under the personal leadership of the Swedish King entered Great Poland, and a third army under General de la Gardie made its way into Lithuania through Livonia. After the Russian troops occupied Wilno, the schismatic Lithuanian hetman Janus Radziwill laid down his arms at Kiejdany, to the north of Kovno. The Swedish armies reached Warsaw without difficulty. Later Cracow, although bravely defended by Czarniecki, was also forced to surrender. At the same time the Russian troops and Chmielnicki's Cossacks took Lemberg and camped outside the walls of Lublin. Apprised of the situation, the Elector of Brandenburg, brother-in-law of Radziwill, entered West Prussia "to protect it." Recalled from Ukraine, the regular army also surrendered upon finding the whole country bowing in recognition of Charles. John Kazimir, with his wife and small court fled to Glogow in Silesia, and

**The Treason  
of the Polish  
Nobility**

Poland ceased to exist as an independent nation. The country was divided among Sweden, Russia and Brandenburg. Soon, however, seizing the opportunity when Charles turned against the Elector of Brandenburg, the people rose in a body and with the aid of foreign alliances restored their national and state existence.

When the nobles betrayed their King and surrendered to Charles X they entertained the hope that the military power of Sweden would assist them in defeating the Muscovites and Cossacks. Keen was their disappointment when they found that even their own estates and churches were not immune from plunder. The Swedish soldiery robbed the manors, desecrated the churches, violated the convents and outraged the population. The cruelty of the soldiery soon brought forth a strong reaction on the part of the Poles of all classes. The peasants first, armed with scythes, sickles and flails began a guerilla warfare. In Great Poland the local armed attempts merged into a strong movement under Christopher Żegocki, and was soon followed by similar organizations formed in Little Poland and Lithuania. In December, 1655, the provincial armies became united by the act of confederation. The foremost soldier of the time was Stefan Czarniecki, a man of austere principles of life, of unimpeachable honesty and deep patriotism. An implacable foe of the magnates and of political anarchy, he was one of the rare types that combine an exalted conception of civic duty with clear vision and force of action. He was a man of genius and of exceptional strength of character. When the King returned the confederacy was solemnly confirmed at Lancut (in present day Galicia) and Stefan Czarniecki was proclaimed generalissimo of the confederate

**The Uprising  
of the People**

army. The picturesque and valiant defense of Czenstochowa (the city famous for the miraculous image



FIG 132—HETMAN STEFAN CZARNIECKI

of the Madonna) by Kordecki, Prior to the Paulist Abbey, supplied an additional stimulus and gave as-



surance to the masses that the "Queen of the Polish Crown" had not abandoned them. In the Cathedral of Lemberg the King swore to alleviate the hard lot of the peasantry who first rose in defence of their country.

Seeing the extent of the popular uprising, Charles turned for help to Poland's enemies. The Elector of Brandenburg in 1656 signed a treaty to support Sweden in compensation for which he was proclaimed independent ruler of the East, or Ducal Prussia, and was promised a few districts in Great Poland. Little Poland, Mazovia and Lithuania were offered to Rakoczy, Duke of Transylvania, and Ukraine to Chmielnicki. The rest of Poland, namely, West or Royal Prussia and Livonia, were to go to Sweden. The allied troops ravaged the country and defeated the Polish armies in several encounters. To balance the Swedish alliance, John Kazimir set out to form a counter league. Muscovy, dissatisfied with the disposition Charles had made of the coveted Lithuania and Livonia, was ready to conclude the war with Poland and to join against Sweden. The negotiations were prolonged, the Tsar demanding the cession of Lithuania which he had occupied and a war indemnity. The reasons advanced by the Tsar's deputies for his claims are so characteristic and so purely Hegelian that they are worthy of quotation: "The war must have been right when God gave Lithuania into the Tsar's hands; and what God gave, the Tsar must not return to anybody."\* They did, however, consent to the return of Lithuania to Poland in twenty years; only White Russia and the territories on the left bank of the Dnieper were to remain in the Tsar's possession. In

**The Swedish  
Alliance and  
the Polish  
League**

\* Smolenski, "Dzieje Narodu Polskiego," Warsaw, 1898, Vol. II, p. 102.

addition, they insisted on the recognition of the Tsarevich as successor to John Kazimir. The Polish delegation could not, of course, agree to this demand, so glaringly against the constitution. They promised, however, to bring the matter up at the next Diet with a view of proposing the Tsar as hereditary king of Poland. The treaty was signed at Niemieža near Wilno, in 1656, and soon the Muscovite troops took the field against Charles with the hope of making a permanent conquest of Livonia. For Poland the relief afforded by the cessation of hostilities in the East was of great importance. At the same time Polish diplomacy also scored a few additional successes. The struggle for supremacy between France and Austria gave an opportunity of exploiting one side in favor of Poland. Each of the two countries had strong adherents in Poland and at the court. The King, like his father, Zygmunt III, had pro-Austrian attachments; the Queen, Marie Louise Gonzague, the widow of Wladyslav IV whom John Kazimir married, was a Frenchwoman with strong leanings toward her native country and with powerful friends in Poland. The pro-Austrian policy prevailed and not only did the intervention of Ferdinand III expedite the negotiations with Muscovy, but by the treaty of Vienna (1657) Austria promised, though she did not send, an army to defend Cracow. A few months later Denmark also covenanted to help Poland against Sweden as did the Tartars. The Elector of Brandenburg, seeing the magnitude of the Polish league, in spite of the treaty, promptly abandoned his Swedish ally and entered into an agreement with Poland at Wielawa (1657) by which he was released from recognizing Polish suzerainty over East Prussia. In consideration of the two fiefs given to him, those of

Bytow and Lauenberg, he agreed to send six thousand men against Sweden.

So fortified, Poland threw herself with new vigor into the fight which was exceedingly sanguinary because of the determination and strength of the invaders. Rakoczy's large Hungarian army was finally overpowered and the Swedes driven out of the country by the hero of the war, Stefan Czarniecki. He pursued them as far as Denmark, and the feats of the Polish cavalry who twice swam the straits to the Island of Alsen, have gained for them lasting glory. A new outbreak of hostilities with Muscovy led to an early peace with Sweden, which was made under French mediation and signed at Oliva near Gdansk, on May 3, 1660, and by which Poland lost all Livonia to the north of the River Dvina and John Kazimir renounced his hereditary claims to the throne of Sweden. Thus came to an end the long feud, which had lasted almost sixty years.

The war with a Protestant nation and its tocsin cry, "For our faith and our country," the excesses of the Swedish soldiery and their desecration of Catholic churches, the successful defence of Czenstochowa and the final defeat of the Swedes, attributed to divine interference, the assistance afforded the Swedes by the Protestant elements in Poland, the impending war with orthodox Russia, and the constant danger from Mohammedan Turkey, all contributed to the arousing of religious fervor and fanaticism in Poland, and to the identification, in the popular mind, of Catholicism with patriotism. The future history of Poland but tended to merge the two conceptions into one. The Arians or Anti-Trinitarians, who openly

**The Defeat of Sweden and the Peace of Oliva, 1660**

**The Growth of Religious Fanaticism**

helped the Swedes, were the objects of particular animus and were singled out for banishment from the country (1658). The enforced emigration of hundreds of the most enlightened families was a great loss to Poland, comparable with the loss later sustained by France in her similar intolerance of the Huguenots. Among the Polish exiles were writers of first magnitude, such as Zbigniew Morsztyn, Erazm Otwinowski and Simon Budny, the last having distinguished himself by his masterful and critical studies of biblical texts which outdistanced modern biblical scholars by two centuries.

War with Muscovy, which hastened the conclusion of war with Sweden, was caused by the flat refusal of the spiritual and temporal lords

**The Causes of  
the War with  
Muscovy,  
1658-1667**

of Poland to consider the Tsar's ambitions to the Polish throne and to ratify the new agreement into which the Republic entered with the Cossacks. The Cossacks, whom Chmielnicki had placed under the suzerainty of Muscovy, soon became dissatisfied with the Tsar. They realized that only in Poland could their ideals of freedom and liberty be respected, and that the autocratic and despotic form of the Tsar's government was inherently inimical to them. When Chmielnicki died in 1657 John Wyhowski, the temporary hetman, proceeded immediately to arrange for a return of the Cossacks to Polish sovereignty. On September 16, 1658, an agreement was signed at Hadziacz, near Poltava, by the terms of which the Cossacks were admitted into the Polish state on the same basis as the Lithuanians had been by the terms of the Union of Lublin, as "the equal with the equal, and the free with the free." The Cossacks were given equal privileges with the nobility of Poland; had similar rights over peasants; and were free to elect their

own hetmans, marshals, chancellors and other dignitaries who were entitled to seats in the Polish Senate, as were their metropolitan and the diocesan bishops. They were guaranteed freedom of faith and the Uniate Church was abolished in Ukraine. Polish political thought now soared high above the narrow-minded spirit of a short time before and laid an equitable, just and solid foundation for a symbiosis of Ukraine with Poland and Lithuania. Perceiving this, the Tsar determined to prevent it by force of arms and sent an unexpected expedition into Poland. Though still at war with Sweden the Republic raised an army large enough to deal successfully with Muscovy despite the fact that a section of the Cossacks under the younger Chmielnicki fought against her. The Polish arms triumphed in battle after battle and after the Peace of Oliva, when the Western armies were released, they forced the Muscovites to capitulate at Cudnow in Volhynia (1661). Chmielnicki then declared for Poland. As had so often before happened in Polish history, so now again the brilliant military successes could not be properly exploited, this time on account of the revolt of the unpaid armies. The Crown troops as well as those of Lithuania formed confederacies and refused to continue the campaign until their wages had been paid. The nobility, too, seeing the enemies beaten off, resolved to discontinue hostilities and to turn their attention to the sorely needed internal reforms.

The betterment of the economic status of the peasantry and the King's vows to that effect made in the Cathedral of Lemberg during the Swedish invasion could well be and were disregarded, but the need of regulating parliamentary procedure and of simplifying the method of royal elections was urgent

**The Rebellion  
of Lubomirski,  
1666**

and immediate. The intrigues of the Austrian Ambassador Lisoli prevented the consideration of parlia-



FIG. 133.—GEORGE LUBOMIRSKI, "The Polish Cromwell"

mentary reforms and made the matter of succession to the throne precedent over all else. An attempt

was made at preventing the impending interregnum by electing an heir to the throne during the life of John Kazimir, but it resulted in nothing except a terrific political tempest which for a time made impossible the consideration of any other question. The main influences at work in the matter of succession were those of France and Austria. The Queen, aided by Pac and John Sobieski, favored the Duke d'Eng-hien, the son of Condé the Great. The Austrian faction was headed by George Lubomirski, marshal of the Crown, a man of great distinction and wealth and no less ambition. When the matter of election was brought up at the Diet of 1661 feeling rose so high that the King feared the disruption of the session and recalled the subject from consideration. After the close of the Diet both parties set to work to gain supporters. A confederacy was organized by George Lubomirski, called the Polish Cromwell, who, by his demagogue-like appeals to the ignorant squires, rallied great support for the cause of "free elections, threatened by the French party," thus dodging the real issue. Preparations were made for armed resistance to the election of the candidate of the party he opposed. The King brought suit against him for conspiracy, treason and the incitement of rebellion. The Court of the Diet, composed of the King's supporters, sustained the charges and sentenced him to infamy, loss of dignity and exile. In the eyes of the knighthood he was a martyr of the cause of liberty, to be supported to the utmost. Meanwhile Czarniecki formed another confederacy and with the aid of Sobieski took up the defense of the country against Muscovy. The Cossacks, encouraged by the turmoil in Poland and prompted by a lust for plunder and spoils began to harass Poland and Czarniecki's at-

tion had to be turned to them. In the midst of all this came the clash of Lubomirski's forces with those of the King. The rebels threatened Warsaw and a compromise was finally agreed upon. Lubomirski expressed his regrets and the King promised to abandon his plan of bringing about an election of his successor.

The rebellion prevented the development of sufficient strength to support the loyal Cossacks. Disheartened, they turned, under Doroszenko, to Turkey at the time when Mahmed IV was getting ready for a war with Christendom. In the face of a common danger and harassed by internal disorders, Muscovy and Poland agreed to a thirteen years truce at Andrushov in 1667, by which the Tsar renounced all claims to Lithuania and Livonia and Poland ceded to him Smolensk, Siewiersk, Czernihov and the part of Ukraine on the left bank of the Dnieper. The city of Kieff was left in Muscovite hands for two years. These cessions to Muscovy were considered but temporary in Poland, and no crown offices pertaining to them were abolished.

At the Diet which assembled in 1667 the King, led by his strong-willed wife, once more brought up the matter of succession and again proposed the Duke d'Enghien. The Diet, which in view of the impending dangers carried through certain reforms and appropriated funds to pay the army, rejected the King's proposal although Lubomirski was no more alive. They again expressed their preference for "free elections." Meanwhile the Turks, Tartars and Cossacks made their appearance on the frontiers. John Sobieski, then Field Hetman, met them and with small

**The Truce of  
Andrushov**

**The Ascending  
Star of John  
Sobieski**



forces maintained almost wholly at his own expense, and though battling against great odds was able by superior strategy to stay the avalanche and compel their retreat.

The splendor of the achievements of Sobieski entirely eclipsed the waning star of the unfortunate John Kazimir whom the people held responsible for the deluge of misfortunes which had befallen the country during his reign. Deprived of the sustaining power of his remarkable wife and abandoned by almost everybody, he lost heart and abdicated on September 16, 1668. In a pathetic speech he warned the country against the many existing evils, and ended: "Wearied with age and the hardships of war, exhausted by deliberations, oppressed by the worries of twenty years, I, your King and father, surrender that which the world values most highly—the Crown of this country." He stayed in Poland for another year, then left for France where he died three years later in the modest Abbey of St. Germain near Paris.

During the interregnum following John Kazimir's abdication the alignment of the political forces came into strong relief. The magnates and political leaders were divided into two camps, the French and Austrian. French gold, lavishly spent by Louis XIV, not only in Poland but everywhere else, made corruption an almost political institution in the whole of Europe. The vast sums spent by the late Queen in support of the Duke d'Enghien gained a large number of influential supporters for the candidates of France. Even those among the magnates who favored the French party by conviction, were given bountiful subsidies. The Austrian party similarly sought

**The Abdication  
of King John  
Kazimir, 1668**

**Political  
Corruption**

influential support by bribing. Demoralization and corruption became the order of the day. The great body of electors saw what was going on and resented the foreign candidates and the corruptive influence which came with them into the country. At the election field where over 80,000 men assembled, the hostility of the great body of citizens toward the magnates became apparent and led almost to serious bloodshed, so intense was the opposition to the Frenchmen and to all the other foreigners. At a proper moment Bishop Olszowski proposed a native candidate, the son of the famous Cossack vanquisher, Wisniowiecki, who had become completely impoverished by the loss of all the great frontier estates, forfeited by the loss of a part of Ukraine. "Long live King Michael Wisniowiecki!" was the spontaneous and unanimous reply (1669).

The healthy instinctive impulses of the electorate unfortunately were ill-directed, as the new King was weak-hearted, weak-willed and weak-minded, and entirely under the domination of a small coterie. Educated at the Austrian court, he had strong pro-Austrian leanings and married Eleanor, the sister of Emperor Leopold I against the will of the Senate, composed largely of French sympathizers. Soon the French party, conniving with Louis XIV, began to lay plans for dethroning the legally chosen King and for elevating the young French duke, Saint-Paul de Longueville, an adventurer par excellence. A passionate strife ensued, characterized by rancor and vituperation. Diet after Diet was broken up, and not a few deputies lost their lives at the swords of angry partisans. Chaos became general and to

**King Michael  
Korybut  
Wisniowiecki,  
1669-1673**

make matters worse an immense Crescent host appeared in Poland.

When news of the election of Wisniowiecki, son of the hated "Jarema," became known to the Cossacks it once again awakened their animosity toward Poland. They broke the Hadziacz agreement and went over to Turkey. The Cossack ally was welcome at the time when the Porte, having reached the zenith of its power was planning conquests of Austria and Poland in order to reach the Baltic. The new Turkish danger stood in the way of the realization of the plans of Louis XIV and of the French party in Poland, which was spending all its time and energy to counteract the influences of the Austrian faction. In the capital not much thought was given to the organization of an adequate army to meet the Turks. Hetman Sobieski, with his small forces was accomplishing marvels of gallantry. He was, however, only retarding the Turkish advance, not checking it. Soon the enemy overrode Ukraine and after a desperate defense by its small garrison Kamenietz Podolski, the strongest Polish frontier fortress and the key to the South, surrendered. In spite of the proximity of the enemy and the appearance of Sobieski in Warsaw and his insistence on energetic action, partisanship dominated patriotism. The Diet dissolved, nothing accomplished, and as a consequence Poland found herself suing for peace under the most humiliating terms. By the so-called Buczacz Treaty, the Republic ceded to Turkey the provinces of Podolia and Ukraine, paid a heavy war tax of 80,000 thalers and promised an annual tribute of 22,500 thalers (1672).

**The Turkish  
War and the  
Treaty of  
Buczacz, 1672**

This unprecedented humiliation was exploited by the Austrian party, to crush the French party by attributing to them complete blame for the disaster and even accusing them of courting it with the aid of French diplomacy. They formed a confederacy, known as that of Golomb, indicted the leaders of the Senate and, as in the case of the Primate Prazmowski, deprived some of their offices and confiscated their estates. The confederacy had a distinct class character. It was the expression of resentment and distrust on the part of the rank and file squire against the corruption and dishonesty of the rich and powerful lords. The Assembly of the Confederation proposed to do away with life tenure of State office and to discourage the use of the liberum veto. Three Diet members who used this malicious device were indicted. There was a great deal of truth in the assertions and accusations of the Golomb Confederacy. The time, however, was not opportune for recriminations and vengeance, the more so because the struggle threatened to develop into a civil war, for Sobieski returning from his expeditions surrounded by glory, organized a counter-confederacy in support of the Primate. Through the good offices of reasonable and clear-headed men, and also because of the death of the Primate, the clash was prevented and steps were taken to organize an adequate army and to repudiate the Buczacz treaty. Austria and Muscovy were asked to join the campaign but, as always, refused to help.

A single-handed expedition was sent against the Turks under Sobieski and at Chocim, where fifty-two years before, in Zygmunt Vasa's reign, Chodkiewicz had checked the same enemy, Polish arms scored a splendid victory over the Porte. The Turkish army was almost

**The Golomb  
Confederacy**

**The Victory  
Over the Turks  
at Chocim, 1673**

entirely annihilated, and 120 mortars, 400 standards and the entire supply store fell into Polish hands. It was in keeping with Polish tradition that the fruits of this victory were not fully gathered. The mercenaries, not having been paid, struck, and the militia, apprised of the death of the King who expired on November 10, 1673, at the age of thirty-three years, were anxious to get back home for electioneering.

The Convocation Diet assembled in Warsaw by the middle of January and the Austrian party, fearing the popularity of Sobieski, proposed the elimination of all Polish candidates at the election. The measure did not go through and in view of the war situation money was voted for the maintenance of an army 70,000 strong, and the date of election was set for April 20, 1674. Led by the powerful Pac family, Lithuania stood irrevocably for the Austrian candidate, the Duke of Lorraine, whom they had also chosen to be the husband of the widowed Polish queen, the sister of the Austrian Emperor. The Duke of Neuburg was the French candidate. When it appeared that he could not be elected, the French party proposed John Sobieski who by his heroic deeds had gained considerable popularity among the nobles, although his past record as an active supporter of Louis XIV's policies, a participant in an illegal plot to dethrone the late King, and as a member of the camarilla of the intriguing queen, Marie Louise Gonzague, and of late the organizer of a counter confederacy in opposition to the Polish Cromwell, weighed strongly against him. In spite of the objections of the Pacs and the Wisniowieckis he was

**King John III  
Sobieski,  
1674-1696**

elected. The election was questioned by the Lithuanians who left the field, but two days later after recon-



FIG. 134—JAN III SOBIESKI, 1674-1696

sidering the matter, they voted to support the new King-elect.

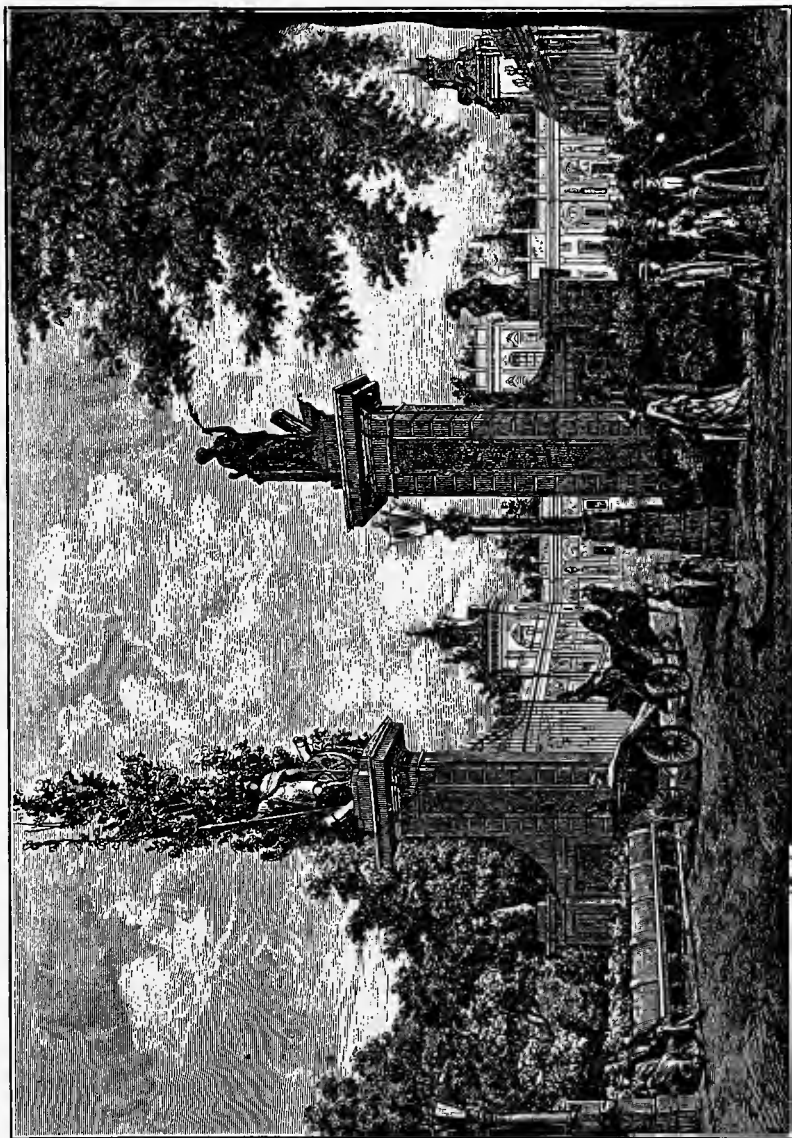


FIG. 135.—THE GATE OF SOBIESKI'S PALACE AT WILANOV, SUBURB OF WARSAW

Almost immediately after the election, the King left with the army to halt a new Turkish invasion, postponing the coronation until a later date. After two years of brilliant campaigning in the course of which the Turks were thrown across the Dniester and a great many towns (except that of Kamenetz Podolski) were retaken, Sobieski returned to Cracow for the coronation, and at the Diet immediately following the ceremony asked for adequate appropriations to continue the war. He was soon in the field again. After the famous siege of Zoravno, where a hundred thousand Turks in vain endeavored to surround the small forces of the Polish King, by the aid of French mediation, peace was established, the terms of which superseded the Buczacz treaty. Many other advantages were gained by Poland, among them the restoration of two-thirds of Ukraine (1676).

The Diet expected more of the martial genius of the King and the treaty was not ratified. An additional reason for this action on the part of the Diet was the suspicion entertained as to the reasons that led France to bring about the peace. It was a matter of common knowledge that Louis XIV desired to draw Poland into a war with his enemies, Austria and Brandenburg, and for certain considerations Sobieski supported the Hungarian revolutionaries and allowed the use of Polish territory for the passage of Swedish troops marching against Brandenburg. He even contemplated a campaign against the Elector to regain East Prussia. Austria was alarmed by the cessation of Polish hostilities with Turkey, fearing that the latter might turn against her and strained every effort to gain sufficient support in the Diet against the King's plans. She was ably seconded by Branden-

**The Peace of  
Zoravno, 1676**

**Internal  
Dissensions**



burg and the Pope, Innocent XI, who desired to see Poland in a league against Turkey, and who issued instructions to the Polish clergy advising them to work in that direction. Their endeavors were not in vain. The suspicious, ill-informed, ignorant and presumptuous country squires assumed the same attitude toward the King as they had done in Wladyslav's days and thwarted the realization of large plans, based on the possibilities of a European conflict. They again prevented the country from gaining the last chance to become an important factor in European politics, to which she was entitled by her magnitude and position. Seeing the pettiness of the thoughtless mob, which held supreme power in the State, Sobieski conceived the idea of effecting a coup d'état, which alone could have saved the country from decadence. He informed Louis XIV that he intended putting a stop to anarchy and introducing absolute government in Poland, and asked his support in the matter. To his disappointment, the egotistic French monarch replied that he saw no advantage to himself in the proposed scheme. Left unsupported, Sobieski submitted to the pacifist measures of the Diet, which reduced the army from thirty to twelve thousand men. His attention was soon again turned to Turkey and Muscovy.

In spite of the failure of the Polish Diet to ratify the treaty of Zoravno, Turkey did not resume hostilities, having meanwhile engaged Muscovy in a war over the control of Ukraine. The war was crowned by the treaty of Bakchiseray (Crimea) in 1681, according to which the part of Ukraine to the east of the Dnieper was to remain in the Tsar's hands, but the western part of Ukraine, which the Andrushov agreement of 1667 guaranteed to Poland, was to be divided

**The Alliance  
with Austria,  
March 1683**

between Turkey and Poland and a desert maintained between the Dnieper and the Boh to separate the possessions of the two nations. Poland could not consent to sharing Ukraine with Turkey, and the King, disappointed with the Diet and with Louis XIV, to whom also his beloved wife, Marie Casimir, took a sudden dislike because he refused to grant a ducal title to her father, Marquis d'Arquien, turned to Austria. The alliance with Austria was based on a community of interests and on account of this it gave assurances of sincerity of purpose and firmness. It was, moreover, a realization of the idea of the Sacred League against the Infidel. Early in 1683 Austria and Poland finally concluded a treaty for defensive and offensive purposes, by which, among other things, the Emperor promised to raise an army of sixty thousand, to contribute 200,000 gold coins to the Polish war treasury and to interfere at Madrid for the repayment of the so-called "Neapolitan sums" which Queen Bona, the wife of Zygmunt I, loaned to Spain and which were never returned to Poland, in spite of many representations. The Polish King covenanted to raise an army of forty thousand and agreed not to conclude a separate peace with Turkey. In case of a siege of either Vienna or Cracow the allies agreed to send relief expeditions and the monarch present with the allied troops in the field should be in command of the united forces.

Very soon after the alliance was established an immense host approached Vienna under the leadership of the gifted Grand Vizier Kara Mustafa. The Imperial army under the Duke of Lorraine could not stem the rapid Turkish advance. The Emperor, who fled the capital, had sent imploring messages, one after another, to Sobieski. On the 15th of July, 1683, the

**The Battle of  
Vienna, 1683**

investment of Vienna was complete and a regular siege begun. Desirous of arriving in time, Sobieski made hasty preparations and not waiting for the Lithuanian army and the Cossacks, left in forced



(J. Kossak pinx.)

FIG. 136—KING SOBIESKI AT THE GATES OF VIENNA, 1683

marches toward Vienna. On September 7th he joined the Austrian forces and assumed supreme command over the allied army which comprised Bavarian and Saxon troops also. On the 12th the famous

battle took place, directed by the Polish King in person. The course of the battle is a matter of record. The right wing of the allied army, comprised of the Polish winged hussars and other types of Polish horse for which the country has been famous, saved the day.



FIG. 137— THE ARMOR WORN BY SOBIESKI DURING THE  
BATTLE OF VIENNA

The backbone of the Turkish army was broken. The Vizier fled with the remnants of his host and the green standard of the Prophet and all supplies and munitions fell into the hands of the Christian sol-

diers. Kara Mustafa was pursued into Hungary by Sobieski, who, because of the lack of support on the part of the Allies, suffered a reverse which was, however, promptly compensated by another victory. The heroic achievements of Sobieski and his army brought to him and his country everlasting fame and praise for the saving of European civilization and Christianity from destruction by a powerful and ruthless enemy who was determined to conquer Europe. It brought, however, no political advantage to Poland. Leopold and his court very soon became cold to their saviors and forgot the services rendered. It seems almost incredible that the army which saved Austria from destruction should have been treated as they were only a few days after the battle of Vienna. Forage was refused to the horses, and other petty difficulties put in the way. After having pursued the Turks into Hungary and having cleared a considerable part of the country of them, Sobieski returned to Poland.

Austria did not keep the tacit agreement made with the Polish King of giving the Austrian Archduchess Marie Antoinette in marriage to his son James. She also prevented his marriage to Princess Radziwill, daughter of Boguslav, who was heir to immense riches in Lithuania and who subsequently became the bride of Louis Hohenzollern, the Elector of Brandenburg. This marriage was the cause of a great political tempest as the Hohenzollerns thus came into possession of very large estates and a number of cities in Lithuania. Anxious to insure regal station for his children and to crush the Porte forever Sobieski, in spite of his disquieting experiences with Austria, joined the Holy League against Turkey, the Emperor having given assur-

**The Holy  
League  
Against  
Turkey**

ances that Moldavia and Wallachia would be given to James Sobieski, the King's son. The expedition into Wallachia was unsuccessful and to obtain the aid of Muscovy the Polish King made a sacrificing agreement with that country which had only a short time before proven treacherous and unreliable. By this new agreement of 1686 known by the name of the Polish commissioner, Grzymultowski, Poland, for the support against Turkey and for a compensation of a million and a half roubles, forever ceded Ukraine to the east of the Dnieper and the important City of Kieff on the western shore. The cession of the territories was an irreparable loss to Poland. She was deprived of her predominant position and influence in the East, and her command over the Cossacks, and was cut off from the Black Sea which became the foundation for the growth of the Muscovite Empire. The political ideas of Batory and Wladyslav IV were forever abandoned. Moreover, neither Muscovy nor Austria kept their promises. The Wallachian expeditions carried on single-handed were unsuccessful and finally abandoned in 1691.

The constant internal dissensions caused and nourished by foreign intrigues were in no mean measure responsible for the King's failures in his final campaigns and in his diplomacy. They resulted in the loss of territory and the decline of Poland's position as a great European power.

French and Austrian money supported Polish anarchy. Diets were constantly torn up, some even before the presiding officer could be elected. No law could be enacted. Corruption was rampant. Several attempts were made to depose the King. Religious intolerance became intensified and the first and last auto da fè in Poland was executed in 1689, on

**Political  
Anarchy, and  
Sobieski's  
Death, 1696**

one Casimir Lyszczyński for his atheistic proclivities. The country became a theatre of constant strife between the various magnate families. At times the clashes resulted in formal civil wars, as was the case in the feud between the Sapiéhas and the Bishop of Wilno. With the death of Sobieski on June 17, 1696, ended the glory of old Poland. He was the only man, says Prof. Sokolowski, who if he could not revive the country, could at least prevent Poland's speedy destruction. But "blindness and evil passion destroyed the last salvation plank and then begins the slow death of a powerful organism."



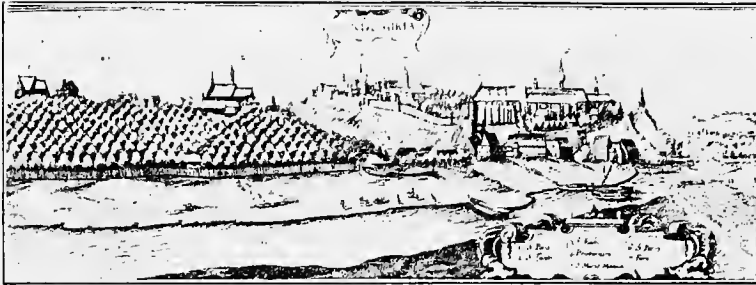


FIG. 138—GENERAL VIEW OF SANDOMIR  
From Georg Braun's "Civitates Orbis Terrarum," 1491.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### The Disintegration of Political Sovereignty.

The election following Sobieski's death was the last that was free. Subsequent elections were held at the point of foreign bayonets. The debasement into which political morality had fallen at that period everywhere in Europe received its echo in Poland.

**The Election  
of August of  
Saxony, 1697**

Sordid haggling and corruption took possession of Polish political life under mischievous foreign influence. All past glory and lofty tradition were forgotten, and the country was given over to the personal rapacity of the magnates and the intrigues of foreign monarchs. James Sobieski was the candidate of the Austrian party, bitterly opposed by his mother, who favored the Elector of Bavaria, her son-in-law. The French candidate was the Duke François Louis de Conti. The family jealousies of the Polish magnates prevented the election of Sobieski; Conti's good chances were spoiled by the sudden decision of the Court of Versailles not to spend any more funds for the election; and so Saxon gold, supported by Russian influence, carried the day. The dissolute, intem-



perate and sly Elector of Saxony, August the Strong, having become a Catholic, mounted the throne of Poland as King August II, in 1697, although the Primate declared the French candidate to have been legally chosen. August was a man possessed of a strong will and of great political ambitions. Poland was to serve his designs. Heir to despotic traditions, he planned to turn her into a hereditary domain of his house.



(J. Mateyko)

FIG. 139—AUGUST II (1697-1733)

In the *pacta conventa* he promised to bring Ukraine and Podolia, with the fortress of Kamenetz, back to Poland. Soon after the election he determined upon and prosecuted a war with Turkey as the first step in the seeming fulfillment of his promises. The conflict was not long drawn out, for the Porte, after a series of long and dis-

**The Close of  
Hostilities  
with Turkey,  
1698**

astrous wars with Sobieski and Austria was exhausted. The allied forces of Poland and Saxony, under Field Hetman Felix Potocki, won a brilliant victory at Podhayce in 1698, which hastened the conclusion of the peace at Karlowice, by the terms of which Austria received Transylvania and Hungary as far as the Save; Azov was ceded to Russia; and Ukraine and Podolia with Kamenetz came back to Poland. Poland in return, abandoned all claims to Wallachia and Moldavia. This peace marks the end of hostilities between Poland and Turkey. The growth of Russia made them natural allies, in opposition to the disquieting growth of the colossus in the East.

An alliance with Russia was, however, within the political machinations of the Saxon Elector. He schemed to take advantage of Charles XII, the youthful King of Sweden, and to wrest Swedish Livonia from him. Accordingly he entered into a secret treaty with Peter of Russia for a division of the Swedish Baltic littoral, a Swedish traitor by the name of Patkul being the chief agent in carrying out the negotiations. August was able to draw into the league the Danish King Frederick IV and later the Elector of Brandenburg, who, with the consent of the perfidious Polish king, crowned himself in Königsberg as King in Prussia on January 18, 1701, although his sovereignty extended only over East Prussia. West or Royal Prussia was then still an integral part of Poland. When the Polish Diet voted its opposition to a war with Sweden, August decided to carry it on with his Saxon troops which very soon invaded Lithuania. Protests were made against the presence of Saxon soldiery in Poland, but in the private war that was being waged between the powerful magnates, the Sapiehas and the Oginskis, the

**The Beginning  
of the  
Northern War,  
1700-1721**

cunning King found a pretext for the unlawful stationing of his troops in Lithuania. The Oginskis had formed a confederacy for the protection of the rights of the nobility against the iniquities of the Sapieha "kinglets." The Saxon troops, under Field Marshal Flemming, were dispatched to Lithuania ostensibly to protect the nobles against the oppression of the Sapiehas, whom the King hated because of their power, but in reality to be near the frontier ready for an attack on Sweden. Soon they fired the first shot which started the great Northern War, lasting from 1700 to 1721. But to the allied powers, how disappointing were the opening chapters of that venture! In a few months Denmark was defeated and concluded a separate peace at Travendal (1700). Peter's army, five times as large as that of Charles, was routed at Narva on the Gulf of Finland and put to a most ignominious flight. The Saxons were defeated at Riga and compelled to retire, hotly pursued by the Swedes, who occupied Courland and entered Lithuania. The Diet which assembled in Warsaw, to the unpleasant surprise of the King and his Russian ally, demanded the withdrawal of Saxon troops from Poland and the cessation of hostilities with Sweden, and protested against the recognition of the Elector of Brandenburg as King in Prussia. Charles sent a request to the Polish government for the dethronement of August. No immediate reply, however, was given to the demand of Charles, except that he respect the neutrality of the country. When the latter insisted on the dethronement of August and occupied Warsaw, war became inevitable. In the confusion that followed the conquests of the Swedish army in Poland, no unity of action could be expected. Great Poland was against the King, while Little Po-

land and Lithuania remained loyal to him. A confederacy of loyalists was formed at Sandomir, and a



(J. Mateyko)

FIG. 140—STANISLAV LESZCZYŃSKI (1704-1710)

protest formulated against the breaking of the peace of Oliva by the Swedes. August called a Diet at

Lublin, which demanded certain guarantees from the King and voted appropriations for a large army of defense. Still the treacherous King sued for peace, offering to Sweden the provinces of Courland and Livonia.

Charles, however, refused to consider peace and insisted that August be deposed. Pressed by him, Great Poland formed its own confederacy at Warsaw against the King who was conniving with foreign enemies against the country. A few months later the ruler was declared deprived of his royal office (1704). Charles favored the election of James Sobieski, but when August's agents apprehended him and his brother, and Alexander, the youngest of King Sobieski's sons, refused to be a candidate, the Swedish King proposed Stanislav Leszczynski, the woyevoda of Posen, who was elected by a small assembly of the nobility. The Sandomir Confederacy, supported by the Tsar of Muscovy, refused to recognize the new King, and as a result a civil war ensued, fought in the interest of foreign monarchs and leading to the practical disappearance of Polish sovereignty which became divided between Charles on one hand and Peter on the other, the latter having assumed the rôle of protector of the opponents of the Uniate Church.

After a series of defeats at the hands of the Swedes, August fled to Dresden, but soon Saxony was overrun by the armies of Charles, and August was forced to sign the peace of Altranstaedt in 1706. He surrendered his right to the Polish throne in favor of Leszczynski and released the two Sobieskis. Austria, Brandenburg, Holland and England recog-

**The Election  
of Leszczynski  
1704, and the  
Civil War**

**The  
Abdication by  
August II, 1706**

nized the new Polish King, but the Sandomir Confederacy was less tractable. Aided by Russian troops, they waged a bitter war against the Leszczyński faction and the Swedish army. The country was laid waste and neither the Swedish nor the Muscovite armies showed consideration for the native population. Peter, ostensibly protecting the opponents of the Uniate Church, persecuted the adherents of that church in a most cruel manner, and unceremoniously interfered in the internal affairs of Lithuania and Little Poland, hoping to pave the way for his son as the next King of Poland.

Having disposed of the Saxon Elector, Charles turned his attention to the last adversary and soon cleared Poland of all traces of Muscovite occupation. He planned to push his campaign northward, and reached Smolensk after a series of triumphant battles; but, persuaded by Mazepa, the last elective hetman of the Cossacks, who promised the support of Ukraine and large supplies of food and ammunition, he turned southward to free the Cossacks from the domination of the Tsar. The Polish King was apprised of Mazepa's plans and favored the new opportunity of bringing the Cossacks back to Poland. The campaign rashly undertaken ended disastrously for Charles. A part of his army did not reach him in time; the winter in Ukraine was extremely severe; the ill-provided army suffered intensely, becoming considerably attenuated; and Mazepa failed to arouse Cossack support for the venture. Surrounded at Poltava by an immense Muscovite host and wounded, Charles barely escaped to Turkey under the care of Stanislaw Poniatowski, and the remnant of his army capitulated (1709).

**The Russian Campaign and the Battle of Poltava, 1709**

The Swedish disaster tolled the death knell of Leszczynski's reign. Immediately after the battle of Poltava, the Tsar and August moved into Poland. Hetman Adam Sieniawski, one of the most rabid opponents of King Stanislav, joined hands with Peter.

**The  
Withdrawal of  
Leszczynski,  
1710**

Only a part of the Polish army remained loyal to Leszczynski, who, seeing that the matter could not be settled amicably as the opposition did not wish to have his case adjudged by the Diet, and trying to avoid further bloodshed, withdrew into Sweden. Meanwhile August renewed his treaty with Peter and offered him the much coveted Livonia. He also withdrew his abdication, claiming that it was exacted under duress and quoting the Polish statute of 1669, which prohibited abdications. The Diet of 1710 proceeded according to the dictation of the Tsar and reaffirmed the kingship of August. The Diet also granted freedom of faith to the communicants of the Greek Church. Peter demanded that he be made the guarantor of their rights, and in this wise received legal sanction for his meddling in the internal affairs of the country.

Charles, however, did not resign his plans. With the aid of Stanislav Poniatowski, one of his warmest friends, he was able to prevail upon Turkey to start a new war on Muscovy. When the Turkish campaign failed in 1711, Leszczynski begged the Swedish King to give up the war. Moreover, internal dissensions in Sweden compelled him to postpone further action at that time, and Peter was left unhampered to do in Poland as he pleased. He drafted a hundred thousand Polish recruits into his army, exacted heavy

**Russian Inter-  
vention in  
Poland**

contributions from the population, arrested and executed many of the Uniate clergy and planned for the eventual extension of his sovereignty over the whole of Poland. These designs led him to oppose the realization of August's plans for a partition of Poland. The latter hoped by this means to add a portion of the country to his Saxon patrimony. For help in carrying out his designs, August planned to cede West or Royal Prussia to Frederick. When halted by Peter he tried another expedient.

Under the pretext of fear of a Turkish invasion, August kept his Saxon troops in Poland in the hope that their insolent behavior might cause a revolution, which he expected to quell and then to change the form of government to suit his plans. The Saxon provocation caused, indeed, an armed uprising under the leadership of Stanislaw Ledochowski, during which the country was turned into a barren waste. Everything that had survived former wars was destroyed in this civil strife. Agriculture, commerce and industry came to a standstill. Peaceful inhabitants turned into bands of brigands. Cities were depopulated. Cracow could count only ten thousand inhabitants. The unfortunate ancient city of Kalisz, which in the XVIIth century had been the centre of cloth manufacture with a large and prosperous population, was demolished during this war. Violence, rape, murder and plunder ruled supreme. August was unable to crush the revolution he had fomented and accepted Peter's offer of mediation. The eighteen thousand men Peter sent into Poland enabled Prince Dolgorookey to bring about an agreement (1716).

**The Civil War,  
1715-1717**



The treaty of Warsaw, as the agreement was called, abolished the existing confederacies and prohibited future formation of such organizations; the Saxon troops were ordered withdrawn from Poland within twenty-five days' time; the authority of the hetmans was reduced to military matters only; the administration of the army was entrusted to the subdivision of the Treasury Department; the regular army was reduced to twenty-four thousand men, eighteen thousand in the Crown and six thousand in Lithuania; the tenure of state offices was reduced to two years and the duties revised; and finally, the building of new dissident churches was prohibited. The Diet of 1717 approved without discussion all the measures and dissolved six hours after its opening. It is known in Polish history as the first "Dumb" Diet. The Tsar became the guarantor of the laws and did not withdraw his troops from Poland which he considered a conquered territory. Almost all of the measures approved by the "Dumb" Diet were harmful, particularly the diminution of the army to a number entirely inadequate for the defense of the country, surrounded as it was by military powers with large and modern armies.

Soon the Tsar and the Prussian King made an agreement in Berlin (1719) to act jointly in Polish affairs and to prevent any reforms which would tend to strengthen the Republic. August's plan to form an alliance with Austria and England against Russia and Prussia was frustrated by the shrewd political moves of the ambassadors of the two latter countries. The ignorant and fanatical nobility did not realize the gravity of the situation and by their religious intolerance, inculcated and nourished by the Jesuits,

**The First  
Dumb Diet,  
1717**

**Religious  
Intolerance**

afforded opportunities for foreign powers to interfere in Polish internal affairs. In 1718 the Diet excluded one of its deputies because he was a Protestant, and in 1733 the dissenters were deprived of civic and political rights. The intolerance of that period, not as rabid, perhaps, as in other countries, was alaciously taken advantage of for Russian and Prussian interference which eventually led to the dismemberment of the country. The first step in that direction was made by Peter at the close of the Northern War when Livonia became a part of the Russian Empire.

Realizing that it would be impossible to make Poland a hereditary monarchy, August endeavored at least to prepare the ground for his son's succession. The marriage of Leszczyński's daughter to King Louis XV of France, in 1724, spoiled his designs, for it gave a powerful support to the exiled King. He then conceived the plan of withdrawing his son's candidacy to the Polish throne and of enlisting French influence against the Pragmatic Sanction of Charles VI of Austria in the hope that his son who was married to the daughter of Emperor Joseph I, might press his claims to Austrian succession. The Court of Vienna, apprised of this move, approached the Russo-Prussian alliance and the union of the "three black eagles" came to pass in 1732, by which the three monarchs pledged to use their influence against the election of either Leszczyński or the son of the Saxon Elector and to resist any attempt at reforms in Poland. This union led the perfidious August to suggest once more to Prussia and Austria that Poland be dismembered, one part to become a hereditary part of his Saxon patrimony. In the midst of negotiations he died on February 1, 1733, in

**The Union of  
the "Three  
Black Eagles"  
and August's  
Death, 1733**

Warsaw, whither he had gone to attend the session of the Diet.

By the nature of things, the interregnum following the death of August could be nothing but turbulent. The majority of the electors had become convinced that only a native King should sit on the throne and favored the banished Stanislaw Leszczynski, who was spending his life in retirement and study. The most powerful magnate families with Theodore Potocki, the Primate at the head,

**The Interregnum, 1733-1735, and the Second Election of Leszczynski**



FIG. 141—A SOUVENIR MEDAL OF THE ELECTION OF LESZCZYSSYI IN 1733

indorsed his candidacy and practically excluded everybody else. At the election field the great assembly of citizens, with a unanimity seldom known in Poland, elected Leszczynski on September 12, 1733, and the Primate officially announced his election, in spite of the threatening declaration made by Austria and Russia that they would not consent to recognize him. Counting on personal gains Prince Wisniowiecki, the Great Chancellor of Lithuania, and Theodore Lubomirski, the Woyevoda of Cracow, together with the Bishops of Posen and Cracow, with-

drew with a small band of six thousand of their retainers to the suburb of Warsaw on the right bank of the Vistula, and upon the arrival of Russian troops elected the son of the late King August.

Although the union of the black eagles excluded also the Saxon candidate who was a son-in-law of the



(J. Mateyko)

FIG. 142—AUGUST III (1733-1763)

Russian Inter-  
ference and  
August III

Austrian Emperor, yet the enticing offers he made to Russia and Austria won their consent. The inducement offered to Austria was his renunciation of all claims to Austrian succession and a promise to respect the Pragmatic Sanction; and to Russia, he promised Courland for Ernest Biron, the lover of Empress Anna. Under the protection of Russian and Saxon arms, August III was crowned in Cracow, on January 17, 1734.

Leszczynski, the legally chosen King, withdrew with his supporters to Danzig, pursued by the Russian army. The Russian Field Marshal Münnich threatened to destroy the beleaguered city and to butcher all infants for the resistance offered by their fathers. The unfortunate Leszczynski fled to Königsberg, but the war between the two factions lasted for two years. The magnate Adam Tarlo became the marshal of the general confederacy which was organized in 1734 at Dzikow in defense of King Stanislav. The failure of Sweden, Turkey and France to send support against Russia and Saxony made August's position strong in spite of the fact that France declared war against Austria, nominally for the Polish succession (1733-1738) but de facto in her own interests. In 1735 the Confederacy suffered a defeat and the King was forced to leave the country. He abdicated the throne and France made him the Duke of the newly acquired province of Lorraine which he ruled wisely and intelligently until his death in 1766.

The Diet of 1736 was forced to recognize the new King and to consent to the cession of Courland to Russia after the death of the last Duke of the house of Kettler. This was the only Diet that had not been broken up during the twenty-eight years of August III's reign which is marked by a most crass and abject degradation of all life values—moral, social, political and scientific. Servility took the place of patriotism; all respect for law and order disappeared and the wantonness of magnates held full sway. Even tribunals hitherto respected were put under the thumb of the local potentates. The magnates openly carried on negotiations with foreign sover-

**The Dzikow  
Confederacy,  
1734**

**August III,  
1733-1763, and  
His Times**

eigns and received subsidies for services rendered; the government ceased to be able to exercise any of its functions and to be a factor in European politics. Foreign governments interfered in Polish affairs and fostered anarchy to retain excuses for their interference. Neither Russia nor Prussia or Austria respected her sovereignty or her boundaries. They sent their armies through Poland whenever it suited their plans and at times even resorted to recruiting in Poland to replenish their forces.

Exhausted by constant civil wars, the country was in a desperate condition of poverty. The lot of the Polish peasant grew worse and the amount of unpaid labor he was obliged to render to his overlord increased. Ignorance and fanaticism reigned supreme. The number of convents, cloisters and monasteries multiplied immensely. The beautiful literature of the Golden Age almost disappeared. Silly, mediæval stories, astrology and the lives of the saints took its place. Separated from the West by the warrent and devastated German states, Poland was deprived of the refreshing scientific currents from France, Italy and England. The former custom of sending Polish youth to Western universities was replaced by pilgrimages to the Holy Sepulchre or to less remote places of religious worship. "In the contemporary intellectual movement of the West," says Smolenski, "Poland took no part; she did not even adopt its most significant achievements. The great discoveries of Keppler, Galileo, Newton, Pascal and Torricelli in astronomy and physics were as foreign to her as were the philosophical ideas of Bacon, Descartes, Locke and Leibnitz. Ignorance closed the eyes of the people to a realization of the gravity of their situation. Men of wisdom and thought, who could look critically at public affairs, had to conceal

their opinions lest they be indicted for heresy or assault upon the liberty of the nobles . . . Without being aware of the causes of the evil and the means for remedying them, the nation was rolling into the abyss of ruin."\* But the inexhaustible spiritual resources of the Polish nation were not crushed by this trying period. Like Phœnix from the ashes they suddenly arose again to life and asserted themselves with vigor toward the close of the century, during the Four-Years' Diet, when Poland again took place be-

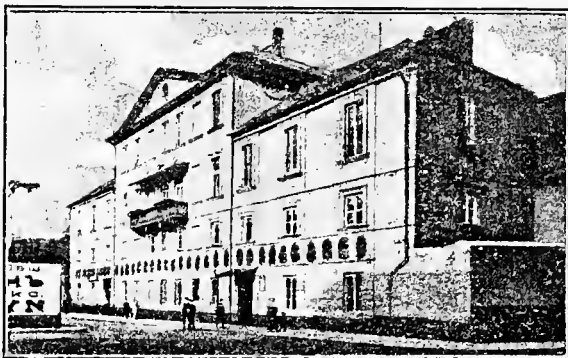


FIG. 143—THE ZALUSKI PUBLIC LIBRARY AT WARSAW. Opened to the public in 1748 with 200,000 volumes donated by Bishop Joseph Zaluski. The whole collection was later removed from Warsaw to St. Petersburg by the order of Empress Catherine.

side France as a center whence progress and regeneration spread over Europe.

The middle of the XVIIIth century saw the awakening of Polish thought. During his candidacy the philosophically inclined Stanislaw Leszczynski published a pamphlet on the need of political reforms, which did not go entirely unheeded. He enthused a number of younger men who went abroad to study.

The Intellect-  
ual and Politi-  
cal Awakening

\* Loc. cit. Vol. II, pp. 159-160.

In subsequent years his court at Nancy was the seat of art and learning, whence modern thought and ideas radiated into Poland and found numerous adepts among the magnates, constantly vying with each other for power and influence. Among other influential



FIG. 144—ELIZABETH DRUŻBACKA (1695-1765)  
The First Polish Woman Writer.

publicists of the time were the two brothers Zaluski, Andrew and Joseph, both bishops, who, in 1746, founded the first well equipped public library in Warsaw. Stanislaw Poniatowski and a few others also published pamphlets on the need of political reform. It is noteworthy that in this dark period of Polish



intellectual life a strong stimulus to the literary awakening came from a woman. The writings of Elizabeth Druzbacka soared high above the sordidness of her contemporary environment and blazed a new trail for Polish literature. She, in a measure, cleared the Polish language of foreign influences and of hybrid expressions.



FIG. 145—STANISLAV KONARSKI (1700-1773), Patriot, Educator and Jurist

The greatest influence, however, was wielded by Stanislaw Konarski a highly gifted and patriotic priest who, upon his return from abroad after years of study, established the famous "Collegium Nobilium," where modern subjects and modern methods of instruction were in-

Stanislaw  
Konarski

troduced. Scholasticism was banished and science, astronomy, mathematics, history and modern languages took its place. In addition to imparting knowledge, Konarski strove to inculcate patriotism and sound civic ideas in the minds of his students. With him began the intellectual and political awakening of Poland which found expression in the Constitution of May 3, 1791, and in the monumental scientific works of the close of the XVIIIth and of the XIXth centuries. He wrote a great deal on political and social problems and fearlessly exposed the dangers of the existing system and particularly the wretched "liberum veto," which, to the nobility, was the pearl of their liberties. Single-handed, he undertook the Herculean task of codifying all the laws of Poland, beginning with those of Kazimir the Great and carrying them through to the end. His "Volumina legum," prefaced by a learned dissertation on the origin and sources of law, became subsequently recognized as the official handbook for the use of the courts, diets and other state offices. The college founded by Konarski and its success invited imitation, and a number of old schools were modernized or new ones established. The revival of thought became noticeable all over the country and it did not fail soon to transmute itself into action.

The two leading and most enlightened Polish families, those of Potocki and of Czartoryski, undertook to put into life the reforms advocated by the political thinkers of the time. Unfortunately, an element of family pride underlay the splendid motives of the two parties, and prevented concerted action. Each strove for individual distinction and adopted different ways

**The Reform  
Parties**

of carrying out their programs. The strife of the two political factions formed by the two families constitutes the political history of the reign of the thoughtless and slothful August III. The Potockis, firm supporters of Leszczyński, formed a party known as the Patriotic or National Party; the Czartoryski party was generally known as the "Family." The National Party aimed at the transformation of the Republic into a strong state; the other of reforming the government by securing a firm "family" hold upon it. The first party sought alliances with France, Sweden and Turkey; the second relied on Russia for support in the accomplishment of their plans. August III was an ally of Russia to whom he was indebted for his election as King. Accordingly he offered no protest when Russian armies passed through Poland during the Russo-Turkish war (1737-1739), and, in compliance with his pre-election promise, gave Courland to Biron, protégé of the Russian Empress, after the death of Duke Ferdinand Kettler (1737). The National Party protested and took steps to organize an armed confederacy. Agreeing with the King's Russian policy, and having at their command the most important State offices, the "Family" Party was able to frustrate the plans of their opponents by dissolving the Diet. They were unsuccessful, however, in their attempts to induce the Republic to take part in the war of the Austrian succession, during which Frederick the Great wrested from Maria Theresa the ancient Polish province of Silesia. The Russians defeated the Saxons, and with the aid of the "Family" the Polish King endeavored to equip a large army and to draw Poland into the war. By preventing any of the Diets to come to pass the opposition rendered action impossible. Internal disorder, characterizing the Saxon rule in Poland, reached its apogee at about

this time. Charged with designs of turning the country into a monarchy, the "Family" Party began to lose its sway, particularly after its unsavory dealings in disposing of the estates of the heavily indebted Prince Sanguszko at Ostrog became known and raised a tide of public indignation and contempt. Soon the "Family" was relegated to the rôle of the opposition. Realizing that their chances of regaining influence were slim, the Czartoryskis turned for support to neighboring nations, especially to Russia. The time was particularly propitious, as a member of the "Family," the elegant and young Stanislaw August Poniatowski, as Ambassador to Russia, gained influence at St. Petersburg because of his love affairs with the wife of the heir to the throne. In 1762 the old Empress Elizabeth died, and Katherine II, having quickly disposed of her half-idiotic husband, Peter III, ascended the throne of Russia. The "Family" gathered forces for the purpose of overturning the government and introducing the planned reforms. The National party was ready to resist them by force of arms, and a civil war was impending when the news came of the sudden death of August III, on October 5, 1763.

In spite of the fact that, owing to the exhaustion caused by the Seven Years' War, there was less dis-  
 position on the part of the neighbors  
 of Poland to interfere in her internal  
 affairs, this chance was not grasped by  
 the political leaders of the time, more in-  
 terested in a realization of their individ-  
 ual ambitions than in the destiny of their country. The  
 Patriotic party favored the son of the deceased King.  
 He died, however, before the election, and the leader of  
 the party, Hetman John Clement Branicki, became the  
 candidate. The Czartoryskis had prepared them-

**The  
 Last Royal  
 Election,  
 May 7, 1764**

selves thoroughly for the convocation diet and the election which they sought to postpone as long as possible. Russia was to be their chief supporter and she began by paying eighty thousand roubles to the interrex, the Primate Wladyslaw Lubienski, for deferring the election until May. The local assemblies became busy places of pre-election activity. Support was bought by intrigue, bribe and promise; the recalcitrant members were disposed of by thugs hired by the "Family" or by Russian soldiers brought over to intimidate the opposition. To the convocation diet the two parties came armed to the teeth. Branicki and Radziwill brought considerable forces of the Crown and Lithuanian troops; the "Family" invited Russia to garrison the city; and the royal palace and convention hall were guarded by the private militia of the Czartoryskis. The atmosphere was not particularly conducive to an amicable settlement. The opposition, immediately after the opening of the session, declared that in view of the presence of the Russian troops in the capital no Diet would be held. Despite the pressure brought to bear upon the Chairman of the Diet by the "Family" he refused to continue the session until freedom from military intervention was restored. The opposition broke up the Diet and withdrew. The Czartoryskis did not relish the idea of going through another costly pre-election campaign, and resorted to the flagrantly illegal measure of continuing a dissolved Diet and of deciding the various issues by a majority vote. Their program of reforms was well considered and far-reaching, but could be adopted only in part as both Prussia and Russia declared that they would not tolerate the abolition of the "liberum veto" and some other reforms. The measures adopted related to the simplification of parliamentary procedure, the

abolition of the oath binding deputies to follow the instructions of the local assemblies they represented, the creation of executive committees in matters relating to the State Treasury and the Army, changes in the judiciary, the protection of cities against the wilfulness of the nobility, and improvement of the methods of taxation, particularly of import duties, and the limitation of the power of the nobles in judicial rights over the peasants. They legalized proxy representations at elections, and excluded foreigners from candidacy to the Polish throne. Henceforth, only a Polish noble, Roman Catholic in faith, could be elected. They also recognized the imperial title of the Russian monarchs, which former Diets had refused to do, as well as the royal title of the Elector of Brandenburg, and confirmed the cession of Courland to Biron. The opposition declared all the laws passed by the "Family" Diet not binding, and left the capital. They were punished by a loss of all offices held by them, and their supporters were pursued by the Russian troops sent against them. The "Family" did not hesitate to adopt most radical measures against their opponents, many of whom, like Branicki and Radziwill, went abroad. Their estates were sequestered. Thus far everything had gone well for the Czartoryskis, but their first disappointment came when the Russian Empress expressed a wish to see her former lover Poniatowski, rather than Prince August Czartoryski, on the Polish throne. The Czartoryskis had to respect her wish, but at the election at which Stanislaw August Poniatowski, then thirty-two years old, was elected King of Poland, only five thousand electors were present. In the *pacta conventa* he swore to respect the laws of the nation, the privileges of the nobility, the enactments of the convocation diet, and to

establish a military school for the nobles. Contrary to the time-honored custom, his coronation took place



FIG. 146—STANISŁAW AUGUST PONIATOWSKI (1764-1795)

in Warsaw and not in Cracow, on November 25, 1764, on the name's-day of the Russian Empress.

The new King, son of the Castellan of Cracow and the Princess Constance Czartoryska, was a man of broad but superficial education, refined tastes, considerable ability, good breeding, soft manners, but of weak character. He was well-intentioned, but had no strong moral principles, was vain, egotistic and effeminate. He took great pride in receiving the Order of the Prussian Black Eagle from "so great a man" as Frederick the Second, felt no impropriety in receiving a regular salary from Catherine, whom he extolled as "the great Empress" and whose love made him "the happiest of men." The perspicacious Empress well knew his sentimental and feeble character, and decided to make him a tool in carrying out political plans, laid jointly by her and her friend Frederick of Prussia. It was the King in Prussia who protested most vigorously against the Empress giving her consent to the abolition of the "liberum veto" when the new King asked for it before the coronation Diet assembled.

At this Diet the Czartoryskis clearly realized that the support Russia had given them was not meant to benefit Poland, but only to afford an opportunity for interference in internal affairs. The Russian Ambassador proposed an alliance for offensive and defensive purposes, and informed the assembly that should such an alliance be made the Empress would consent to the increase of the Polish army from twenty-four thousand, set by the Dumb Diet of 1717, to fifty thousand. He proposed a rectification of the Russo-Polish frontier which would have given a considerable stretch of territory to Russia, and the restoration of certain rights to the dissidents. The Prussian Ambassador took occasion at this time to

**Stanislaw  
August  
Poniatowski,  
1764-1795**

**The Reforms  
of the  
"Family"**



inform the Diet that his sovereign regarded the contemplated tariff reform with disfavor. The Diet realized that the increase in the army was greatly needed, but that an alliance with Russia for offensive purposes would be detrimental to Poland, making her a vassal of Russia and leading to unnecessary wars. Accordingly, they informed the Empress that an alliance for defensive purposes would be agreeable, but no common cause could be made with Russia for purposes of foreign aggression. They also informed Catherine that the privileges she requested for the "dissidents" could not be granted. The Prussian Ambassador was asked to state to his sovereign that the matter of taxation was an internal matter and his interference with reference to it was resented.

As a result of these bold expressions by the Diet, the Czartoryskis lost standing in St. Petersburg, and the Russian Ambassador received instructions to work against them and to revive the former anarchy by all available means. It was not very difficult to foment trouble at that time when the great body of people was hostile to the high-handed methods of the "Family" and to the person of the foppish King, elected by a handful of paid retainers under the protection of the troops of his former paramour, who paid his debts, financed his election campaign and carried him on her annual payroll. Despite the fact that the King, in the words of the Russian Ambassador, "considered the Russian interests as his own," he nevertheless tried to remedy some of the ills of his native country. At the Diet of 1766 he again introduced a measure aimed at the restriction of the liberum veto, and the adoption of the principles of a majority vote. This gave an opportunity to Repnin, the Russian Ambassador, to start his campaign

Russian In-  
trigue against  
the "Family"

against the King and the "Family." He declared that the Empress would never consent to the majority vote because "such a basis for law enactment could not be reconciled with the freedom of the nation." The measure failed of passage and the seeds of discord sown by Russian and Prussian agents soon bore fruit. With the aid of the unspeakable Gabriel Podoski, a priest soon afterwards made Primate as a prize for the services rendered to Russia, Repnin organized a confederacy at Radom, ostensibly with the purpose of overthrowing the King and his party. Russia feared the "Family," not the King. They knew he was a man without character, with whom they could do as they pleased. It was easier, however, to form the Confederacy under this slogan. The coarse and shallow Prince Charles Radziwill, who had fled after Poniatowski's election and whose large estates had been sequestered by Russia, was asked to become the Marshal of the Confederacy. For the return of his estates he promised to do everything the Empress might demand of him. A Russian agent was assigned to guide this scion of a proud and ancient family in his abject servility to a foreign sovereign.

When the Confederacy was organized a large Russian army arrived at Radom, and then Repnin demanded of the surprised and dumb-founded Confederates an expression of loyalty to King Poniatowski, for the dissenters equal rights with Roman Catholics and required the recognition of the Russian Empress as the guarantor of the cardinal laws of the Republic. Russian bayonets exacted an acquiescence in all of the demands of Repnin. At the confederation Diet, held with the King's approval in October, 1767, Repnin presented his program, which in-

**The Radom  
Confederacy,  
1767**

cluded the abolition of all the disabilities of the dissidents, a new constitution and an alliance with Russia. When a strong opposition arose, Repnin, to facilitate matters, demanded the appointment of a commission with power to act. This project was vigorously opposed by Kayetan Soltyk, the Bishop of Cracow, Joseph Zaluski, the Bishop of Kieff, the Field Hetman Watslav Rzewuski and his son Severin. All of them were arrested by Repnin's soldiers and taken to Kaluga in Russia. The outrage committed caused a storm of indignation. After it had quieted down and the assembly had satisfied itself by sending a deputation with a request for release of the the captive senators, business was resumed and Repnin was able to prevail upon the Diet to appoint a commission to work out jointly with him the new constitution.

The new instrument assured to the dissidents religious and political rights equal to those enjoyed by the Roman Catholics. It may be of interest to note that the total number of dissidents, that is, Protestants and adherents of the Uniate Church in whose behalf that magnanimous Russian sovereign pleaded so vigorously, was at the time, in Poland, somewhat over a million, or eight per cent. of the population of the Republic. With only one exception the proposed constitution abolished all the reforms of the Convocation Diet of 1764, and retained the free elections, the unanimity of decision in almost all matters of importance, the liberum veto and the prerogatives of the nobility. The hetmans were elevated to senatorial dignity and Russia became the guarantor of the Constitution. All these provisions were adopted by the Diet without any discussion, and with but one loud voice of protest, that of Joseph Wybicki. This was

**The Second  
Dumb Diet,  
1768**

the only demonstration of hostility and resentment by the assembled poltroons, for whom personal safety was superior to honor and the fate of their country.



FIG. 147—JOSEPH WYBICKI, Soldier and Patriot

The true expression of the outraged feelings of those who saw the iniquitous designs of Russia and resolved to save the country from the slavery into which a part of the nobility was willing to engulf her for personal profit or preferment, can be found in the Confederacy which was organized “pro religione et libertate” at the town of Bar, on the Dniester, in Podolia, chiefly by the middle class gentry under the

**The Bar  
Confederacy,  
1768-1772**

leadership of Bishop Adam Krasinski, his brother Michael and the elderly, but still fiery and active, Joseph Pulaski and his three sons, one of whom, Kazimir, subsequently became the distinguished hero of the American War for Independence. The highly patriotic and exalted movement of protest and resentment was so elemental and spontaneous that it



(J. Styka)

FIG. 148—KAZIMIR PULASKI, Soldier and Patriot,  
Hero of the American Revolution. Died in the Battle of Savannah

lacked sufficient organization and planning. The Confederates had such faith in their holy cause and were so certain of universal support that they neglected making the necessary preparations before hoisting the flag in defense of their country and its liberties and religion against foreign aggression. When

the news of the formation of the Confederacy reached the King and the Senate they decided to persuade the leaders to abandon the venture and at the same time to apprise the Russian Ambassador of it and request his support if need be. The impetuous and shrewd Repnin did not wait for the result of the conferences of the King's envoy with the Confederates, but gathered his army and requested the aid of the Polish crown troops in his campaign against the insurgents. Francis Xavier Branicki led the Polish crown regiments which joined the Russians and took by assault the towns of Bar and Berdychov. The Confederates were forced to withdraw, and in their retreat were harassed by the Cossacks and Ukranian peasants who, incited by their priests and the agents of the Russian government, burned and sacked defenseless towns and manors and murdered the people sparing neither women nor children. The frontier freebooters and brigands, known as haydamaks, again laid waste the country which had been rebuilt and restored laboriously after the devastating Cossack wars. Wantonly and cruelly they pillaged and massacred. The carnage in the city of Humań is one of the most revolting chapters in the history of that province, rife as it is, with bloodshed and destruction.

In spite of lack of organization, internal dissensions, checks and defeats, the Confederacy gained increasing support all over the country, not only among the lower strata of society but among the magnates as well, who at first had carefully stayed away. A butcher, by the name of Morawski, the shoemaker Szczygiel, and a Cossack Sawa Calinski, distinguished themselves by their valor and devotion, as did the saintly monk, Father Mark Jandolowicz, who formed a special brotherhood of the Knights of the Holy Cross. The managing board of the Con-



(Sculpture by Kazimír Chodźiński)

FIG. 149—MONUMENT ERECTED BY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AT WASHINGTON IN MEMORY OF PULASKI

federacy, or its general staff, was unable to unify the direct movement adequately. The brilliant achievements of Kazimir Pulaski, Zaremba, Dierzanowski and of Dumouriez, sent by France, were in vain because of the lack of coherence and unity in the directing body, the majority of whom consisted, by this time, of magnates who desired to overthrow the King. This policy was unfortunate because when the wavering King and the "Family" were ready to join the Confederacy, the treacherous Primate Podolski, acting in behalf of the Russian Government, insisted upon the dethronement, and in this way all chance of a united action against Russia was frustrated. The King was forced back upon Russia, where he again sought support, and France, which during the ministry of Choiseul had supported the Confederates with money and experienced officers, became somewhat alienated when the Governing Board refused to join hands with the King. The other and most faithful foreign ally of the Confederacy was Turkey which declared war against Russia in 1768, giving as its cause the illegal activities of that government in Poland. Unfortunately for the Confederacy, the Turkish army was no match for the Russian naval and land forces under Admiral Orloff and General Rumiantseff. The successes of Russia cooled the Austrian sympathies for the Confederates. In 1767 Maria Theresa was ready to send her troops to free Poland and the King from the outrages and insults of Repnin. She was prevented from doing so by Frederick of Prussia, who threatened war if she carried out her plans. Her heir, Joseph II, did not share her views. Back in 1769 he had conferred with Frederick with reference to Poland. The next year they again met at Neustadt in Moravia. As a result of this conference Austria, under the pretext of the necessity of rectifica-



tion of her frontiers, wrested away a considerable part of the Province of Cracow, and Prussian troops occupied West Prussia up to Great Poland in order "to establish quarantine against plague" which Frederick "feared" could be carried into his domains. At the end of the year Frederick sent his brother to St. Petersburg to negotiate the first partition of Poland.

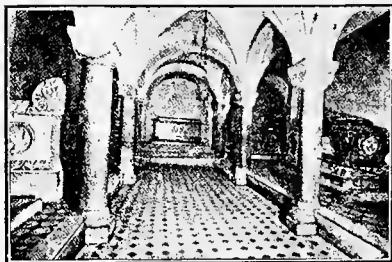


FIG. 150--ST. LEONARD'S CRYPT IN  
THE CATHEDRAL OF CRACOW

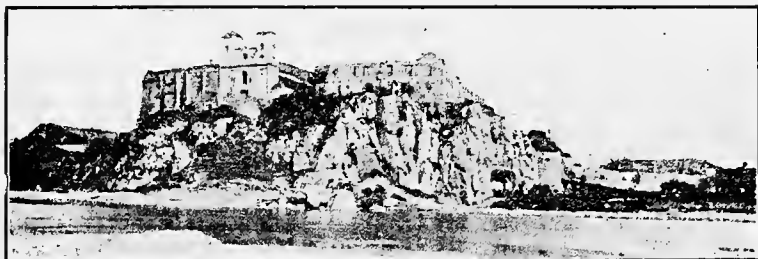


FIG. 151—THE CASTLE OF TYNIEC ON THE VISTULA

## CHAPTER XV.

### The Three Partitions

At the conferences which Frederick the Great held with Marie Theresa's heir at Nissa in 1769 and at Neustadt in 1770, the Russian victories over the Turks and their possible consequences were discussed. Frederick feared Russian aggrandizement in the South. It was to his interest to preserve a strong Porte which could be advantageously utilized in the event of a Prussian war either with Russia or Austria. Despite the recent enmity between Prussia and Austria, by a deft presentation to the future Austrian sovereign of the dangers to which the Holy Roman Empire would be exposed by Russia's conquest of Moldavia and Wallachia, he easily won the acquiescence of the young and vainglorious Joseph II in his selfish scheme of protecting Turkey in the possession of Moldavia and compensating Russia with territories in Poland. Such an arrangement was doubly advantageous, for it checked Russia in the south and by upsetting the existing balance of political influence it opened the way for Prussian and Austrian claims to similar shares of the Polish Republic. Frederick's

**The First  
Partition,  
August 5, 1772**

plan was well thought out, and its accomplishment would have enabled him to secure the much coveted West or Royal Prussia without cost. He was determined to carry the scheme through. His brother's mission at the Russian capital in 1770 had been to secure Catherine's consent to it, but the Russian Empress and her advisors, Panin and Chernishev did not cherish the idea of sharing Poland with other powers. To all intents and purposes Catherine was already mistress of the country. This condition served to intrench Maria Theresa in her adverse attitude to the scheme. The Austrian Empress had been opposed to the dismemberment of Poland and for that reason supported the Bar Confederacy, giving shelter to the General Board of that organization. In 1771 Maria Theresa approached Turkey and made an alliance with the Ottomans for the reconquest of Moldavia, with a further joint agreement to insist upon the territorial integrity of Poland. The plans alarmed Russia, and, fearing the strengthening of the alliance by the entry of Prussia, she submitted to the insistence of Frederick and agreed to cede Moldavia in return for a share in the partition of Poland. This caused Austria to retrace her steps. On February 19, 1772, the agreement of partition was signed in Vienna. A previous agreement between Prussia and Russia had been made in St. Petersburg on February 6, 1772. Early in August the Russian, Prussian and Austrian troops simultaneously entered Poland and occupied the provinces agreed upon among themselves. On August 5, 1772, the occupation manifesto was issued, much to the consternation of a country too exhausted by the heroic endeavors of the Bar Confederacy to offer further resistance.

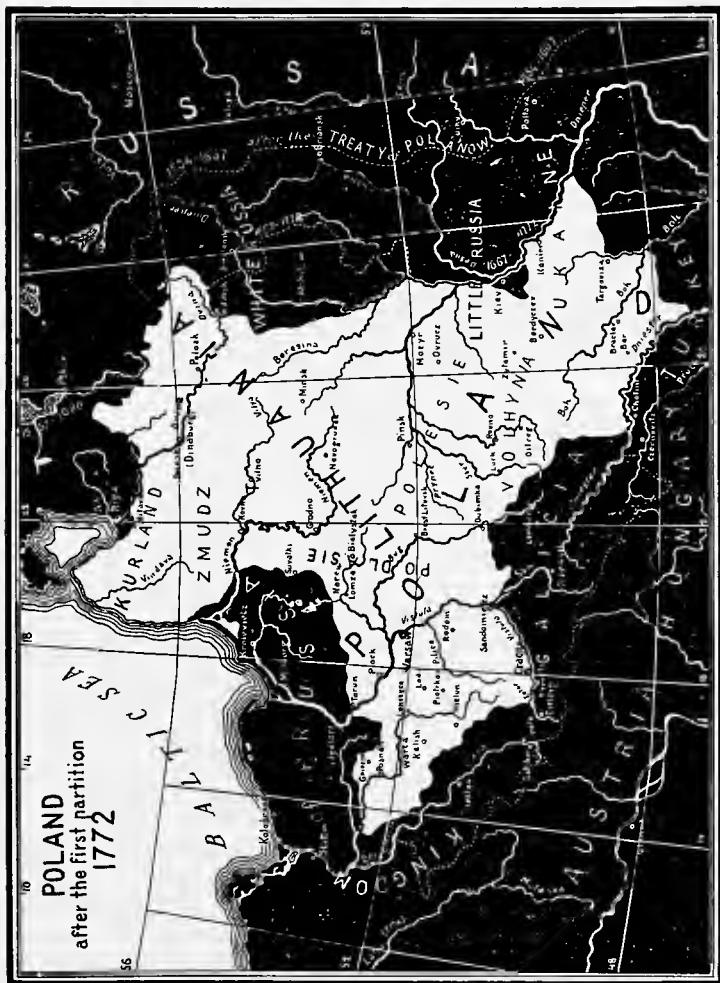
The regiments of the Bar Confederacy, whose executive board had been forced to leave Austria after that country joined the Prusso-Russian conspiracy, did not lay down their arms. Every fortress in their command held out to the very last round of ammunition and the last ounce of food. Famous was the defence of Tyniec, which lasted until the end of March, 1773, and also that of Czenstochowa commanded by Pulaski. Cracow fell on April 28th, captured by the Russian general Suvorov who exiled the heroic garrison to Siberia. Neither France nor England, upon whom such great hopes had been based, helped in a sufficient measure or protested when the greatest crime in modern times was committed. So came to a tragic end the noble but ill-organized attempt of patriotic Poland to save itself from foreign aggression. It had cost about a hundred thousand men and once more laid the unfortunate country waste, but in the words of Professor Sokolowski, "it was the first demonstration of the reviving national conscience, the first armed protest before the eyes of Europe against outrage and unheard-of oppression."\*

The dismemberment treaty was ratified by its signatories on September 22, 1772. Frederick was elated with his success; Kaunitz was proud of wresting as large a share as he did, with the rich salt mines of Bochnia and Wieliczka; and Catherine "never signed a diplomatic document with greater satisfaction." By this "diplomatic document" Russia came into possession of that section of Livonia which had still remained in Polish hands, and of White Russia embracing the counties of Vitebsk, Polotsk and Mscislaw; Prussia took Warmia and West Prussia

**The End of  
the Bar  
Confederacy**

**The Spoils of  
Russia, Prussia  
and Austria**

\*1. c. vol. III, p. 418.



as far as the Netze and embracing the county of Pomerania, without the city of Danzig, the counties of Malborg, Chelmno, without the City of Thorn, and some districts in Great Poland; and to Austria fell Zator and Oswiecim, part of Little Poland embracing parts of the counties of Cracow and Sandomir and a great portion of Ruthenia, in other words, the whole of Galicia, less the City of Cracow. By this partition Poland lost about thirty per cent. of her territory, amounting at that time to about 484,000 square miles, and about four million of her people. The largest share of the spoils, as far as population and revenue were concerned, went to Austria.

After having occupied their respective territories, in brazen arrogance, the three robber governments demanded that the King and the Diet approve their action. The King appealed to the nations of Western Europe for help and tarried with the convocation of the Diet. When, as usual, no help was forthcoming and the armies of the combined enemies occupied Warsaw to compel by force of arms the calling of the assembly, no alternative could be chosen save passive submission to their will. Those of the senators who advised against this desperate step were, after the well-known Russian fashion, arrested and exiled to Siberia by the representatives of the Tsarina. The local land assemblies refused to elect Deputies to the Diet, and after great difficulties less than half of the regular number of representatives came to attend the session, most of them men of degraded character, led by Adam Lodzia Poninski, the commander of the Malta Order, a cynic and notorious gambler, willing to undertake anything for money. In order to prevent the disruption of the Diet and the defeat of the purpose of the despoilers he

**The Diet  
of 1773 and  
the Treaty  
of Cession**

undertook to turn the regular Diet into a Diet of a Confederacy, where majority rule prevailed. In spite of the dramatic efforts of Thaddeus Reytan, Samuel Korsak and others to prevent it, the deed was accomplished with the aid of Michael Radziwill and the dishonorable Bishops Mlodzieyowski, Masalski, and Ostrowski, who occupied high positions of State and who were ready to sell their country and honor for Russian gold. The Diet elected a committee of thirty to deal with the various matters presented. On September 18, 1773, the Committee formally signed the treaty of cession, renouncing all claims of Poland to the territories taken from her.

While the committee was still in session the news reached Poland that Pope Clement XIV had dissolved the Order of the Jesuits. The lay members of the Committee argued for the retention of the Order in Poland, the ecclesiastical members for its dissolution. The opinion of the ecclesiastics prevailed, and with it came the question of the disposition of the properties of the Order and of the organization of popular education which had hitherto been, with such disastrous effect, in the hands of the Jesuits. It was voted that the government take over all the Jesuit schools and apply the income from the Jesuit estates to educational purposes. A special commission known as the Educational Commission was created to take charge of the schools of the country. In this manner education was secularized, and the first State Board of Education in Europe was established. In spite of the fact that more than half of the Jesuit estates, worth over forty million Polish guildens, was stolen by the members of the Parliamentary Committee of Thirty, which with such light heart had subscribed to the act of foreign spoliation,

**The First  
State Board  
of Education  
in Europe**

enough was left to put the schools of the country on an adequate basis. The Commission had broad powers and set about its work in a most enthusiastic and competent manner. Among its moving spirits were some of the most enlightened men of the time, such as Hugo Kollontay, from whom Thomas Paine



FIG. 152—HUGO KOLLONTAY (1750-1812)  
Statesman, Educator and Historian

received many of his ideas on education; John Sniadecki, a mathematician of great renown; Stanislaw Staszyc, the foremost political thinker of the time, and many others. Some of the most prominent men of Europe were consulted on various matters, and many, like Dupont de Nemours and others, visited



Poland as advisers and remained as university instructors. The scope of the work of the Commission was immense. They organized and modernized the whole range of schools, beginning with the village parochial school and extending to the universities. A modern astronomical observatory was built at Cra-

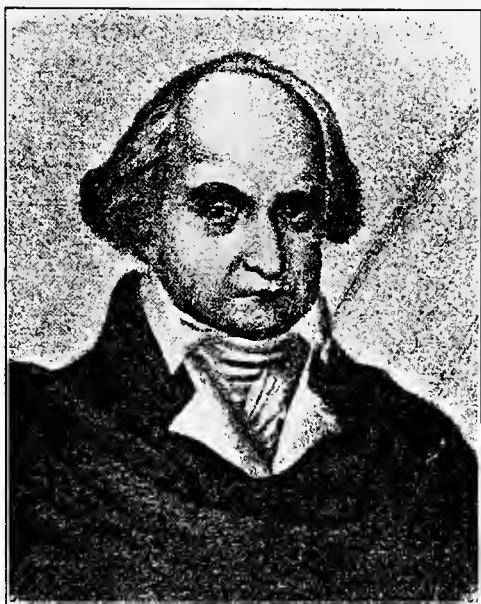


FIG. 153—JAN ŚNIADECKI (1756-1830)

Rector of the University of Wilno, mathematician, author of a monumental work on "Physico-Mathematical Geography of the Earth" and precursor of Auguste Comte in philosophy.

cow; a well equipped chemical laboratory was established; and a school of surgery was opened, where human cadavers were used for instruction. At the University of Wilno the astronomical department was enriched by new instruments of precision, and chairs were established for the teaching of natural

history, chemistry and anatomy. Andrew Sniadecki, brother of John, author of a celebrated work on the "Theory of Organic Beings," taught chemistry and medicine, Jundzill—botany and Joachim Lelewel—history. Other sciences found equally remarkable exponents at the University of Wilno.

A school of engineering, a conservatory of music and an institute for the deaf and dumb were founded. A special council, known as the Society for Element-

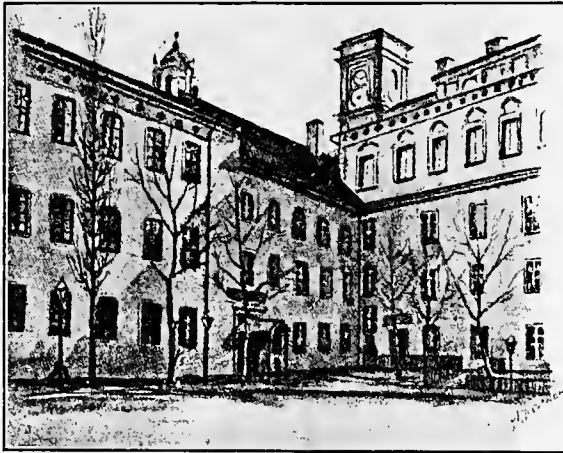


FIG. 154—THE MAIN HALL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WILNO

ary Education, whose task it was to prepare suitable text-books, was created. The Commission trained teachers and vigorously fought all the obstacles thrown in its way by old modish folk who resented the reforms and the secularization of instruction. The Jesuits and low, ignorant clergy obstructed the progress of the work with the persistence of fanatics. Despite all the difficulties the Commission accomplished a great work, raised the standard of the education of the people, and gave stimulus to regenera-

tion of science, literature and civic righteousness. The brilliant achievements of the movement may serve as one of the many extant proofs that the nation was sound and healthy and that its political depravity was limited to those elements of reaction whom France was able to drown in the mighty tide of the Revolution and whom the newly born American nation expelled from its midst. The large numbers of active workers throughout the land and the hearty support given by the nation to the labors of reform, crowned as they were with marked success, testify to the fact that below, what Mickiewicz later called, the "cold dirty lava" burned a fire of new life which even a century of calamities and disappointments could not extinguish. Hampered by foreign intervention Poland could not, like France and the United States, rid itself of this hardened crust of "dirty lava." The political corruptionists and reactionaries were in a position to carry on their wicked work.

In addition to the act of bestowing princely titles upon their ringleaders, such as Poninski, Masalski, Xavier Branicki, and approving those given by the Emperor to the Lubomirskis, Sulkowskis and Jablonowskis, the above mentioned parliamentary committee made certain changes in the constitution of the State. The various labors of that committee which lasted for two years, were finally submitted to the Confederation Diet on March 27, 1775. Attempts were again made to protest against the highhanded actions of the committee which signed the act of cession, but were of no avail. The constitutional changes made by the committee brought the country back to the political framework adopted at Repnin's command by the Second Dumb Diet in 1768, with but four modifications. The first

**The Changes  
in the Con-  
stitution and  
the Permanent  
Council**

concerned the limitation of the rights of dissidents, to which the Russian Ambassador made no vigorous objections. The matter had already been made use of to intrench Russian influence in Poland, and a new constitutional departure in that respect gave Russia but another opportunity to interfere on behalf of the oppressed dissenters should her interests demand it. The other new features in the constitution specified that only a Polish nobleman holding property within the boundaries of the Republic could become King, and that sons and grandsons of a King might mount the Polish throne only after two successive reigns had terminated since the death of the royal father or grandfather. The constitution also provided for a Permanent Council to take charge of the administration of the country. The Council was to consist of thirty-six members, eighteen Senators and eighteen Deputies, elected by ballot every two years by the Diet. The King was president of the Council which was subdivided into five departments: foreign affairs, police, war, justice and treasury. Corresponding ministers headed the respective departments and had special counsellors assigned to them. The decisions of the departments were subject to the approval of the majority of the Council. By this arrangement the King was stripped of every semblance of power. Henceforth he could do nothing without the consent of the Council and appointments to the various State offices could be made by him only from among the candidates presented by the Council. The power of the hetmans was similarly reduced. The army was increased to thirty thousand, new indirect taxes were introduced, and salaries were paid to the executive officers of the government. The Russian Empress became the guarantor of the Constitution.

The new constitution, although it retained the vicious old principles of liberum veto, free royal elections, and similar impractical measures, contained, nevertheless, many useful provisions. It created a strong centralized government with a considerable army at its disposal to enable it to carry out its provisions. In spite of the fact that the members of the Permanent Council were all subservient to Russia and ready to obey the Russian minister in every respect, and although they farmed out to themselves various State and municipal monopolies bringing millions in income, and voted for themselves immense life pensions, yet they were successful in restoring order in the country, in raising taxes, paying the civil and military officers and in stimulating industry, agriculture and commerce. After the first partition, the Republic still occupied an area of 344,000 square miles, and had a population of seven and a half millions. Previous anarchy and guerilla warfare had brought industry and farming almost to a standstill. Alongside of those who insanely squandered fortunes in the orgies of gambling, debauchery and gaiety, there were those who saw the paramount need of the economic upbuilding of the country. Encouraged by the government, many magnates and burghers invested their money in factories, and industrial and financial enterprises. Most active in this respect was Anthony Tyzenhaus, a wealthy Lithuanian potentate, who built cloth, linen and paper mills and who played an important part in the industrial reorganization then taking place. The King established a porcelain factory near Warsaw and a steel plant in the iron region. In four years the export trade of the country rose from twenty-two to one hundred and ten million. New roads and waterways were built and the old ones

The  
Improvement  
in Economic  
and Social  
Conditions

improved. The nobility of the County of Brest-Litevski undertook, at its own expense, the draining of the Polesie swamps and built the highways of Pinsk-Slonim and Pinsk-Vollhynia. Many a river was cleared and deepened and made fit for navigation. At the private expense of the Lithuanian Grand Hetman Prince Michael Kazimir Oginski, a canal, known until this day by his name, was dug, connecting the river



FIG. 155—ANTHONY TYZENHAUZ  
Magnate and Patron of Industries

Szczara, a tributary of the Niemen, with Jasiolda, a tributary of the Pripet, and thus was established a direct route between the Baltic and the Black Seas. A similar waterway, known as the Royal Canal, was built by uniting the river Pina, a tributary of the Pripet, with the river Muchawiec, flowing into the Bug. General prosperity increased. Crops were good and in order to improve the farming methods and increase their productivity, many magnates

undertook extensive reforms and liberated their peasants. Numerous writers, mostly of physiocratic convictions, pointed out the need of such reforms, but the great mass of the landed gentry was in determined opposition to them, and entertained their old attitude of contempt toward the peasants and burghers. In 1776 the Lithuanian cities were deprived of autonomy and the project of Andrew Zamoyski, aiming at the removal of certain disabilities and the imposition of certain duties on the clergy, was publicly cut to pieces, to the great satisfaction of Stackelberg, the Russian Ambassador at Warsaw, who maintained that the measure advocated by Zamoyski was contrary to the liberties guaranteed by Russia.

Simultaneously with the economic awakening of the country came the revival of science, literature and art, fostered by the magnates and particularly by the King. His palace was equipped with physical and chemical laboratories, an astronomical observatory, a rare library of old and new works, a numismatic collection and a splendid art gallery. From abroad he brought a number of highly skilled craftsmen, artists and sculptors, among whom Bacciarelli and Lebrun should especially be mentioned. The greatest minds and masters of the time met at his famous "Thursday dinners" where scientific, artistic and political subjects and ideas were presented and discussed in their academic as well as practical aspects. The King was keenly interested in the application of scientific discoveries to practical ends. The application of electricity to human therapy, vaccination against smallpox, aerial navigation in balloons, the lightning rod and other discoveries of the time had in him an ardent admirer and cham-

**The  
Renaissance  
in Art and  
Science**



FIG. 156—TYPE OF A POLISH GENTLEMAN OF THE END OF THE XVIII AND BEGINNING OF XIX CENTURY





FIG. 157—TYPE OF A POLISH LADY OF THE END OF THE XVIII  
AND BEGINNING OF XIX CENTURY

pion. It was due to his inspiration that Bishop Adam Naruszewicz undertook his celebrated critical "History of the Polish Nation." The "prince of poets," Bishop Ignatius Krasicki, was another member of the King's circle, to which also belonged the poet Stani-



FIG. 153—WOJCIECH BOGUSŁAWSKI, Founder of the first national theatre in Poland (1765)

slav Trembecki. Among the other cultural achievements of that time was the establishment of the first national theatre which saw such a brilliant development under the leadership of Wojciech Bogusławski, and the founding of the periodic literary magazines.

Philosophy, economics, pedagogy and political science had illustrious representatives in Hugo Kollontay, Stanislav Staszyc, Onufry Kopczynski, George Piramowicz, the Sniadeckis, the brothers Stroynowski, Wielhorski, Poplawski, Jezierski, Joseph Wybicki



FIG. 159—STANISLAV STASZYC (1755-1826)  
Educator, Philosopher, Statesman and Ardent Patriot

and others. The political writers of the time were chiefly under the influence of the Physiocrats and the Encyclopaedists. They advocated the abolition of serfdom, and proposed numerous land reforms and the recognition of the civic rights and economic needs

of the townspeople. Some, like Butrymowicz, argued for the equalization and polonization of the Jews. The pamphlet literature of that period is one of the richest in Europe. Among the leaders of the "third estate" two rose to particular prominence, the president of the City of Warsaw, John Dekert, and a lawyer by the name of Barss. Aided by the champions of social reform and particularly by the great genius of Staszyc and Kollontay, they organized a movement for the recognition of civic rights of the cities, which found a sympathetic echo in the middle class gentry.

The landowners had borne the brunt of the previous anarchy and misrule caused by the oligarchal magnates who based their power on the masses of impecunious nobles depending upon them for a living. The responsible, self-respecting middle class gentry, who once before had shown their patriotism by organizing the Bar Confederacy, joined hands with the responsible real estate owners of the cities to establish a strong government based on the land owning elements of the country, and on the complete or partial elimination of the "noble" proletariat. This was in accordance with the political ideals reaching Poland from the West. The reform or patriotic party, as it was called, counted among its adherents the most distinguished men of the time. Some of the magnates like the "Polish Aristides" Stanislaw Malachowski and the two brothers, Ignatius and Stanislaw Kostka Potocki, joined in the reform movement. The Czartoryskis favored the reform party as it was the only element in the country that openly championed freedom from Russian tutelage, whose dupes they had been and on account of which Polish state sovereignty had practically ceased to exist.

**The Reform  
Party**

The party that was most bitterly opposed to the reformers was, in the first place, composed of the very reactionary and inert elements among the nobility who were almost unanimously supported by the episcopate, and therefore by the entire church hierarchy. The most dangerous elements in the opposition, however, were not those who deprecated the reforms because of ignorance or conviction, but the ambitious and unscrupulous despoilers like Poninski, Xavier Branicki and others. Not only were they opposed to fundamental reforms, but seeing the moderately good work of the Permanent Council, attempted to influence the Russian Empress to overturn it. Anarchy was a much more profitable field for the rapacity of the magnates of their kind than an orderly government. The leadership of that element fell to Branicki, whose real name was Branecki, but who usurped the name of the ancient family of the Branickis after the last legal bearer of it, Hetman John Clement, died in 1771. Branecki was a man of the lowest instincts and of a most degraded character. He gained the first favors of Catherine by ruthlessly pursuing the Bar Confederates with the aid of the Russian Cossacks. The next steps were very easy. He became the owner of enormous riches and rapidly mounted from one dignity to another, until he became the Grand Hetman of the Crown. He then desired to restore to the office the great prerogatives it had possessed in the past and declared war on the Permanent Council which restricted it. His chief political associates were Felix Potocki, the Polish Croesus, who owned over three million acres of land and tens of thousands of serfs, the despicable Bishop Kossakowski and his brother Simon and Severin Rzewuski, erstwhile prisoner in Kaluga, whither he had been exiled for making pro-

The  
Opposition

tests against the iniquities of Russia at the Radom Diet of 1768. Like Michael Radziwill he found it much more convenient to dull his national sensibilities and, upon receiving high honors, went so far as to champion the retention of Russian influence in Poland and the former pernicious political and economic liberties. The great mass of thoughtless, landless, homeless, penniless nobility was always at the command of the magnates. Immense bands of these hungry, ignorant and lawless nobles, following blindly the command of their unscrupulous and ambitious masters were the greatest menace to the country and its free institutions, and the cause of its decline and eventual downfall.

Placed between the two political extremes was the compromise party of the King and his brother Michael, the primate. They desired to strengthen the country and its government, but discountenanced opposition to Russian influence. They favored only such changes as could be made without arousing the opposition of the Russian sovereign. It was a hopeless program in the face of Russia's watchfulness and her determination to preserve the golden liberties of the Polish nobility. Yet after the death of Frederick the Great in 1786, whose evil genius stood ever in the way of Poland's best efforts, the understanding reached in 1780 between Emperor Joseph II and Catherine in regard to Turkey was soon to be practically effected, and a change in the Russian policy was to be expected. In case of war with Turkey the support of Poland was of great value to Russia as it afforded the easiest route for the passage of troops as well as for the making of convenient junctures with the Austrian armies. Further-

**The Political  
Conferences  
with Catherine  
at Kaniow**

more, the rich south Polish granaries and cattle herds afforded abundant supplies for the provisioning of the Russian troops. In 1787 Catherine, on her way to Crimea, stopped at Kaniow to confer with King Poniatowski concerning a Russian-Polish alliance and some internal Polish matters. The leaders of the extreme pro-Russian party all flocked to Kaniow for secret political conferences with the Empress and her hero Potemkin, and pledged their support against Turkey for Russian assistance against the King and the lawful government she had guaranteed to support. She did not accept their offer at the time but reserved it for future utilization. The leaders of the reform party, on the other hand, saw in the impending difficulties of Russia a chance to get rid of her control and influence. Soon the country was called upon to decide which of the two ways should be followed: An alliance with Austria and Russia against Turkey and the further intrenchment of Russian influence in Poland, or a union with Prussia for the restoration of Polish sovereignty.

After the conference at Kaniow, the Russian Empress sent the Polish King a copy of the proposed Russo-Polish treaty. It guaranteed the territorial integrity of the allied countries and called for mutual help in the event of foreign invasion. It declared against all reforms in the Polish government, but contained consent to holding the next Diet as of a confederacy in order to prevent its dissolution and in order to carry through the alliance as well as to provide for an increase of the army. The need of the latter was well recognized by all parties, and made possible the unanimous consent to a confederacy diet where decisions were reached by a majority vote.

**The Project of  
a Russo-Polish  
Alliance**

The Diet met on October 6, 1788, in Warsaw and formed the confederacy. The two marshals of the confederacy, Stanislav Malachowski for the Crown and Kasimir Nestor Sapieha for Lithuania, belonged to the Patriotic party. Their election ensured consideration of the various reform measures and augured ill for the proposed alliance with Russia. In two weeks after the opening of the session the project to increase the army to one hundred thousand passed and a special military commission was established to supersede the War Department of the Permanent Council. The Russian Ambassador protested against this change and threatened war. The King and the Primate argued against the change but the general sentiment was very strongly in favor of it. It was pointed out that a department which was not responsible to the Diet and which was composed of men appointed at the request of a foreign government and subservient to it should not be given command of a large army. This view prevailed and despite the Russian threats the measure was adopted.

**The Four  
Years' Diet,  
1788-1792**

The severance of the Prusso-Russian entente, which since 1764 had hung over Poland as a sword of Damocles, and the Russian entanglement in a war with Turkey and Sweden, afforded the possibility of free action. Prussia, then in alliance with Great Britain and Holland, strained every effort to embolden the Diet and to estrange Poland from Russia, hoping by an alliance with Poland and a war with Austria to gain for herself the City of Thorn and the commercial port of Danzig, in return for the restoration of Galicia to the Republic. Albeit the request for the cession of these two cities was very firmly refused, the treaty with Prussia was made on March 27, 1790. It guaranteed

**The  
Alliance with  
Prussia, 1790**





FIG. 160—STANISLAV MALACHOWSKI (1736-1809)  
"The Polish Aristides." Statesman and Patriot, President of the Four Years' Diet

the integrity of the territorial possessions of the two countries and mutual help to the last in case of foreign invasion. Frederick Wilhelm II, the successor of Frederick the Great, was thus able to gain the confidence of Poland, much in need of protection and support to bring about the reformation of the government by which only she could be saved from inevitable destruction, and to which Russia was unqualifiedly opposed.

The alliance with Prussia and thus indirectly with England and Holland encouraged the Diet to break the treaty with Russia and to abolish the constitution which she had forced upon the country in 1775. This marks the beginning of Poland's emancipation from the demoralizing influence of Russia. Patriotic enthusiasm reached a high pitch, and it was found possible to pass a law subjecting the nobility to the payment of regular taxes which had hitherto been identified with slavery. Forty million guildens were needed annually to support the army alone on the footing voted by the Diet. Many new sources of revenue were devised, but it proved difficult to raise that amount for the war commission. The army could not, therefore, be increased to the desired one hundred thousand. The total net revenue did not exceed forty millions. It was, however, twice the amount which had been raised a few years before and was considered a great success and a testimonial to the executive ability of the government and the patriotic response of the country. It enabled the government to obtain considerable loans abroad. Ten millions was obtained in Holland alone. Because the Diet did not limit itself to the revisions of the Constitution, but discussed and considered many social and economic problems, its work became

The Accom-  
plishments of  
the Four  
Years' Diet

dilatory, particularly in view of the obstructionist tactics of the opposition. The civic rights of the cities were brought very strikingly to the attention of the Diet by the bold act of the President of Warsaw who, in November, 1789, brought together at the



FIG. 161—JAN DEKERT, MAYOR OF THE CITY OF WARSAW.  
LEADER OF THE "THIRD ESTATE" ..

capital the representatives of 141 Polish cities and jointly with them worked out a remarkable memorial which was submitted to the King and the Diet. By the enactment of April 18, 1791, the burghers received

the privilege of *neminem captivabimus* or *habeas corpus*, the right to own land and to hold any ecclesiastical, civil or military office. City home rule was restored and the representatives of the cities were admitted to the Diet to advise with reference to city matters. Many of the aristocrats asked to be entered among the citizens of the cities. In this wise a fundamental change in the political and social structure of the country took place without the employment of force or violence of any kind. This act of the Diet was but preliminary to the greater works of reform which it undertook.

After prolonged debates a new constitution was formulated. The Reform Party well realized that evolution does not proceed by leaps and refrained from adopting extreme measures advocated by the more radical wing of the party, which was under the spell of the principles of the French Revolution. To be doubly sure they submitted a draft of the constitution to the several land assemblies with a request that it be locally considered and that additional deputies be sent to the Diet to express the opinion of the country. Almost all of the local assemblies voted for the constitution, with the exception of the clause making the throne hereditary, and elected the supporters of the reform movement as their delegates. It was evident that sober thought had taken possession of the country when it realized that it had drifted too far in the wrong direction. At the time when the country had already suffered one dismemberment and was soon to be deprived of its birthright to a free life and to an unmolested development, it was perhaps riper than ever before for rational and orderly democratic self-government, as evidenced by the progress it made during the past two decades, the provisions of the

**The  
Constitution of  
May 3, 1791**

new constitution and the universal support it had received. In spite of the practically universal approval of the measures to be incorporated in the new constitution, the reformers hesitated to submit it to a vote lest the opposition, with the support of Russia, prevent its adoption. With the consent of the King, a coup d'état was agreed upon. The final draft of the new instrument was prepared in a small circle and the fifth of May was selected as the date on which it was to be adopted. This date was fixed for the reason that many of the members of the opposition were still away on their Easter vacation. Only reform sympathizers were apprised of the session. When the secret became known, the session was called for May 3rd, to prevent the arrival of the turbulent and obstructionist opposition. Haste was indicated as international conditions changed and the outlook grew gloomier after Pitt's plans of a joint war with Prussia and Poland against Russia came to naught. Moreover, at the Convention of Reichenbach, 1790, Austria, pressed by Prussia, consented to forego the war with Turkey, on the basis of a status quo, and Russia, having defeated the Turks, was eager for peace. The Prusso-Austrian understanding nullified the Prussian hopes of getting Thorn and Danzig in return for the restoration of Galicia to Poland. The need of forming a strong government as soon as possible became apparent and led to the coup d'état. On the third of May the Diet met in joint session at the Royal Palace, amidst great demonstrations and jubilation of the populace. After the reports of some of the Polish ambassadors were read to acquaint the deputies with the sinister significance of certain developments in foreign politics, the King submitted the draft of the proposed constitution. The reading of this short document proceeded amid the enthusi-



FIG. 162—"POLONIA," A SYMBOLIC PICTURE OF THE CONSTITUTION OF MAY 3rd, 1791, by Jan Szyka. Bought by the City of Lemberg to commemorate the one hundredth anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution

astic applause of the visitors and the hisses of the opposition. Although Branicki's underlings were present in full array and one of the deputies, by the name of Suchorzewski, made a theatrical display of emotion to manifest his resentment at the way "a revolution had been hatched that liberty may perish," yet the opposition were unable to frustrate the plans of the reformers. The Assembly adopted the constitution and anon the procession went to the Cathedral of St. John to witness the solemn oath the King took to respect and defend it.

The new constitution did not deprive the nobility of their privileged position. It similarly recognized Roman Catholicism as the prevailing religion but assured liberty and protection to all other creeds. The laws of April 18, 1791, concerning the cities, were all incorporated in the new constitution.

**The Provisions of the New Constitution**

Protection was given to the peasants in their relations with the landlords but serfdom and patrimonial jurisdiction were retained. While the ancient social organization was left practically unchanged, the form of government underwent considerable modification. "By the will of the people" it was made to consist of three distinct branches: the legislative, executive and judicial. The legislative authority was vested in the Diet, composed of the House of Deputies and the Senate. The deputies of the nobility were to be considered representatives of the whole nation and not of the several electoral districts as hitherto. All laws originated in the House of Deputies, the Senate approved them or suspended them until the next Diet. The Senate was composed of bishops, woyevodas, castellans and ministers. The Diet was to meet regularly every two years. It could, however, be called at any other time to consider special matters

requiring immediate attention. Every twenty-five years an extraordinary session was to be called to consider amendments to the constitution. All decisions at the Diets were to be taken by a majority vote. *Liberum veto* was abolished, as were also the confederacies. The executive power was vested in the King and in the special council, known as the "Guardian of the Laws," composed of the Primate in his capacity of President of the Education Commission, and of five ministers, appointed by the King for a term of two years, and responsible before the Diet. The ministers were of: Police, the Seal, War, Treasury and Foreign Affairs. The King had the power to appoint the executive officials. He also nominated the bishops and military officers. All the members of the executive branch of the government were to receive stipulated salaries. The King had the power to pardon criminal offenders. In the event of war, the King was to be commander-in-chief of the army. The throne in Poland was to be hereditary in the direct line of the King. In case of extinction of the royal family, a king was to be elected and then the throne made again hereditary in his line. Upon ascending the throne every king was required to take an oath on the constitution and on the *pacta conventa*. The judicial organization remained practically unchanged. The judges in the courts of the nobility were elective as before. There were separate courts for the cities and separate courts for the free peasants. Serfs were dependent on patrimonial jurisdiction. Appeals were to be taken to the tribunals.

To be sure, the new constitution was not perfect when judged by our present-day democratic standards. It was, however, a long stride in the right direction, undertaken amidst extremely difficult



conditions. It corrected the vices of the former fundamental laws and gave the country a solid foundation and a strong responsible government. In the words of Professor Lewicki, "it was the middle ground between the ancient institutions and the extreme doctrines of the French revolution." \* The paragraph in the constitution providing for special sessions every twenty-five years to consider amendments is worthy of notice, as it is characteristic of Polish political thought, which never recognized fixity of form in social and political life. In its evolutionary conception of law, expressed as far back as the XIVth century, in the Wiślica statute, Poland had been a precursor and leader. The French Revolution set out to create an "absolute" constitution which would guarantee "absolute rights of man"; the makers of the Polish constitution of 1791 held the view, now generally recognized, that a constitution should be an expression of the relation of all the living and active forces operating within a nation. In accordance with this principle they readily recognized the rights of the burghesses as soon as they perceived that the cities were really conscious of their interests and willing as well as able to fight for their recognition. As the peasants of the time lacked political vitality and made no demands for their rights, their social status was not changed. They received protection from all kinds of iniquities as minors would. It was, however, expected that in another quarter or half century the peasants would develop their own economic consciousness and make political demands. To meet such and similar conditions the provision for periodic revisions of the constitution was devised.

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\* Zarys Historji Polskiej. Vth Edition, Warsaw, 1913, p. 363.

The best test of the new constitution is to be found in its workings. Under it the country was transformed itself rapidly. Prosperity increased and law and order prevailed. Revenue came in regularly. The people were satisfied and the army was increased to fifty-seven thousand men, with an equipment of twenty-six thousand horses and over three hundred mortars. Unfortunately, the Patriotic Party, more concerned about seeing the reforms carried out than in occupying high positions, allowed some of the most important state offices to fall into the hands of the obstructionists. Two of the five members of the new Executive Council or the "Guardian of the Laws" were from among the reactionaries. Neither Branicki nor Rzewuski were deposed from hetmanic dignity and two other commanding positions in the army were given to young and inexperienced men, to Prince Joseph Poniatowski, the nephew of the King and to Prince Louis of Wurtemberg, son-in-law of Adam Czartoryski and brother of the Austrian Empress and also brother of the wife of the heir to the Russian throne. The foreign prince turned traitor at a most critical moment, when Russian armies appeared in Poland to undo all the good work and exertions of the Patriotic Party and to put an end to the independence of the country, because it was endeavoring to eradicate past cankerous growths and to heal the wounds of the body politic. Russia well realized that the reforms adopted would make of Poland a strong and influential state and she was determined to prevent such a development as soon as sufficient forces could be despatched to Poland at the close of the war with Turkey (1792). Catherine remembered the assurances of support given to her by the powerful Polish magnates who had met her

Foreign  
Hostility to  
the New  
Constitution

at Kaniow in 1787 in the event of her undertaking to undo the "Jacobinic reforms" aimed at the suppression of the former anarchy. She resolved now to make use of these gentlemanly pledges. In addition to such abject and crass creatures as Xavier Branicki, Bishop Joseph Kossakowski, his brother Simon and a few others, there were certain elements in Poland which she could also utilize to carry out her iniquitous scheme. Many ambitious magnates, such as Felix Potocki and Severin Rzewuski, saw in the provisions of the new constitution a check to their inordinate lust of power and importance; to others, the idea of a hereditary throne was genuinely and honestly repugnant. The large host of irresponsible and indigent noblemen realized that under an orderly system of government their services to the magnates would depreciate in value and they would, in consequence, be deprived of an easy living. All these men could be marshaled to serve the cause of Russia.

While the Four Years' Diet was still at work reforming one thing after another, Branicki, Rzewuski, Felix Potocki and others held secret conferences with the Russian Empress and undertook to organize a confederacy with the object of overthrowing the government and abolishing the constitution. Protected by a large Russian army under General Kachowsky, the infamous Polish traitors issued their manifesto in the Ukrainian town of Targowica. Another Russian army under Krechetnikoff entered Lithuania, where Simon Kossakowski undertook to organize a similar confederacy. Here it was that the Prince of Wurtemberg, commanding the Lithuanian forces, betrayed by disorganizing the army and preventing it from offering determined resistance. Wilno, the capital of Lithuania, fell and it then be-

**The Confederacy of Targowica**

came impossible for the dismembered army under new leadership to hold the Russian advance. Many cities and fortresses fell in quick succession, and the rapid progress of the Russians reacted on the campaign carried on in the other part of Poland by Prince Poniatowski. He was compelled to retire before the superior forces of the enemy and with every retreat a new part of the country became a hunting ground of the Targowica band. By intimidation and compulsion they forced the nobility to join the cursed confederacy, but the results of their nefarious work were slim. Unfortunately, however, the successes of the Russian armies had entirely upset the faint-hearted King. He lost faith in the ability of the Polish army to withstand the invasion, although it exhibited great gallantry, particularly under Kosciuszko, and was growing in resistance as it concentrated. When Prussia proved to be an entirely unfaithful ally, and when Catherine, in spite of the assurance given of her grandson's accession to the throne of Poland, declined to make truce, the exasperated King, together with many of his ministers, apprehending Catherine's threats, joined the Confederacy. By his act he upset all chances of a successful defence. The Polish generals and other officers resigned in a body and together with many other patriots went abroad. The army, then in splendid fighting trim, became disorganized and fell a prey to the leaders of the Confederacy and of Russia. Large supplies of ammunition fell into the enemy's hands, as did the State Treasury. The national guard organized in the cities had to disband and all of the multifarious patriotic plans of defence collapsed. The Confederacy which, in spite of Russian assistance had been feeble and quarrelsome, suddenly came into power. When only a while ago they had found but twelve active supporters in

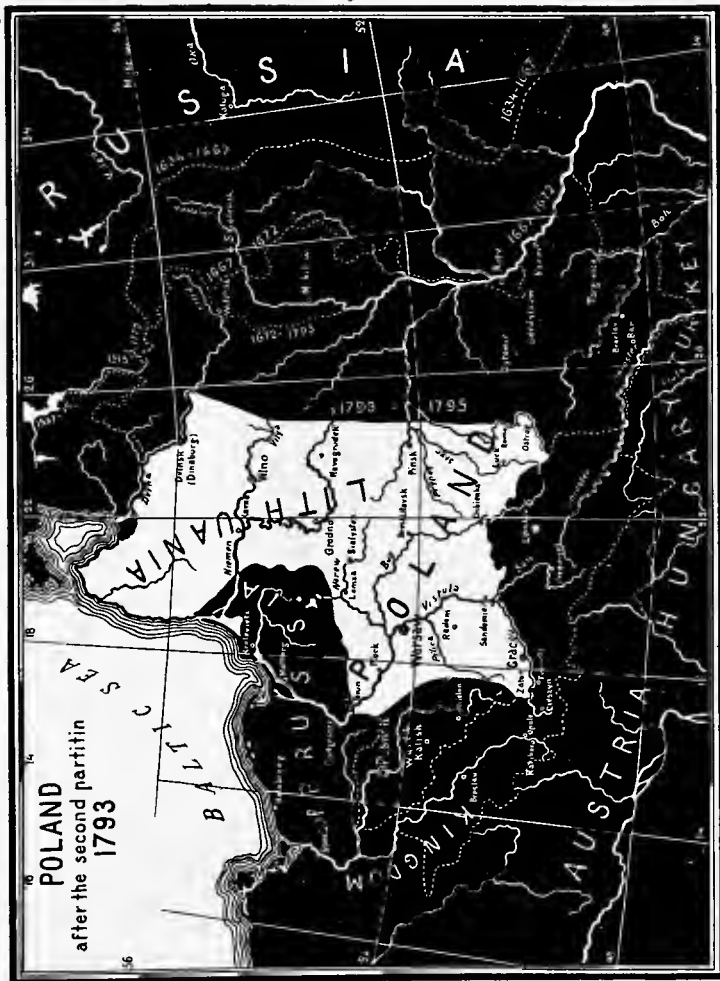
the whole of Great Poland and five in Mazovia, they now were masters of the situation. The Russian army took Warsaw and the confederates met at Grodno to annul all the reforms of the Four Years' Diet. Hardly were there ever greater misdeeds committed. The illustrious work of the patriots was undone with vengeance. Rapacity and corruption took its place. The fruits of the action of the Targowica leaders ripened quickly. Since then, in Poland the name of Targowica has been a terrible designation for national treason.

When the delegation of the ignominious Targowica Confederacy reached St. Petersburg to thank the Empress for the noble help afforded, the Empress for the noble help afforded, **The Second Partition of Poland, 1793** pourparlers were already going on concerning the further dismemberment of Poland. Prussia, suffering defeats from the republican Frenchmen, was bent upon recovering in Poland the losses suffered in the West and threatened with cessation of hostilities against France unless her demands were heeded. Fearing lest the threat be actually carried out, Russia and Austria consented to the second partition on January 23, 1793. Immediately following this treaty Prussian troops entered Poland and spread over Great Poland and other parts of the country. The City of Danzig resisted the invasion for over a month. A similarly obdurate resistance was offered by the City of Thorn until it finally fell under heavy bombardment. Proclamations of the Russian and Prussian governments were published and the adoption by Poland of the principles of the French Revolution was given as the reason for the second partition, and to add to their mockery they designated the Third of May as the day on which the occupied country was to render "homagium." The honest but misguided members

of the Governing Board of the Targowica Confederacy looked with consternation at what they had accomplished, and left the country. Others, like Felix Potocki, became Russian generals. Meanwhile the Russian Ambassador, Count Sievers, requested that the Diet assemble for the purpose of formally ceding to Russia and Prussia the territories occupied by the troops of the respective countries.

To ensure themselves of a desirable election both the Russian and Prussian ambassadors used every means conceivable to bribe or intimidate the local diets into sending representatives agreeable to their designs. The Diet, consisting of but six senators and one hundred and twenty deputies met at Grodno and despite the vouched for character of the deputies, refused to ratify the pillage. Only after the recalcitrant members were either arrested by the Russian soldiery guarding the city, or were stilled by threats of confiscation of their estates, and not until the King was deprived of the supply of food and the country menaced with war should further resistance be offered, did the Diet consent on the 23rd of July, 1793, to cede to Russia the counties of Minsk, Kieff, Bratslav, Podolia and the eastern districts of the counties of Wilno, Novogrodek, Podlasie and Volhynia, an immense territory with 3,800,000 inhabitants. In this way Russia took the remainder of White Russia, the remainder of Ukraine and Podolia and the eastern sections of Polesie and Volhynia. As to the claims of Prussia, the Diet remained obstinate and refused to sanction them. The territories taken by the Prussians were the richest of the country's domains and were autochthonously Polish. No threats availed. Finally, on September 23, 1793, when no vote could be taken because the deputies refused to answer ques-

The  
Last Diet



tions, Sievers by force compelled the King and the Marshal to sign the treaty of cession, by which Prussia acquired the cities of Thorn and Danzig, the coun-



FIG. 163—TADEUSZ KOŚCIUSZKO  
Monument by Antoni Popiel at Washington, D. C.

ties of Gnesen, Posen, Kalisz, Sieradz, the whole of Kujawy, the county of Wielun with the City of Czenstochowa, the counties of Plock and Rawa and parts



of Mazovia, Austria did not participate in the second dismemberment. Only 245,000 square kilometers with about three and a half million inhabitants, was left of Poland. With the main purpose of the Diet accomplished, Sievers requested that a new constitution be adopted, which, in almost every way was similar to that of 1775. This labor of the last Polish Diet was superfluous, as the months of the independence of the country were limited and the "people's rebellion" of Thaddeus Kosciuszko broke out sooner than even its organizers expected.

While the Grodno Diet was still in session, a group of patriots in Warsaw were laying plans for a revolution in which the whole nation was to take part. The brutality of the Russian and Prussian soldiery and the severe economic crisis which followed the Targowica venture, and the second dismemberment, brought about a state of mind in which one spark could cause a social conflagration. When Igelstrom, the new Russian Ambassador, requested that the Polish army, already weakened by the treacherous Polish hetmans, Kossakowski and Ozarowski, be reduced to half its size, Brigadier General Madalinski refused to submit to the order and struck at Ostrolenka. This was the tocsin that tolled general alarm. From house tops the revolution was proclaimed. Kosciuszko, who had gained fame during the American War for Independence and who had recently distinguished himself under Joseph Ponia-towski, was acclaimed Dictator. On March 24, 1794, he issued his famous manifesto in Cracow. Without waiting, having only four thousand troops and two thousand peasants armed with scythes, he proceeded against the Russians and at Raclawice gained a brilliant victory over a large body of them. The peas-

**The  
Rising of  
Kosciuszko,  
1794**



FIG. 164—THE PEASANT TROOPS OF KOSCIUSZKO IN PRAYER BEFORE THE BATTLE OF RACLAWICE  
(Painting by Joseph Chelmonski)  
(April 4, 1794)

ants exhibited wonders of chivalry and daring. Many a cannon was captured by them. In recognition of their patriotism and valor Kosciuszko issued a manifesto from his camp abolishing serfdom and granting to the peasants the ownership of the land



FIG. 165—COL. JAN KILINSKI, Patriot, Leader of the Warsaw populace

titled by them. The revolution gained impetus. Warsaw rose, and the population under the leadership of John Kilinski, a shoemaker, aided by a small Polish garrison, freed the city from Russian domination, taking over all the military stores and depots. Wilno soon followed Warsaw's example. Enthusiasm waxed

high. Even Jews, called upon by the distinguished Jewish Colonel Berek Joselowicz to rise, formed a regiment. The Russians were driven out everywhere and the traitors like Bishop Massalski, Bishop Kosakowski, hetman Ożarowski, hetman Kossakowski, Ankwicz and others were hanged. The effigies of those who succeeded in fleeing the country were strung up on lamp-posts. The King's brother, the

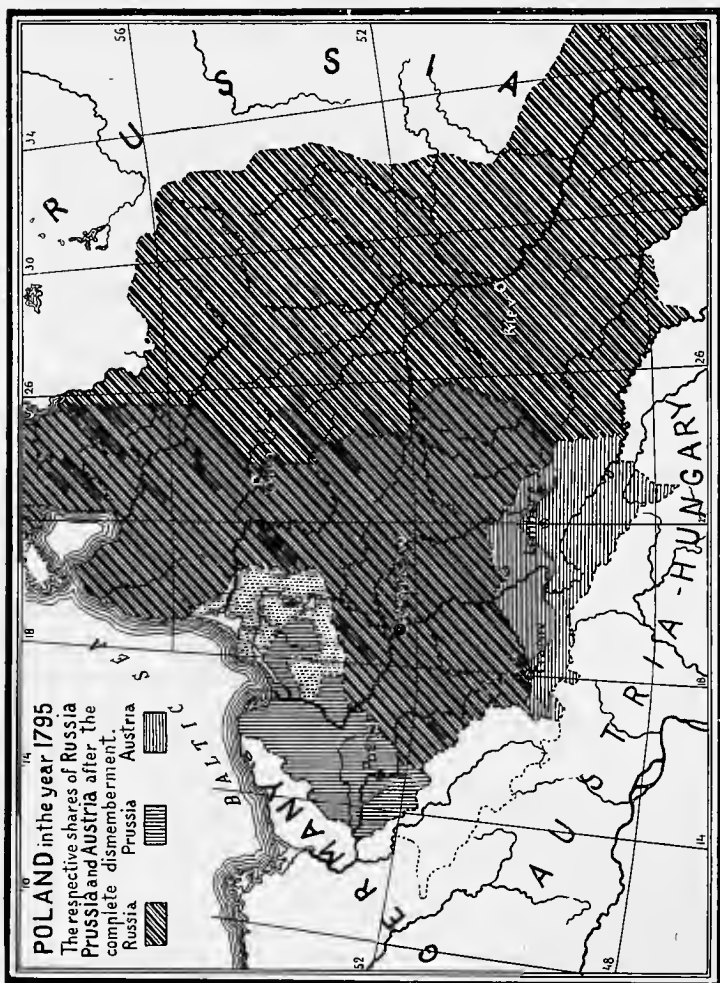


FIG. 166—COL. BEREK JOSELOWICZ  
The Jewish Commander of a Regiment under Kościuszko

Primate, escaped an ignominious death by committing suicide. In spite of the auspicious beginning of the revolution, the energy of the governing body and the support and the boundless generosity of the people, it failed in view of the infinitely superior forces of Russia and Prussia, which were subsequently joined by Austria, the latter desiring to compensate its loss of Belgium at the expense of Poland. Incidentally it may be added that, as has been so well

brought out by Chuquet and other historians, the Polish uprising under Kosciuszko saved France from destruction, just as a later uprising against Russia in 1830 made possible the emancipation of Belgium from Dutch rule.

When Cracow fell into the hands of the Prussians, the Polish forces retired to Warsaw. The defense of Warsaw was so determined that when General John Henryk Dombrowski organized resistance in Great Poland and struck at the rear of the Prussian army, they hurriedly raised the siege of the capital and withdrew, suffering great losses. No sooner had they retired than a huge Russian host, having taken Wilno, marched upon Warsaw led by Suvorov. To prevent the juncture of this army with that of Fersen, Kosciuszko decided to strike at the latter. Adam Poninski failed to bring support at the proper moment. Kosciuszko suffered a defeat at Maciejowice and, seriously wounded, was captured by the Russians on October 10, 1794. The news of his capture threw the country into despair. Meanwhile, Suvorov approached Warsaw and began to bombard its suburb, Praga, situated on the right bank of the Vistula. On November 4th Praga was taken and its population was literally slaughtered by the bloodthirsty soldiery. About fifteen thousand persons were butchered and many more thousands maimed. Until this day Polish mothers frighten their children with the name of Suvorov. The next day the capital fell. Wholesale executions, arrests and exiles to Siberia followed. The immense estates of the Crown and those of the participants in the revolution were confiscated and divided among Russian generals and the Polish traitors who had sold their country. Prussia and Austria proceeded in a similar manner,



the latter forcing thousands of Polish refugees into the ranks of her depleted army.

Soon after the capitulation of Warsaw and of the Polish army came the third partition of the country.

**The Third  
Partition of  
Poland, 1795**

On October 24, 1795, Poland ceased to exist as an independent state entity. The part of the country between the rivers Bug, Vistula and Pilica, together with the City of Cracow, went to Austria. The section to the west of the rivers Pilica, Vistula, Bug and Niemen, with the City of Warsaw, went to Prussia and the remainder to Russia. On November 25, 1795, on the thirty-first anniversary of his election and on the namesday of the Russian Empress, the wretched and pitiful King Stanislaw August abdicated the throne of Poland at Grodno. The Russian Government paid his debts and obligations, and after Catherine's death he was invited by Czar Paul I to St. Petersburg, where he remained until his death in 1798. And so came to an end the history of the Polish Republic, but not of the Polish Nation.



FIG. 167—THE EAGLE ON  
KOŚCIUSZKO'S BANNER



FIG. 168—A POLISH LANDSCAPE

## CHAPTER XVI

### Napoleon and the Duchy of Warsaw

One of the most egregious errors of the Polish political philosophy of the XVIIIth century was the prevailing belief that Poland was needed to preserve the balance of power in Europe, and that she was exposed to no danger as long as she remained unaggressive and as long as there existed competition and jealousy among the great powers, precluding the territorial aggrandizement of any one of them. How utterly fallacious such reasoning was the sad events of the last quarter of the XVIIIth century amply demonstrated. The internal problems of France and the exhausting wars she carried on, the preoccupation of Great Britain with the American Revolution, and the jealousies and antagonisms between France and England afforded the opportunity for Russia, Prussia and Austria to proceed unhampered with reference to Poland. With the exception of Turkey, no European power did so much as protest when "the greatest crime of modern history was perpetrated." In reply to Poniatowski's appeal after the first dismemberment, King George III of England wrote: "Good Brother . . . justice ought to be the invariable guide of sovereigns . . . I fear,

**The Attitude  
of England and  
France toward  
the Polish  
Tragedy**



however, misfortunes have reached the point where redress can be had from the hand of the Almighty alone, and I see no other intervention that can afford a remedy." \* Beyond an expression of sympathy, England did nothing to prevent the utter destruction of Poland at the time when the country was going through a period of national regeneration and was making superhuman efforts to remedy the ancient ills, to create a strong government and to introduce social and economic reforms. "After all, no English interests were involved in the partition. It was not her business to intervene." \*\* The interests of Great Britain in the East at that time were purely commercial and the fate of Poland was a matter of indifference to her as long as she was assured by the treaty of May, 1774, with Frederick the Great, of all former commercial rights at Danzig and Western Prussia. "The time had not arrived when Great Britain felt that the Russian advance was either a menace to her Mediterranean interests or to her Indian empire." \*\*\* France also remained singularly unperturbed over Poland's tragedy. Louis XV did not even reply to Poniatowski's appeal of 1772. And Revolutionary France did not exhibit any particular enthusiasm for "a country of nobles."

As a consequence, the Polish nation was left entirely unaided against the joint action of three powerful militaristic States to whom "might was right" and whose governments immediately after the partitions proceeded ruthlessly to suppress the national Polish sentiments and bound themselves by the treaty

**The Post Partition Régime in Poland**

\*David Jayne Hill, "A History of Diplomacy in the International Development of Europe," Vol. III, p. 675.

\*\*J. Ellis Barker, "Peace and the Polish Problem," *The Nineteenth Century and After*, January, 1915, p. 99.

\*\*\*D. J. Hill, loc. cit., p. 659.

of January 26, 1797, to destroy everything "which might retain the memory of the Polish Kingdom." The leaders of the nation, not excluding Kosciuszko, were imprisoned and some of those who fell into Russia's hands were exiled to Siberia and even to Kamchatka. Prussia and Austria applied themselves to the task of denationalization very industriously. Polish law and institutions were supplanted by those of the Teutonic countries; schools were Germanized; heavy taxes were laid; men were drafted into military service to supply the then much needed fodder for cannon; large crown, church and individual estates were confiscated; German colonization in the Polish provinces was strongly encouraged. The Prussian minute police regulations and her spy system which she introduced in Poland were as cruel and vexatious as they were petty and ludicrous: they went so far as to prescribe methods of cow milking. The principle of collective responsibility for political offenses of individuals was applied and the imposition of a severe censorship thwarted every expression of patriotism. In Russian Poland the lot of the nobility was not as severe as in the other two sections of the country. The inferior Russian civilization could not readily supersede the higher culture of Poland. A form of home rule was also retained. Moreover, the opportunities afforded for a ready export of grain through the newly opened ports of the Black Sea brought material prosperity. This prosperity, however, was acquired at the terrible expense of the peasantry, whose conditions under the new régime became infinitely worse. The cities were likewise deprived of all the privileges and prerogatives granted to them by the Four Years' Diet. The habitations of the Jews were restricted to a certain area and the Uniate Church

was singled out for repressions and persecutions by the Russian Government.

Every successive dismemberment sent forth a new wave of Polish emigration. The exiles scattered in various parts of Europe and some even embarked for the far-off shores of America. Endeavors were made to arouse the nations of Europe and their governments to a realization of the crime committed upon Poland, and to stimulate them to action in the cause of humanity and justice. Realizing that no nation would sacrifice its blood to avenge the Polish tragedy, the emigrants conceived the idea of organizing Polish armed forces in Wallachia and elsewhere and of holding them ready to enter Poland when the proper moment came. The expectations of an international conflict to which Poland could offer a key were based on sound premises. The antagonism between Austria and France was bitter and after Prussia sealed her compact with the French Republic at Basel on April 5, 1795, the old enmity of Austria toward Prussia was revived and the robber triumvirate was divided against itself. Austria endeavored to induce Russia to a war against Prussia, "the traitor of the monarchical idea." Nothing but a war among the three black eagles, aided by Revolutionary France, as contemplated by the Paris Committee of Public Safety, could offer the coveted chance of organizing a Polish army to regain national independence. The hopes of Poland hung upon a triumphant France and nobody realized this more clearly than did General Jan Henryk Dombrowski, who, after the defeat of Kosciuszko at Macieyowice, conceived the bold and pathetic idea of gathering the remaining forces and of marching to France, jointly with the King and the members of the Four Years'

**The Hopes  
and Plans of  
the Polish  
Patriots**

Diet, cutting through Germany by force, if necessary. He well knew that France was the only country in Europe at the time which could have a direct interest



FIG. 169—GENERAL JAN HENRYK DOMBROWSKI, ORGANIZER OF THE POLISH LEGIONS OF THE NAPOLEONIC ERA

in the reconstruction of Poland. The obduracy of the King and the indecision on the part of General Wawrzeczki, the successor of Kosciuszko in command of the army, prevented the execution of this truly dramatic

act. When it failed, Dombrowski, a knight "sans peur et sans reproche," whose military fame was well known abroad, went to Berlin in February, 1796, where he presented to the King of Prussia a plan of a joint campaign with France and Turkey against Austria and Russia and assured him of Poland's active assistance if Prussia would help to restore Poland's independence. Should this be realized he was confident the Poles would welcome a Hohenzollern to the throne of their thus reconstructed country. After numerous conferences with the Berlin cabinet and the French representatives, he left for France to organize Polish legions from among those Poles who resided abroad or who were kept in French detention camps as Austrian soldiers.

There is hardly a more touching chapter in the world's history than the story of the Polish Legions.

**The Polish  
Legions**

When Dombrowski arrived at Paris he presented his idea in a memorial which he had prepared jointly with Joseph Wybicki, the member of the Four Years' Diet and the lawyer Barss, who was the representative of Kosciuszko. It was favorably received by the Directory and by M. Pétiet, the Minister of War. He then went to Milan to present himself to Bonaparte, the youthful hero, then Commander in Chief of the Army in Italy. Napoleon had already heard about conditions in Poland from his gallant adjunct, captain Joseph Sulkowski, who subsequently perished in Egypt. Referring to a letter received from Prince Michael Oginski, an ardent patriot whose immense estates in Lithuania were confiscated by Russia and who was then active in patriotic circles in Turkey, Napoleon said to Sulkowski: "What can I reply to him? What can I promise? Tell your countrymen that I love the Poles and esteem them highly; that the

dismemberment of Poland was an act of injustice which cannot last; that after the war in Italy is over I shall personally lead Frenchmen against Russia to compel her to restore Poland's independence; but tell him also that the Poles should not rely on foreign help, that they should arm themselves, harass Russia and keep in contact with their country. The beautiful words designed for their infatuation lead nowhere. I know the diplomatic language and the indolence of Turkey. A nation crucified by her neighbors can be resurrected only by the call to arms." \* In spite of his pronounced feelings toward Poland, he gave a cold reception to General Dombrowski when the latter appeared at the French headquarters on December 4, 1796. The probable reason for it was Napoleon's contempt for "the lawyers of the Directory," whose letters of introduction Dombrowski presented. This attitude toward the man who was carrying out his former advice with reference to Poland soon changed and developed into a warm admiration for the military genius of Dombrowski, and the gallantry of his legions whose status was determined by the convention signed by the Administrative Board of Lombardy and the Polish General on January 9, 1797. In this way, two years after the last dismemberment of Poland, a Polish army was formed, in Polish uniforms, under Polish command, decorated with French cockades and wearing on the epaulets the inscription: "Gli uomini liberi sono fratelli." (Free men are brethren.) The legionaries were considered citizens of Lombardy with a right to return to their motherland whenever circumstances might demand it. On January 20, 1797, Dombrowski issued his appeal to the Poles, in which he said: "Poles, hope is rising.

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\*Maryan Kukiel: "Dzieje oręża polskiego, 1795-1815." Posen: Z. Rzepecki et Co., 1912, p. 30.

France is victorious. She fights for the cause of the nations. Let us help to weaken her enemies. . . Polish legions are being formed in Italy . . . The triumphs of the French Republic are our only hope. With her help and that of her allies we may yet see our homes which we left with emotion.”\* In re-



FIG. 170—ONE OF THE COLORS OF THE POLISH LEGIONS IN LOMBARDY

sponse to this call thousands of Poles flocked to Dombrowski’s banners. A good star seemed to have appeared on the dark horizon and enthusiasm was genuine. The rapturous song of the Polish Legions, known by its first words “Poland is not yet lost,” or as “Dombrowski’s march” was then born and has since become the national anthem. To its strains the valiant Legions flung themselves into the thick of every battle.

\*M. Kukiel: Loc. cit., p. 33.

Napoleon's phenomenal successes over Austria at Arcole, Rivoli and Mantua seemed to make the realization of Polish hopes near at hand. Dombrowski had already secured Bonaparte's permission for a march through Transylvania to Galicia, when truce was declared at Leoben and preliminary steps taken for the Campo Formio peace. The treaty sealed on October 17, 1797, made, however, no mention of Poland. It was the first severe shock and disappointment experienced at Napoleon's hands. The only apparent result of all the bloody efforts of the past campaign was the intact existence of the Legions, the living and fighting representation of Poland. After the Campo Formio treaty they became attached to the Cisalpine Republic. In June, 1798, Kosciuszko returned from America to France where he was met by the government and the people of the country in a most tender and enthusiastic manner. His popularity and influence were expected to promote the cause of the Legions, whose chief adviser he became. He was yet bound by his pledge to the Russian Emperor Paul I, who released him from imprisonment under promise of not taking part in active service against Russia. He acted, therefore, only as a patron and counsellor of the Polish army. His encouragement added fresh vigor to the soldier-patriots who patiently persisted in their devotion and self-imposed military service. New hopes arose when the second coalition was launched by the allied powers against France. The Legions were burning with desire to push the campaign as far eastward as possible, to be nearer their goal. They distinguished themselves in Championnet's army, as only men fighting for a great ideal can. In the battle at Civita Castellana the Polish batallion under General Kniaziewicz annihilated the corps of Count de Saxe, which constituted



the left wing of the Neapolitan army. When at Calvi, Kniaziewicz, by a flank attack, took six thousand prisoners, Championnet elevated him to the rank of Brigadier General. Gaeta was captured by Dombrowski and it was Kniaziewicz's garrison that occupied the Capitol after Rome fell. In recognition of his brilliant services Kniaziewicz was chosen to carry the captured banners to Paris. Rivers of beautiful oratory were poured on the Legions for their valor and French gratitude to the Poles vouched forever. Polish troops took part in the bitter north Italian campaign. In the battle of Legnano the Poles revealed wonders of bravery and determination. At Magnano the heroic General Rymkiewicz fell; Chlopicki exhibited his dauntless courage and coolness in the action at Novi; and Michael Sokolnicki's grenadiers performed marvellous feats of prowess and valor on many occasions. On the banks of the Trebbia the Polish eagles fought with particular furor. They were facing the Tamerlane of the day, the Russian Field Marshal Suvorov, the heartless destroyer of Praga whom they had met in the Valley of the Vistula before. In this battle General Dombrowski was severely wounded. The French army, however, was compelled to retire before the vastly superior forces of the Allies and when the fortress of Mantua surrendered, many of the Poles who were in the garrison of the city fell into Austria's hands.

Strenuous campaigning, murderous battles, inclement weather, disease, privations, lack of food and clothing decimated the ranks of the Polish warriors who braved everything and suffered without complaint or murmur of dissatisfaction, although some of the duties assigned to them were repugnant to their moral principles. They saw only their ideal, for the realization of which no price was too high.

The reverses suffered by the French armies, however, made the achievement of it remote, but when Napoleon returned from Egypt spirits rose again. With the opening of the new campaign, fresh Polish volunteers filled the depleted ranks of the Legions. Soon Dombrowski and Kniaziewicz were in command of an army of over fifteen thousand experienced veterans, whose hearts were filled with patriotic ardor and whose souls glowed with enthusiasm. "God is with Napoleon and Napoleon is with us," was the prevailing sentiment, to use the words of the great poet Mickiewicz. At Marengo, St. Christoph and Hohenlinden, Polish banners were in the thick of the fight and the victory at the latter place was in no mean measure due to Kniaziewicz. France was again triumphant and as had happened four years before, so now when Dombrowski was preparing to lead his Legions through Bohemia and Moravia to join hands with the insurrection which was being organized in Poland, Bonaparte concluded the Lunéville peace on February 9, 1801. And again no mention was made of Poland, whose fate was completely subordinated to the direct interests of France. The peace treaty, moreover, contained a clause to the effect that no activities on the part of the subjects of the signatory powers aimed at their respective governments shall be tolerated in any of the contracting countries. This meant the dissolution of the Legions. It is hard to describe the crushing effect the treaty produced on the minds of the Polish leaders. The organizers of the Legions were severely taken to task by Polish public opinion for the misdirection of their efforts and the profitless waste of life and energy. General Kniaziewicz resigned from service in spite of the insistent persuasions of M. Berthièr, the French minister of War. Following his example, a great many

officers laid down their swords and returned to Poland. In order to save the Legions, the undaunted Dombrowski presented several plans to Napoleon, one of them proposing the conquest of some of the Aegean islands and the establishment of a Polish colony there. All were in vain. A part of the Legion was incorporated into the Italian army and a part was sent, at the point of the bayonet, to San Domingo to subdue a revolt of the Haytians. Most of the men perished there either from bullets or from yellow fever. Only a few hundred came back from this expedition. They brought back bitter feelings. One of them, speaking of the reasons which prompted Napoleon to send the Poles to their perdition in the West Indies, says in his memoirs: "Napoleon had already been striving for the crown; seeing in us determined republicans he wanted to punish us and dug for us a grave at San Domingo." Whatever his motives were, he sadly duped those whom he once promised the redemption of their country from "the injustice which cannot last" and whom he warned against infatuation by diplomatic tricks.

Although the Legions had sorely failed in accomplishing what their leaders had in mind when they organized them, their efforts and sacrifices were not entirely in vain. They established a lofty tradition. They demonstrated to the world that Poland is ready to shed her blood profusely for the regaining of her independence; that her patriotism and gallantry are second to none in the world and that there can be no peace in Europe until Poland is reconstructed. Furthermore, the common service of tens of thousands of Poles of all stations and conditions, including even Jews, under Republican banners, bound together by the slogan, "free men are brethren," had produced a deep impression on their modes of thinking and

helped to lessen somewhat the social rift which had hitherto separated a nobleman from a peasant. Finally the admiration which Napoleon could not help developing for the character and bravery of the Poles was one more reason which prompted him to form later the Duchy of Warsaw. An Englishman (Fox Strangways) writing about Poland in 1831 had thus expressed the value of the services the Legions rendered to their country: "After spending their blood in Italy, Spain, San Domingo and in various campaigns where neither the cause of Poland nor the principles of liberty were advanced, they ultimately succeeded in extorting from him (Napoleon) the formation of his Polish conquests into the Duchy of Warsaw. Then it was that the survivors of those who had shed their blood in seemingly hopeless warfare met the recompense they deserved. Since that time they ceased not to repeat to their countrymen that of their fellow soldiers who died in Egypt or the West Indies, not one died in vain. . . . Thus a wandering nation of fifteen thousand warriors restored Poland, if not to her rank, at least to her independence." \*

The disappointment following the Lunéville treaty turned popular sentiment in another direction, and circumstances were particularly favorable to effect such a turn. The "Semiramis of the North" died in 1796, and her son Paul I broke with all of her policies. He expressed his condemnation of the manner in which she had treated Poland and released all the Polish prisoners, of whom Kosciuszko was one. England was much displeased with the new Tsar and

**The Pro-Russian Turn in Polish Politics, and Czartoryski's Plans**

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\*Thoughts on the Present Aspect of Foreign Affairs." By an Englishman, London, James Ridgway, 1831, p. 76-77.

his attitude toward France. His reign was very short however. In 1801 he was murdered and his son Alexander succeeded him to the throne of Russia. Educated by a Frenchman and possessing an impressionable mind, the Tsarevich developed strong leanings toward the principles of the French Revolution and a strong dislike of despotism and injustice. His idealism did not, however, prevent him from taking part in the plot against his father.

In his boyhood Alexander had been thrown a great deal with the two young brothers Czartoryski, who were raised as hostages at the Russian court, An intimate friendship arose between the future Emperor and the Polish Prince, Adam Czartoryski, a man of high ideals but mellow character. They had often discussed plans for the future happiness of mankind and the restoration of Poland. With Alexander's advent to the throne, Czartoryski was made Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia and the Curator of Education in the Wilno district which was one of the six educational districts into which the Empire was divided and which comprised the Polish and Lithuanian provinces. With such a change in the attitude of Russia toward Poland and with a Pole elevated to the highest position in the Empire in the ominous year of the Lunéville peace, small wonder that the hopes of certain elements in Poland became associated with those of Russia. The bond of race added an element of sympathy to the union with that country and created the fiction of common interest against Teutonism which was pursuing a ruthless war of extermination of Polish culture in the sections under Prussian and Austrian sovereignty. A strong pro-Russian party arose, particularly among the Lithuanians, led by Prince Lubecki, Prince Michael Oginski, the erstwhile supporter of Dombrowski's Legions, whose

estates were returned to him, and many others. Their program aimed at the unification of all Polish territories into an autonomous unit under the sceptre of Russian tsars, as kings of Poland. Czartoryski planned to carry this through by offering Silesia and Bavaria or some provinces on the Danube to Austria in return for Galicia, and the Rheinish provinces to Prussia for the cession of her share of Poland. The coalition that was to help in the proposed reconstruction of Europe and in checking French aggressiveness was to embrace Russia, Austria, England, Sweden and Prussia. The latter refused to join the coalition, preferring neutrality which she had maintained since 1795. It was planned to coerce her by sending a Russian army, and Prince Joseph Poniatowski was counted on to organize a rebellion in that part of Poland which was under Prussian rule. The Tsar was expected to proclaim himself King of Poland and was enthusiastically received in Pulawy when he came to visit the Czartoryskis in the "Polish Athens." Prussian diplomacy and the persuasion of the Russian advisers of the Tsar frustrated the plan. Alexander did not issue the expected proclamation, but instead went to Berlin where he and the Prussian King swore fidelity to each other over the grave of Frederick the Great, whose saying that "Poland is the communion uniting the Catholic, Lutheran and Schismatic" was as true then as it was when enunciated. The Tsar then also turned over to his new ally the list of names of the Prussian Poles who were to lead the planned uprising. That confidential list was given to him, as future King of Poland, by Czartoryski. So came to a disappointing end the plans of Czartoryski, unrealizable at best in view of the fresh momentous victories of Napoleon over the Austrians and Russians at Ulm

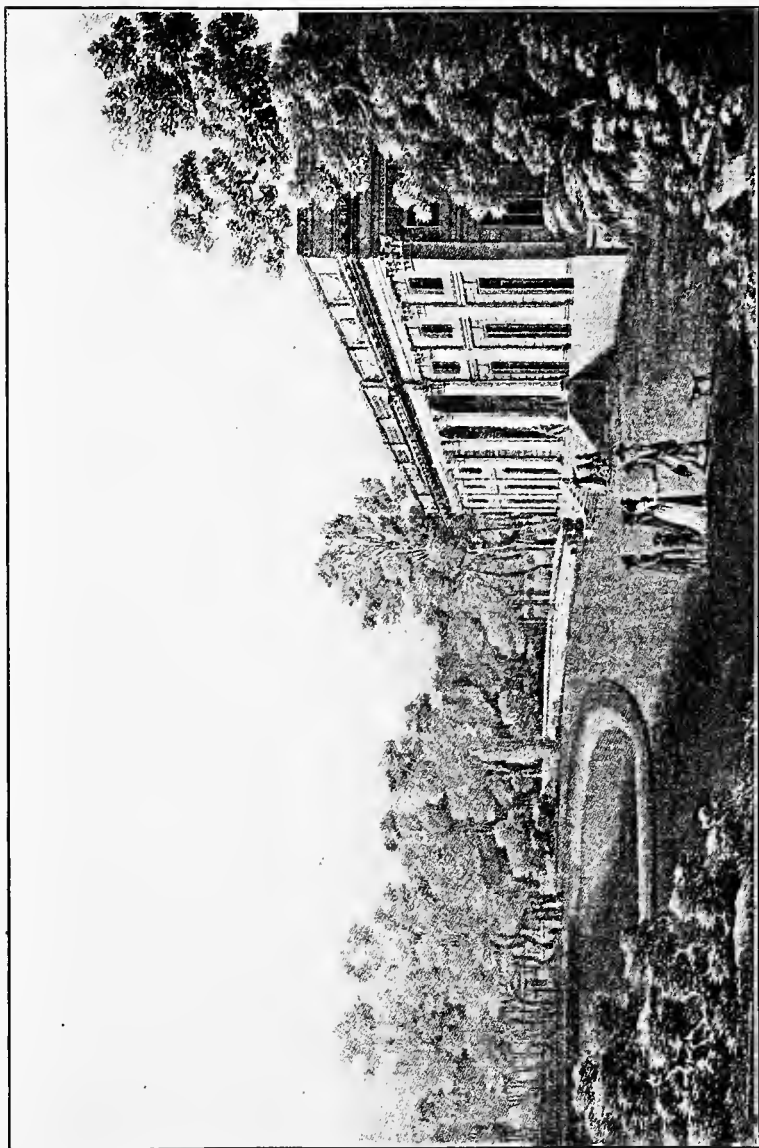


FIG. 171.—PULAWY, THE RESIDENCE OF THE CZARTORYSKIS

and Austerlitz, which even Prussia's participation would probably not have prevented.

Outside of England, Napoleon considered the Hapsburgs his greatest enemy. He was, therefore, anxious to nourish good relations with Prussia which could be used as a check against Austria. Likewise, Russia was a desirable ally. The reopening of the Polish question had, therefore, very small chances of coming to pass. When Prussia first betrayed Russia and then again France with the consequence that in a short while she found herself overrun by Napoleon's army and suffered a terrific defeat at Jena and then again at Auerstadt, the Polish question took on a brighter aspect. Half of Prussia's domain consisted of recently acquired Polish territory. Campaigning in a country remote from his base, Napoleon was forced to seek support among the Poles. He approached Austria with a proposal to exchange Galicia for Silesia and asked Kosciuszko, whose name was surrounded by a halo of glory and patriotism, to organize an armed force in Poland. Kosciuszko did not trust the ambitious French despot and demanded assurances that the Polish state would be restored to its pre-partition boundaries and that the serfs would be freed. As no assurances were given, Kosciuszko refused to act. Napoleon then turned to Dombrowski. The indefatigable warrior immediately proceeded to organize a legion with the aid of Wybicki, Zayonczek and others. In his appeal issued from Berlin in November, 1806, Dombrowski quoted the famous words of Napoleon: "If the Poles will prove that they are worthy of having independence, they shall have it." The appeal was received with indescribable enthusiasm. The belief of the people in Napoleon's star and the magnetic influence his name exercised,

**The Defeat  
of Prussia and  
Napoleon's  
Promises to  
Poland**



caused an immense outpouring of men into the ranks of the new Legions, to whom were added the Polish veterans of Italy. Money was raised locally for the equipment and provisioning of the Polish army. A large Polish deputation from Warsaw, headed by Count Działyński, came to visit Napoleon in Berlin. He received them on November 19th with great pomp and according to the newspaper accounts of the time, he said among other things: "France has never recognized the dismemberment of Poland . . . If I shall see a Polish army of thirty to forty thousand men I shall proclaim in Warsaw your independence; and when I shall proclaim it, it will be inflexible. It is in the interest of France and that of all Europe, that Poland should have her free existence. Let internal strife cease. Your fate is in your own hands."\* Could Poland do otherwise than she did in view of such a statement from the conqueror of Europe? Immediately rebellions sprung up in various parts of Poland against Prussia. Meanwhile Murat, pursuing the Prussians and Russians entered Warsaw on November 28, 1806, and was received amidst tears of emotion and cries of exultation of the populace, which greeted him and his troops as the redeemers of Poland. Faithful to their pledges, the Poles raised an army even in excess of the demanded thirty thousand. The organization of it was entrusted to Prince Joseph Poniatowski who was made minister of war of the Polish territories cleared of the Prussians. The government of the country was entrusted to a Committee of Seven and Stanislaw Malachowski, the venerable president of the Four Years' Diet was made chairman of it. Napoleon found the alliance with Poland very profitable. The country kept his army well provi-

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\*Professor Sokolowski, l. c. Vol. IV, p. 259.

sioned and the Polish regiments proved of great service to him in direct action as well as in scout duty. His victories at Pultusk, Danzig, Friedland and elsewhere were in a large measure due to the support of the Polish troops and their knowledge of the terrain of operations.



(Painting by Gius. Grassi, 1786)  
FIG. 172—PRINCE JOSEPH PONIATOWSKI

Seeing the change of attitude on the part of the Poles and realizing the importance of their friendship during the period of hostilities, Alexander appealed to the aristocratic and wealthy elements in Poland to whom the haughtiness of the French "parvenu" was very distasteful and smacked too much of the detested Revolution. He appealed to Czartoryski and to Kniaziewicz, asking them to organize counter Legions. Neither of the two consented to engage in this

**The Treaty  
of Tilsit, 1807**

work of Cain. The pro-Russian party agitated in favor of Alexander and kept on pointing out the previous treatment of the Poles by Napoleon and called on the people to side with the "Slavic Monarch" whom the Russian General Benningsen was about to proclaim King of Poland. Prussia, seeing how promptly Poland had raised a considerable army, also attempted to gain Polish friendship and promised the restitution of the country under a Hohenzollern. While this was going on, the disastrous defeat suffered by the Russians at Friedland opened the way for peace pour-parlers between Napoleon and Russia. In July, 1807, the two monarchs met on the River Niemen at Tilsit to sign a peace treaty. Napoleon was anxious for peace with Russia as it would give him a free hand in devoting all his energies to the reconstruction of Europe and the war against Great Britain. Russia's endorsement of his nepotism in the disposition of the thrones of Westphalia, Holland and Naples, and her acquiescence in his "continental system" were great prizes, for which he was ready to sacrifice Poland.

At first he offered Prussian Poland to Russia. That section together with the other part already held by Russia was to constitute a political entity united with the Russian Empire in the person of the Tsar, as King of Poland. Such a solution of the Polish problem would have been satisfactory to Napoleon, as it would have hampered Russia by putting upon her various complicated obligations and thwarted her policy of expansion. Moreover, such a union of Poland with Russia was bound to cause dissensions between Russia and Prussia as well as with Austria. Russian diplomacy saw the difficulties which Napoleon's plan would create and Alexander refused to accept the title of King of Poland. As a compromise

**The Duchy  
of Warsaw,  
1807-1815**

measure, it was agreed to create an independent Polish state embracing a part of Prussian Poland. "At the request of the Russian Emperor," Napoleon consented to Prussia's keeping the Polish territories,



FIG. 173—FREDERICK AUGUST, OF SAXONY, DUKE OF WARSAW

which she occupied after the first dismemberment. Her shares in the second and third dismemberment she was to lose. Bialystock and Bielsk, or the north-

ern part of Podlasie, being the section where the Uniate Church prevailed, was demanded by Russia. Danzig became a free city under the joint protectorate of the Kings of Prussia and Saxony. Thorn came back into the new state, which was to be known as the Duchy of Warsaw, and Frederick August, the Saxon King, whom the constitution of May 3, 1791, had designated as King Poniatowski's successor, was made the reigning Duke thereof. The newly created Duchy, as well as the city of Danzig, joined the continental system designed to boycott English commerce. Thus Poland became resurrected from the dead. Although the size of the reconstructed state was small, consist-



FIG. 174—MEDAL IN COMMEMORATION OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DUCHY OF WARSAW

ing of only 64,500 square miles, with a population of 2,400,000, yet it had great political significance for the Poles, and by the guarantees it received for free navigation on the Vistula to the Baltic, its economic self-sufficiency was assured. Its destinies, however, like those of many other states created by Napoleon, depended upon the fortunes of this military genius. The makeshift character of the Duchy of Warsaw was well recognized by the political leaders of Poland. Many were discontented with it, particularly in view of the heavy demands Napoleon made in compensation for its creation and his arbitrary methods which

precipitated grave social problems. Many of the former crown lands were given to French generals, and the old Italian Legion, reorganized and increased to eight thousand men, was sent to Westphalia, later to go to Spain. In addition to the regular army of thirty thousand, fresh levies were ordered for the "chevaux légers" which, because of their handsome appearance and gallant conduct, the Emperor designated for his body guard regiment. They were put under command of Count Vincent Krasinski, the father of one of the greatest poets of Poland. With the opening of hostilities in Spain they, like the other Polish troops, were sent to that country. Here they took active part in the desperate fighting that characterized this campaign. They realized the injustice that was being done to the brave Spaniards, but they were soldiers and faithful to their duty. When the siege of Saragossa decimated the regiments of Chlopicki and Konopka new detachments were sent to keep up the Polish quota. Forever famous in military annals will remain the Polish charge at Samo-Sierra, the gorge which guarded the road to Madrid. The Spanish batteries mowed down the French troops one after another as they came within range of their guns. The possession of the gorge was absolutely necessary. Napoleon ordered General Montbrun to send a Polish squadron of cavalry to take it. When the General reported that it was impossible, the Emperor impatiently replied: "Impossible? I do not know the word. Nothing is impossible for my Poles."\* And with their usual daring the Polish light horse detachment under the youthful John Koziatulski, swept like a tornado through the gorge. Few survived, but to the astonishment of the French troops and even of Napoleon

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\*Kukiel, l. c., p. 219.

himself, Samo-Sierra was taken, and on November 30, 1808, the road to Madrid lay open. Small, indeed, was to be the recompense Napoleon offered Poland for her inordinate sacrifices. Instead of reviving the generally respected constitution of May 3rd, and changing it to meet the new conditions, Napoleon devised for the Duchy of Warsaw an instrument of his own making:



FIG. 175—JAN LEON HIPOLIT KOZIĘTULSKI, THE HERO OF SAMO-SIERRA

It gave large powers to the reigning Duke and limited those of the Diet. No legislative bills could be introduced except by the Government, and the Diet had no power of discussion: it could either enact or reject them. The code Napoleon, which superseded Polish civil laws, created innumerable difficulties and called

for many adjustments. It is well known how attached Napoleon was to his code and how firmly he insisted that it be adopted without change, regardless of the confusion which might follow its introduction. In a letter to his brother Louis, King of Holland, he wrote on November 13, 1807, "If you allow to touch (re-toucher) the Code Napoleon it will no longer be the Code Napoleon. . . . You are young, indeed, if you think that a definite adoption of the code will introduce chaos or be a cause of dangerous confusion in the country."\* While not guaranteeing freedom of speech or assembly, the new constitution was, however, much more democratic than that of May 3rd, in that it extended suffrage to almost all classes, and made all citizens equal before the law. It also abolished serfdom. But in failing to provide land for the freed peasants it created for the first time in Polish history the new social class of the proletariat. The exodus of the peasants from the country gave a stimulus to industry in the cities. Both commerce and manufacture revived, despite the long period of exhaustion preceding it, and despite the heavy taxes laid upon it as well as upon agriculture to maintain the army and to meet the other numerous French requisitions. It is remarkable, though characteristic of Polish spirit, that in spite of the heavy drafts and unsettled conditions of the time, public education received painstaking care and sustained attention. The Department of Education, under the enlightened guidance of Staszyc and Stanislaw Kostka Potocki, established numerous primary schools. While during the ten years of the Prussian régime only two hundred and fifty schools were opened, their number increased to one thousand and one hundred when the Poles took charge of edu-

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\*M. Handelsman, "Napoleon a Polska," Warsaw, E. Wende et Co., 1913, p. 11.



cation, which then became entirely emancipated from the blighting effects of the former ecclesiastical control. The episcopate vehemently protested against this change as well as against the Napoleonic code, which allowed civil marriages and divorce, and did not provide for penalties in cases of non-observance of religious rites. The protests were unheeded. The Polish nation had become thoroughly modernized in the opening decade of the XIXth century.



(Drawing by Alexander Orłowski)

FIG. 176—EAGLE SYMBOLIZING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DUCHY OF WARSAW

The first session of the Diet of the Duchy of Warsaw met on March 9, 1809, in the same building where the Four Years' Diet had sat, under the same president, Stanislaw Malachowski, and in the presence of the Duke whom, in 1791 they had chosen to succeed Poniatowski as King. The solemn and dignified proceedings of the Diet, the unanimity in its work and readiness to meet the extreme burdens imposed upon the country by Napoleon, indicated that a deep change had taken place in Polish life since the great catastrophe which had befallen the country. The

**The Economic Problems**

fiscal and economic problems which became aggravated by the introduction of the new civil code, by the enormous war taxes and by the flood of worthless Prussian money thrown upon the country during the Prussian occupation were ably met by the wise Finance Minister Lubienski.

At the time when economic restoration of the Duchy was proceeding with success and social relations were adjusting themselves to the changed conditions, war was forced upon the country by Austria's challenge to Napoleon. One of the four Austrian armies, under Archduke Ferdinand, appeared on the frontier of the Duchy on April 14, 1809. Taken by surprise, the government ordered general mobilization. A part of the regular Polish army was in France at the time and another part was doing garrison duty in the Prussian fortresses, leaving only thirteen thousand ready for immediate action. Headed by the valiant Prince Joseph Poniatowski, they offered an obstinate resistance during the bloody battle of Raszyn, to the south of Warsaw. The Austrian army was three times as large as the army of the Duchy. It was necessary to abandon Warsaw and to withdraw to the right bank of the Vistula. The government moved to Thorn. All the Austrian efforts to cross the Vistula were, however, in vain. Even Warsaw's suburb, Praga, could not be taken. While the Austrian troops were exhausting themselves in their unsuccessful attempts to get at the right bank of the Vistula, Poniatowski crossed the Austrian frontier to liberate Galicia. Soon he took Lublin, Sandomir, Przemysl and Lemberg. The population of Galicia rose against their oppressors and formed regiments to help Poniatowski. The Galician magnates, however, looked askance upon the

**The War with  
Austria and  
the Conquest  
of Galicia, 1809**

Duchy of Warsaw because of its democratic reforms and the abolition of serfdom and regarded with disfavor Poniatowski's activities. They were laying plans for a reconstruction of the country under a Hapsburg or under the scepter of the Tsar, and were accordingly carrying on negotiations with General Golitsin who arrived with a Russian corps ostensibly to help Napoleon, but in reality to hamper the disquieting conquests of the Polish arms. He frustrated




FIG. 177—THE MILITARY DECORATIONS OF PRINCE JOSEPH PONIATOWSKI

many of Poniatowski's plans and helped the Austrians when they returned from the Duchy to concentrate in Galicia. The fear of Napoleon lest the aggrandizement of Poland cause displeasure in St. Petersburg, resulted in the order that Polish conquests be made in his name and not that of the Duchy, although all operations were carried on by Polish arms exclusively. This naturally caused discontent in Galicia and aroused suspicion. Because of the vari-

ous hindrances put in his way, and particularly those of the "allied" Russian army, Poniatowski withdrew from Eastern Galicia westward and took Cracow. Before he entered the city the French General Mondet turned the city over to the Russian commander and only Poniatowski's threat to open fire upon the Russians caused their abandonment of the city, which was then taken over by a Polish garrison. Meanwhile Napoleon's victory at Wagram ended the war. The Poles who conquered Galicia and left thousands on the battlefields had a right to expect that she would be added to the Duchy. But the ever-vigilant Russian diplomacy made it impossible. Only western Galicia as far as the River San, a district covering 33,000 square miles with a million and a half inhabitants, came back into the Polish State. Again all the former crown lands in that territory were to be given over to the French generals and once more had the Poles the sad occasion to learn how parsimonious and reserved Napoleon was with reference to them. In the last campaign they had engaged over sixty thousand Austrians and had kept the Prussians from turning against the French, yet even the fruits of conquests in their own country, made wholly by their own sacrifices and endeavors, were denied them in a degree they were morally and legally entitled to expect. Yet the fact that the Duchy was growing; that the City of Cracow with all its national sanctuaries and the university was again free; that a valiant and glorious army was in existence, gave faith and assurance, in spite of the iniquities suffered, that the policy of an alliance with the Corsican was the best and would eventually bring the country to its coveted goal.

All plans were soon to be shattered. Napoleon's too ambitious undertaking miscarried. One of the

# The DUCHY of WARSAW

 Territories conquered by the armies of the Duchy in the year 1809.



causes of the war of 1812 was the existence of the Duchy. For it was against the traditions of Russia harking back to Peter the Great, nay, to Ivan the Terrible, to look complacently at the existence of Poland outside of Russian domination. In spite of Napoleon's continuous assurances that "the dangerous Polish dreams" as Alexander called them, would never be permitted realization, the Russian Tsar was forever restive. He demanded that the word "Poles"

**The  
Franco-Prus-  
sian War**



FIG. 178—THE POLISH MILITARY CROSS

be not used in public documents, that Polish orders be abolished and that the Polish army be considered as a part of that of Saxony. The Russian fear of the restoration of Poland was one of the trumps in Napoleon's hand which, together with a display of France's enormous resources in men, he intended to use to intimidate Russia and to browbeat her. This explains his real unpreparedness for the Russian campaign and his ambiguous behavior with reference to

the Poles. He continued to assure them of the sincerity of his purpose and requested a further increase in the army to 80,000 men and 23,000 horses, and the speedy completion of the fortress of Modlin (known now by the Russian name of Novo-Georgievsk) and some others, but made no direct political promises. When in June a special French ambassador arrived at Warsaw and the reigning Duke turned over the whole government to the Council of Ministers, it became evident that great events were near at hand. The Diet assembled to take steps preparatory to the impending war. Napoleon suggested that a general confederation be organized and that he be petitioned to restore Poland. He intimated that Austria would be willing to cede Galicia for the control of certain other territories. In fact, by the secret treaty which Napoleon made with the Austrian ruler on March 14, 1812, the Illyrian provinces were to constitute the prize for the return of Galicia. As had always been the case in times of European conflagration, various bait was thrown out to catch Polish support, so in the war of 1812 Russia also made a polite bow before her "beloved" sister and the Tsar offered, through his old comrade Czartoryski a present to her, in the form of reconstruction of the ancient kingdom in its former boundaries, abutting on the Dnieper and Dvina and including Galicia. He was to give the resurrected country a liberal constitution and a king in his own person, but demanded that Poniatowski betray Napoleon and bring the army over in support of Russia. Czartoryski refused to act. In Lithuania, however, the Tsar's proposals found many supporters led by Prince Michael Oginski and the able and brilliant Prince Drucki-Lubecki. They even contemplated the creation of an independent Duchy of Lithuania. Meanwhile, the "second Polish war," as Napoleon

called it, broke out. When he appeared at Kovno the French Emperor wore the cap and uniform of a Polish officer. To arouse Lithuania he sent to Wilno as a vanguard of his host, a Polish regiment commanded by Prince Dominik Radziwill, a scion of the great Lithuanian family. The dispersion, however, of the Polish regiments among the various French corps was strongly resented. For nowhere else had Napoleon a more loyal and devoted ally than the Poles who stood by him through thick and thin and did not abandon him until his very last hour. They formed a striking contrast to the Prussians under Yorck, who as soon as Napoleon's defeat became known joined the Russians, as did also the Austrians. At the opening of hostilities, the Warsaw Diet formed a confederation calling upon the people to defend their country. The popular response to a fiery speech made by Minister Matuszewicz in the course of which he exclaimed: "Poland will be resurrected. What do I say? Poland exists already!" was enormous. The crowds were wild with enthusiasm. All believed in Napoleon's genius. "God is with Napoleon and Napoleon is with us." And the splendid Polish legions, led by such brilliant generals as Dombrowski, Poniatowski, Sokolnicki and others, who had no peers in any contemporary army, once more carried the fame of Polish heroism along the same roads which two centuries before, in the times of Batory and Wladyslav IV saw the banners of the White Eagle in a triumphant onward march to Moscow. The memories of Zolkiewski and Gosiewski came back. But once more it was necessary to retire. Napoleon was defeated and his grand army dispersed. Enormous losses were suffered by the Poles. Over a thousand officers fell and only six thousand men returned.



But they brought back all their artillery and the eternal glory of their sacrifices for the country and her honor.

Under the guard of Polish uhlans, Napoleon fled Russia which had proved to be the grave of his ambitions. His defeat sounded also the death knell of the Duchy of Warsaw and filled with dismay the hearts of the Poles, who felt that they would again fall prey to the neighboring hawks. The Russian

**The End of  
the Duchy of  
Warsaw**



FIG. 179—THE PALACE OF PRINCE JOSEPH PONIATOWSKI AT JABLONNA

Emperor continued to assure the Poles of his friendship and proclaimed his amnesty to Lithuania but at the same time covenanted with Prussia for another partition in Poland on February 10, 1813, at Kalisz.

Before the Russian army reached the Duchy, the Polish government was discussing the possibilities of offering armed resistance to the invaders; many, like Prince Czartoryski advised an alliance with Russia. A great deal of valuable time was lost in discussion.

Meanwhile, it was learned that Schwarzenberg, the commander of the Austrian army, which constituted the right wing of Napoleon's host had practically betrayed his former ally and in view of that, the defence of Warsaw became an impossibility. Prince Poniatowski gathered all his troops, ordnance and ammunition and moved to Cracow. The Austrian army in doubtful attitude was near by; a Russian corps under Sacken was stationed in the vicinity of Cracow; and the pro-Russian party in Poland was bombarding him with persuasions to submit to Russia. He well realized the difficult situation in which he found himself and the responsibility that rested upon him, but he could not be convinced that an alliance with Russia was for the best interests of the country and his exalted conception of duty revolted at any suggestion of a betrayal. Seeing that he would be unable to carry out his plan of a fight to the end, and abandoned by many of his friends, he determined to leave Poland and to join Napoleon's reorganized Grand Army. "There can be no compromise with honor," he said, and undertook the march in spite of the difficulties which lay before him in crossing hostile Austrian domains. He left Poland, never to return. His withdrawal was quickly followed by untoward events. The whole Duchy, with the exception of a few fortresses, was occupied by Russian soldiery and used as a base of operations against Napoleon. The Polish government left the country. Its place was taken by a "Supreme Council" composed of supporters of Russia and presided over by Lanskoj, a Russian Senator. Among the members was also a representative of Prussia, by the name of Christopher Colomb, to look after the Prussian interests, as, under the above mentioned treaty of Kalisz, the Russian Emperor promised to return to

Prussia the Polish provinces which Napoleon had taken from her. The allies suffered several defeats at the hands of Napoleon. He was approaching



(Portrait by M. Bacciarelli)

FIG. 180—PRINCE JOSEPH PONIATOWSKI

Breslau and laying plans for the reconquest of Poland when the wily Metternich induced him to agree to a truce and to meet at a convention in Prague. Valu-

able time gained by the cessation of hostilities made possible the formation of a closer alliance with England and Austria as active participants. Emboldened by the alliances made, Austria presented at Prague a series of demands to which Napoleon obviously could not accede. The first demand concerned the division of the Duchy of Warsaw among her three neighbors. When Napoleon refused, Austria declared war. The subsequent events concerning Napoleon's



FIG. 181—THE PALACE OF PRINCE JOSEPH PONIATOWSKI AT WARSAW

fortunes need not be retold here, except to point out the loyalty of the Polish troops to Napoleon and their undaunted courage in the discharge of the difficult duties assigned to them. During the battle of Leipzig Prince Poniatowski was made Marshal of France. Because of the treachery of the Saxons and Wurtembergians, Prince Joseph's Polish corps was put into a most precarious position from which, however, it emerged triumphantly. The rearguard action

after the retreat from Leipzig was entrusted to Poniatowski. Here the Prince was wounded. When the bridges over the River Elster were destroyed too early, he was threatened with capture. Though severely wounded and profusely bleeding, he jumped into the stream with his steed and endeavored to swim across the rapid stream. "Il faut mourir en brave," he said. Here a shot pierced his left lung and with the words "Poland" and "honor" he fell from his horse and disappeared under the water.\*

The death of their beloved hero and the appointment of the unpopular Prince Sulkowski in his place, together with reflection upon the futility of further sacrifices, caused the Polish legions to demand release from duty. Apprised of this, Napoleon addressed them in person, pointing out that such a step on their part would not help their country and would but serve to tarnish their past glorious record and their soldierly honor. By staying with him, he said, they could yet serve their country, because he would never forget Poland. It is easy to surmise that they did not abandon him. Sulkowski resigned from command and his place was taken by the untiring Jan Henryk Dombrowski. In the campaign of 1814 Polish blood flowed profusely at the battlefields of Brienne, Rheims, Arcis sur Aube and Montereau. At Arcis sur Aube a battalion of Polish infantry commanded by Jan Skrzynecki saved Napoleon's life. Napoleon's admiration for Polish chivalry was genuine and it is significant that the only squadron which accompanied him to and remained with him in his exile on the Island of Elba was that of the Polish *chevaux légers* under Colonel Paul Jerzmanowski. By article 29 of the Treaty of Paris, inserted at the personal re-

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\* S. Askenazy: "Książę Józef," Posen: K. Rzepecki, 1913, p. 205.

quest of Napoleon, the Polish troops were guaranteed a safe return to their homes and were allowed to carry with them their arms and military decorations. "In this way the small but armed companies were recognized as the representatives of the Polish state. The Congressional Kingdom had its birth here. . . . The vanquished received honors from their conquerors. Sad but proud was the return march to their native



FIG. 182—COL. PAUL JERZMANOWSKI

country. Through a long mourning road General Sokolnicki carried the body of the supreme commander, during life his rival, and two hundred Cracovians formed the last escort of Prince Joseph." \* Grateful memories still surround their heroism and constitute an inexhaustible well of inspiration for the present-day efforts of Poland. The returning legions were received with great honors at Warsaw. The body of the Prince, who was the incarnation of Poland's conception of honor and devotion to duty and

\*M. Kukiel, l. c., p. 470.

country, was first interred at Warsaw but subsequently laid to rest in Cracow in the old royal cathedral. The City of Cracow at the time was the only spot in the old vast domains of the Polish Republic that was free. The other sections had come under the sovereignty of Russia, Austria and Prussia, by the provisions of a new partition agreed upon at the Congress at Vienna.



FIG. 183—PRINCE JOSEPH'S PALACE AT STARA SIENLAWA



FIG. 184—KOŚCIUSZKO HILL AT CRACOW

## CHAPTER XVII

### The Congress of Vienna and the Kingdom of Poland

The grim injustice of Poland's dismemberment was universally recognized and expressions of sympathy were lavishly bestowed upon the unhappy nation. Fortunately, sentimentality was soon to give place to practical considerations. The danger to the political equilibrium of Europe, which this act of injustice created, became clearly discernible after the smoke of the Napoleonic wars had cleared away and the representatives of the chief European countries came together to redraw the map of the continent. It was then discovered that Russia, whose civilizing mission lay in Asia, had already penetrated deep into Europe and was in possession of strong claims to the whole of Poland. And sly Prussia was ready to second Russia's demands if only by so doing she could grab Saxony. Neither France nor England cherished the idea of Russia's becoming an European power, and Austria resisted the enrichment of her neighbors by the large Polish acquisitions. The German states of Bavaria and Hanover, as well as Holland, opposed the plans of Russia and Prussia. Formidable quarrels

The Fifth  
Partition of  
Poland



arose over the claims of these two countries, and for a time it looked as if only by force of arms could the matter be brought to an issue. The reappearance of the Corsican in France called for united action and for a speedy close of the negotiations. The Polish question was settled in a manner that could bring nothing but bitter disappointment to the Poles. The Congress sanctioned the admittedly illegal dismemberment of Poland, which has proved to be a curse and calamity to the country and a cause of periodically recurring violent disturbances, as had been predicted by Lord Castlereagh, the British Plenipotentiary at the Congress. In a note to his government, referring to the vicious settlement of the Polish question, he wrote: "The undersigned adhering to all his former representations on this subject has only sincerely to hope that none of those evils may result from this measure to the tranquility of the north, and to the general equilibrium of Europe, which it has been his painful duty to anticipate." \*

The Congress, which assembled ostensibly to do justice to the nations of Europe, and to guarantee to them independence and liberty, did not take into consideration the desires and feelings of the subdued nations and of the Polish nation in particular. It sanctioned the fifth partition of Poland. On the memorable day of May 3, 1815, Russia signed the treaties with Austria and Prussia by which the lion's share of the Duchy of Warsaw went to her, and the western part of the last independent Polish state became annexed to Prussia under the name of the Grand Duchy of Posen. The districts of Tarnopol and Zbaraz, in Eastern Galicia, went back to Austria,

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\*Barker, l. c., p. 100.

as well as a section in West Galicia comprising the rich Wieliczka salt mines. The City of Cracow, with its immediate vicinity, was made an independent republic under the guardianship of the three partitioning powers. In 1846 it was annexed by Austria. With this exception the boundaries of the three Polands remained fixed, as determined by the Congress of Vienna, until the outbreak of the present great war. Four-fifths of the Polish Republic of 1772 came under Russian rule, and the remaining one-fifth was almost equally divided between Austria and Prussia. Henceforth the history of Poland is the history of the three sections, developing under entirely different conditions; the Russian part, however, by reason of its size and the fact that the Russian Tsar assumed the title of King of Poland, occupies the centre of the stage. The severance of the political bonds of the Polish people was mitigated, in a measure, by the provisions of the treaties between Russia and the other two powers, which guaranteed to the inhabitants of the former Polish Republic complete freedom in their social and economic intercourse within the boundaries of the country as they were in 1772, before the first partition took place. There were to be no tariff walls between the three parts of Poland, and transportation and navigation on all the rivers and canals was to be unobstructed.

Article I of the Treaty of Vienna guaranteed to the Poles as "the respective subjects of Russia, Austria and Prussia," representation in government and preservation of their national institutions "to be regulated in accordance with the political precepts which the several governments would consider useful and advisable for them." This qualifying phrase was couched in language too flexible to supply lasting foundations

for the future political structures which were to be reared in the three sections of Poland. Painfully did the Poles realize their precarious situation! Before the Congress assembled the venerable and aged Kosciuszko was assured by such statesmen as Lord Grey, Talleyrand and Metternich that the safety of Europe depended upon the restoration of Poland. He stayed in Vienna during the sessions of the Congress, and left, brokenhearted, for Switzerland after the disastrous agreement concerning Poland was reached by the Powers. He banished himself voluntarily to the high mountains of Wilhelm Tell rather than to die a slave in his own country, which he loved so tenderly and to which he was born a free citizen. Kosciuszko is the symbol of Poland's strivings for independence. The very mention of his name conjures up exalted feelings of patriotism in the Polish breast. Universal was the tribute paid to him upon his death on October 15, 1817. Instead of erecting a monument in bronze to his memory, it was decided to build something more lasting: a mountain. Approaching Cracow, the city where the Dictator issued his famous proclamation in 1794, one can see from a distance the Kosciuszko Hill, erected by the hands of the people and completed, after years of gratuitous labor, in 1823. It stands firm and forever over an urn containing some earth from the battlefield of Raclawice, where, with several thousand soldiers and two thousand peasants armed with scythes, he won the first victory over the Muscovite despoilers of his country.

The Republic  
of Cracow

Joseph Poniatowski, whose body was brought from Warsaw to Cracow to be laid beside the Polish Kings and heroes, gave additional endearment to the picayune city-re-

public which contained most of the treasures and memories of the past glories of the once mighty country, and was now the only free community within the boundaries of old Poland. The Cracow republic comprised an area of one hundred and three square miles, with a population of ninety-six thousand inhabitants, twenty-five thousand of whom lived within the city limits and the remainder in the villages surrounding it. According to the constitution provided by the Vienna Congress it was governed by a Senate composed of thirteen members, and an Assembly of representatives of the city and village population, of the university, the church and the judiciary. The Assembly exercised legislative power, elected nine of the thirteen Senators, had control over the budget and over the executive branch of the government which was centered in the person of the President of the Senate. The Assembly met annually for several weeks. The Code Napoleon was the civil law of the republic. The judiciary was entirely independent of the legislative and executive branches of the government. A small army of five hundred militiamen was put under the command of the President of the Senate. In 1818 the original aristocratic character of the little state was considerably modified by the emancipation of the peasant serfs, the recognition of full freedom of speech and assembly, the prohibition of confiscation of estates and the guarantee of personal immunity from arrest. Owing to the energy and ability of the first President, Count Stanislaw Wodzicki, the little republic soon began to prosper economically and carried on a brisk trade with the other sections of Poland. On account of its political status, historical associations and ancient university, Cracow became the Mecca of the Poles.

Soon after the treaty of the Vienna Congress was signed the Prussian troops occupied the section of the country that was apportioned to the Hohenzollerns, and the Polish flag flying over the City Hall of Posen was substituted by that of the newly created Duchy. King Friedrich Wilhelm III in an address to the Poles assured them that they would not be called upon to renounce their nationality; that they would have a share in the constitutional rights he was about to bestow upon his Prussian subjects in conformity with the promise made by him during the French invasion; and that they would have a provincial constitution of their own, with complete freedom of worship and national education, and an unobstructed right to use their native tongue in private and official life. He appointed Prince Antoni Radziwill, a Pole, related by marriage to the Hohenzollerns, the first Governor General of the Duchy, and other high offices were similarly filled by Poles. An attempt was made to create a special German-Polish military corps, but the Poles refused to serve in it. At first conditions were satisfactory, but in a short time reaction began to set in. First the districts lying on the right bank of the Vistula were severed from the Duchy, annexed to West Prussia and put under strict German rule. Then attempts at changing the laws were made in the districts where there was the slightest admixture of Germans. The Polish officials were removed and Prussians appointed. The use of the Polish language in the administration and the judiciary was limited, and the schools lost their purely Polish character by the appointment of German teachers. Radziwill became a mere figurehead. Prussian officials with instructions from Berlin became the real governors of the Duchy, and the old

**The Grand  
Duchy of  
Posen**

policy of playing off the peasants against the landowners was revived. In 1824 the Prussian government abolished serfdom and recognized the right of the Polish peasants to the land they tilled. It was a very inexpensive way of gaining the loyalty and gratitude of the peasants and of arousing bitter class antagonism between the two strata of the Polish people. This mischievous principle of "divide et impera" was subsequently invoked by Austria and Russia in their dealings with Poland. In Silesia, where the landowners were Germans and the peasantry indigenous Poles, the Prussian government was less liberal and the peasants did not get land with their freedom. Here the government favored the land aristocracy. The emancipation of the peasants was, however, a step in the right direction. It was a nearsighted policy on the part of the Polish landowners to wait until this reform had been brought about by a hostile government and exploited for the purpose of sowing the seeds of discord between the higher and lower classes, and thus preventing solid national harmony and unity in the Duchy of Posen.

In Galicia conditions were still worse. By making the landowners responsible for the collection of taxes from their peasants the government created bitter antagonism between the two elements. Moreover, the ultra-conservative Hapsburgian government, dominated by the arch-reactionary of his time, Prince Metternich, did even less than Prussia to promote constitutional and liberal government in the Polish province of the Empire. The pledges made at the Congress sank into complete oblivion. At first a semblance of a representative government was introduced in the form of a very cumbersome and undemocratic machinery, but it was soon superseded by a rigid administrative bureau-

crazy which, in order to weaken the Poles still further, endeavored to foster animosities between them and their Ruthenian cousins in the eastern section of the province.

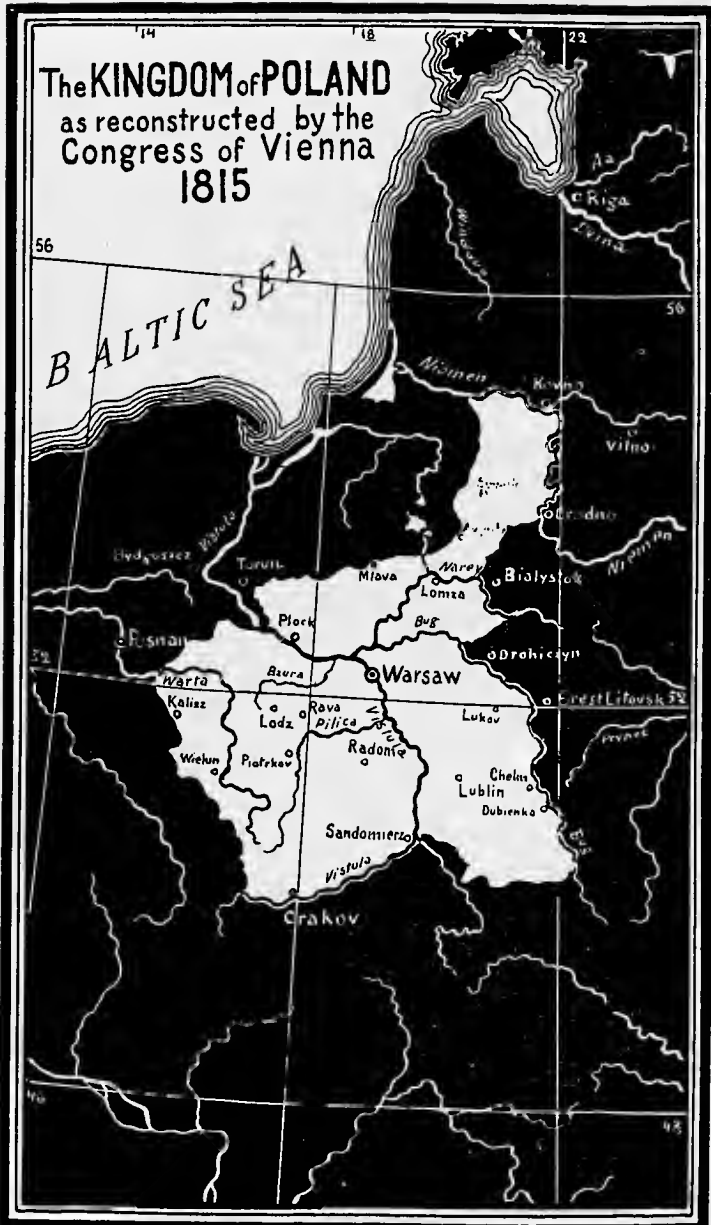
The most liberal rule was introduced in Russian Poland, that is in that section of ancient Poland which was established by the Congress of Vienna as a sovereign state (*état*) and which was "united by a constitution with the throne of Russia," and to which special articles of the treaty of Vienna were devoted. The basis of the union was the constitution. The above quoted flexible clause, leaving the form of internal organization to the discretion of the monarch did not apply to this part of Poland. The boundaries of the newly created kingdom were carefully defined by the Powers. The Tsar, however, expressly reserved to himself the right of making such additions to Poland as he might think fit. "This reservation had in view the eventual annexation to the Kingdom of Poland of at least two parts of Lithuania." \* The rights of the Russian Tsar with reference to it were predicated on the existence of a written constitution. The new Kingdom was a distinct state, united with Russia in the person of the monarch, but not incorporated into the Empire. Article 4 of the existing fundamental laws of Russia clearly recognized this relation with reference to the Kingdom of Poland, as well as to the Great Duchy of Finland. The principles of the Constitution of the newly created state were agreed upon by the Tsar in Vienna and were incorporated in a document signed by him on May 25, 1815. Accordingly he appointed a commission, with Prince Czartoryski as chairman, to

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\*Prof. S. Askenazy "Poland and the Polish Revolution" In: Cambridge Modern History, vol X, p. 446.

The Constitu-  
tion of the  
Kingdom of  
Poland

The KINGDOM of POLAND  
as reconstructed by the  
Congress of Vienna  
1815





work out a draft of the constitution which, on November 27, 1815, he solemnly sealed. It was proclaimed on December 24th of the same year, and the temporary government which had been set up in 1813 under the direction of Lanskoj and Novosiltsoff was



FIG. 155--THE RUSSIAN GRAND DUKE CONSTANTINE

abolished. The two Russian plenipotentiaries remained, however, in Warsaw, as did the Tsar's brother, Grand Duke Constantine, whom the Tsar appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Polish army.

Constantine was a born despot, a man of unbridled temper, a maniacal pedant who nourished an inveterate contumely for constitutional government. Though he had a liking for the Poles, yet his uncouth manners and severe military discipline, with heavy corporal punishment for the slightest infringements of it, made his presence in Warsaw a source of general discontent and irritation. The Polish officers of the higher and lower ranks, accustomed as they were to gentlemanly treatment and honorable dealings, felt outraged by the Muscovite behavior of the Grand Duke, and many of them committed suicide in despair. His cruelty knew no bounds. Revolting accounts are given of the tortures inflicted on prisoners. The Grand Duke's wantonness had the effect of undoing all the liberties the constitution guaranteed. Numerous persons were thrown into prison at his whim. Students were put to labor in paving and repairing streets. He became a veritable terror of Warsaw. Czartoryski was hampered by him in his preliminary work of organization, and intimated to the Tsar the desirability of his removal. But the clique at the St. Petersburg Court and the influential elements of Russia, who opposed tooth-and-nail all the plans of the Tsar with reference to Poland, which, in their judgment were dangerous to the Empire and deprived thousands of Russians of lucrative positions in the newly acquired country, prevailed and his recall was not effected. Similarly impossible was the removal of Lanskoj and Novosiltsoff, who enjoyed their extremely well paid situations, and who, pretending to be devoted friends of Poland, were, in reality, her worst enemies. They kept the court camarilla at St. Petersburg advised of every movement in Polish life and directed all the efforts at destroying the liberal constitution of the

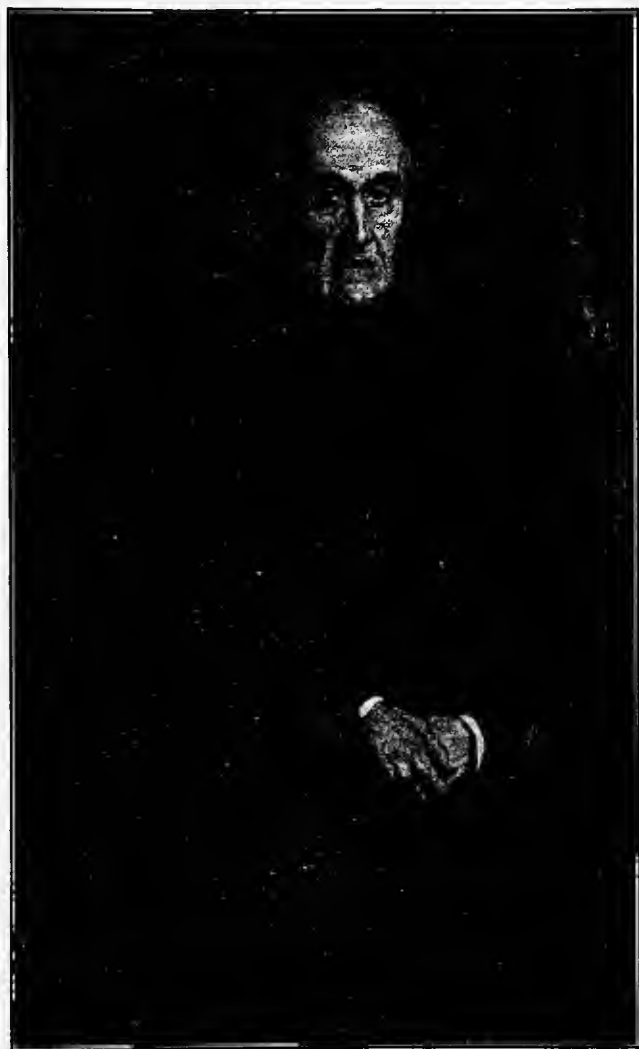


FIG. 186—PRINCE ADAM CZARTORYSKI (1770-1861)

Kingdom. It was at Novosiltsoff's insistence that the old Polish principle of "neminem captivabimus, nisi jure victum" was substituted by "neminem captivari permittemus, nisi jure victum," and thus the power of illegal imprisonment was made a prerogative of the Crown or its representatives.

The principal provisions of the constitution signed by Emperor Alexander I guaranteed freedom of religious worship, equality of all citizens before the law, freedom of speech and inviolability of private property. The Polish language was to be used in all branches of the government as well as in the army. All offices were to be filled by Poles exclusively. The legislative power was to be vested in a Diet composed of a Senate and a Chamber of Deputies. The executive power was entrusted to an Administrative Council composed of the Viceroy and five Ministers, all appointed by the Tsar of Russia in his capacity as King of Poland. He also appointed a Secretary of State, whose function it was to act as intermediary between the King and the country. The Ministers were responsible before the Diet, and countersigned all royal decrees as well as those of the Viceroy. During the absence of the King his power was vested in the State Council, composed of the Viceroy, the Ministers, special counsellors and referees. The State Council's chief duties were to prepare proposals for legislative enactments. For administrative purposes the country was divided into eight provinces, headed by woyevodas. The judiciary was made independent of the executive branch of the government. The judges were appointed for life and could not be recalled. All citizens, without distinction of social status and religion had equal rights at the courts. The competence of the criminal courts did not include cases of high treason or offences of high state officials.

Such cases were tried by the Diet sitting as a Court. The King was Commander-in-Chief of the Polish army, whose size depended upon the budgetary appropriations of the Diet. The constitution provided that the Polish army could not be used outside of the boundaries of Europe. The command and uniforms of the army were Polish. The coronation of the King was to take place at Warsaw. A Polish Viceroy was the representative of the King in civil matters, and the Polish language was recognized as the official language of the kingdom. The constitution prohibited deportations to Siberia.

Such were the main provisions of the constitution which was worked out by the Czartoryski Committee and sanctioned by Tsar Alexander I. It was very liberal when contrasted with the preceding constitutions and when considered in the light of the reactionary currents which prevailed in Europe since the unholy "Holy Alliance." Official as well as unofficial Russia was much displeased with it, and brought strong pressure to bear upon the Emperor to dissuade him from adopting it, and particularly from extending it to Lithuania, Podolia and Ukraine. The famous Russian historian, Karamzin, wrote to the Tsar reminding him that he had no right to separate the Polish provinces that were added to Russia in Catherine's time. "Our sword conquered Poland and this is our law," he wrote. The Tsar, however, would not allow himself to be swayed from his sworn pledges. He came to Warsaw on November 12, 1818, and charmed everybody by his cordiality and apparent frankness. He said he knew of the outrages of his brother Constantine, but did not think it politic to recall him because he would then become an enemy of the Poles and would work against them. He advised the people to suffer him and to coax him as well as the

other Russians into friendship, and then added: "I desire to unite you with Lithuania, Podolia and Ukraine, but this requires patience and confidence on your part and dexterity on mine. It is necessary to steal Poland from the Russians. (*"Il faut aux Russes escamoter la Pologne."*) Such utterances on the part of the Russian monarch were received with delight and gave rise to great hopes for the future. His



FIG. 187—GEN. JOSEPH ZAYONCZEK

failure, however, to appoint Prince Czartoryski, the author of the Constitution, to the post of Viceroy, was a severe disappointment. Public opinion designated him for this exalted office. Czartoryski's character and intimate comradeship with the Emperor made him peculiarly fit for the position in the popular mind. General Zayonczek, upon whom this great honor was bestowed at the request of the Grand

Duke Constantine, was a man whose servility to foreign interests was demonstrated during the Napoleonic period. Elevated to high rank by Napoleon, he became entirely devoted to him, and did not hesitate to sacrifice Poland's interests to those of the French Emperor. He was a man of narrow mind and haughty demeanor, and his attitude to Prince Joseph Poniatowski, when the latter was War Minister of the Duchy of Warsaw, was so distasteful and so humiliating to national dignity that the news of his appointment as Viceroy was received in Poland with a feeling bordering on consternation. Unfortunately the fear of the people was wholly justified. He became a pliable tool in the hands of Constantine and the Russian agent Novosiltsoff, and never so much as attempted to protest against the violations of the constitution on the part of the Russians. The protests of the press and of some members of the Diet were of no avail.

Echoes of the happenings in Spain, Naples and France between the years 1818 and 1820, reverberated in the Polish press and served as an excuse for introducing a government censorship on periodic publications, extended presently to all prints and books. At the opening of the second Diet in 1820, Alexander warned the country against adopting the dangerous West European liberalism. He also expressed great dissatisfaction with the proceedings of the Diet, at which two government measures, one relating to the method of criminal procedure and the other to the method of fixing responsibility upon the ministers, were rejected. He realized that the Diet did not propose to be used as a rubber stamp for all official measures and resolved to curb it. In the words of Byron:

**The  
Reaction**

“How nobly gave he back to Poles their Diet,  
Then told pugnacious Poland to be quiet.”

Thanks only to the great abilities of Prince Xavier Lubecki, the Minister of Finance, was it possible to avert difficulties over the budget which, in violation of the constitution, was not submitted to the Diet for approval. Moreover, the budget did not specify the



FIG. 188—PRINCE XAVIER LUBECKI, FINANCE MINISTER OF THE CONGRESSIONAL KINGDOM

items of appropriation, and in this way afforded means for an illegal diversion of moneys. By persuasive presentations at St. Petersburg, Lubecki was able to save the treasury from being drained for unauthorized purposes. He was also able to raise sufficient taxes to preserve the organization of the



Kingdom. The Emperor had already intimated that in view of the deficit "it would be necessary to change the form of organization of the Kingdom in such a way as to enable it to be self-supporting."\* It was due to the genius and energy of Lubecki that sufficient sums were raised and the need of changing the constitutional groundwork of the Kingdom was obviated. He also contributed greatly to the upbuilding of the country. Thanks to his initiative a Land Owners' Credit Association was organized in 1825, and four years later he founded the Bank of Poland at Warsaw. In spite of his great achievements the Finance Minister was hated in Poland because of his inconsiderateness, and because of his unbounded devotion and loyalty to Russia.

The growing disregard for the Constitution on the part of the Russian Emperor and his representatives affected public life generally. The press was trammled by a severe censorship. Public education next came under the careful scrutiny of the Government, with a view of blotting out any liberal doctrines which might possibly find their way into the minds of the youth. To achieve this end the Government encouraged the aggressiveness of the Church and welcomed religious interference in educational matters. The great educator, Stanislaw Kostka Potocki, who had done so much to raise educational standards and to fight obscurantism, was forced to resign his position as Minister of Education in spite of his brilliant achievements, chief among which was the founding of the University of Warsaw in 1818. He was a Free Mason and an enemy of religious hypocrisy which he so vividly depicted in his novel called "The Journey to Darktown." It was through his efforts that Pius

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\*Smolenski, l. c. Vol. IV, p. 68.

VII ordered the closing of about a score of cloisters in Poland. With the hydra of reaction raising its head high, a man of such convictions as Potocki, though entirely faithful to the Government and recognized as the greatest authority in educational matters, had to go, clearing the way for one Szaniawski, a man of considerable intellectual attainment but devoid of moral principle. He began his career as a revolutionary and ended it as a reactionary, of so obtuse a type as to fit him for the holding of a ministerial post in the Polish constitutional cabinet of Alexander I toward the end of that monarch's life, when he finally succumbed to the form of dementia known as religious mysticism. The standard of the schools soon declined under the strict police régime of Szaniawski and his associates, who stifled every expression of independent thought or action. This coincided with the high tide of reaction which flooded the whole of Europe at the time, and caused the transformation of societies like those of the Free Masons and the Carbonari into secret political organizations. Greece, Italy and Spain lived through revolutions, and political attentats were not infrequent in France and Germany. The members of the Holy Alliance met frequently, and after each successive conference the repressions in their respective countries became stricter and more unbearable. Emperor Alexander attended all these conferences, and grew more convinced of the dangers of liberalism and constitutionalism. The arbitrariness of Constantine, who had an inborn aversion to all popular rights, knew no bounds as the estrangement of his sovereign brother from his former beliefs grew wider. There was no such thing as personal safety in constitutional Poland. People were arrested and thrown into dungeons on the slightest provocation. The prisons were overcrowded

and the suspects subjected to cruel inquisitions. The progressive sections of the Code Napoleon were eliminated, a new reactionary criminal code introduced and flogging made legal. The army was cleared of all the officers who had served in the Napoleonic campaigns and who had a gentlemanly conception of honor. Mechanical drill and lifeless routine took the place of old gallantry. The maniacal Constantine was so given over to the observance of rules that the best officers were compelled to resign for breaks of the most trivial character. The Diet objected to all these flagrant violations of the fundamental laws of the land, and was finally muzzled by an imperial order prohibiting the publication of Diet debates.

In the year 1825 Alexander died and Russia expected the advent of Constantine to the throne of the Tsars. When the news of his resignation, on account of his marriage to a Polish woman, Joan Grudzinska, became known, it created general unrest throughout the Empire, of which the Russian revolutionaries decided to take advantage in order to bring about a change in the form of government. The attempt was doomed to failure on account of the unpreparedness of the masses. Even the troops which supported the Dekabrists (the name by which the revolutionaries were known) and shouted: "Long live Constantine and the Constitution," thought that the constitution was the Grand Duke's wife. Tragic was Poland's lot to be united with a nation of such political immaturity! Alexander's successor, Nicholas I. was a true incarnation of Russia's spirit of that time. His arbitrary character and the deep contempt of the despot for every expression of individualism and freedom augured ill for Poland. Al-

**Secret  
Patriotic  
Societies**



FIG. 189—THE UNIVERSITY OF WILNO AND THE CHURCH OF ST. JOHN  
(On the right hand side is a Russian Orthodox Church)

though he swore to maintain the Polish Constitution, his determination to do away even with the semblance of constitutional government which remained to the ill-fated country in the valley of the Vistula was unmistakably demonstrated by his acts. He failed to appoint a Viceroy after Zayonczek's death in 1826, and intensified the ruthless Russification policy inaugurated by his predecessor in Lithuania.

The conditions prevailing in Poland were as paradise in comparison with what was going on in Lithuania, a country of fine Polish culture, with numerous schools and a celebrated university at Wilno. The Congress of Vienna did not guarantee a constitution to Lithuania and Alexander, "the crafty Greek" as Napoleon called him, did not try "to steal her away from Russia," as he intimated he would do. That section of the Polish Republic was completely at the mercy of his minions. Some petty disturbances in a boys' high school in 1822 were taken as an excuse for wholesale arrests and inhuman persecution by the same Novosiltsoff, who at one time had affected great friendship for Poland. Many young men were exiled to Siberia; prominent university professors who betrayed patriotic tendencies were dismissed; the rights and privileges of the University of Wilno were curtailed; and finally, two years before his death, Alexander proclaimed his famous manifesto against all attempts at a reunion with "the injudicious Polish nation," and ordered that henceforth all instruction in Lithuania and other Polish provinces outside of the Congressional Kingdom should be carried on in the Russian language, and that all "excessive reasoning should be condemned.\* Small wonder that under

**Persecutions  
in Lithuania**

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\* J. Grabiec, *Dzieje Narodu Polskiego*, p. 286.

such conditions a large number of secret patriotic societies arose all over Poland and Lithuania with an avowed aim of liberating Poland from Russian misrule. Some of the societies had existed in Poland for a long time. There always had been a party opposed to any compromise with Russia, skeptical of the



FIG. 190—MAJOR VALERIAN LUKASINSKI, PATRIOT AND MARTYR,  
FOUNDER OF THE PATRIOTIC SOCIETY OF WARSAW

possibility of a symbiosis with that nation. Other societies came into existence when Alexander's true designs became apparent. They had members all over the country, among university students as well as among older and more mature men. The Patriotic Society of Warsaw, founded by Major Valerian Lukasinski, exercised a considerable influence. At first it was a Free Mason lodge, but when these

lodges came under the ban of the law it took on the aspect of a secret society, known at first as that of the National Carbonari and subsequently as the National Patriotic Society. It grew in membership as the Russian atrocities increased and established a number of provincial branches. When its existence became known to Constantine, Lukasinski and his associates were arrested and put through a "third degree" trial, notorious for its cruelty, and which was repeated afterward in another connection. In Poland the name of Lukasinski became a common designa-



FIG. 191--THOMAS ZAN, LEADER OF THE WILNO UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

tion for intense suffering and inhuman torture. Contrary to the constitutional law of the land the leaders of the Society were tried by a martial court, and though nothing except the practice of free masonry could be established against them, they were sentenced to many years of hard labor. The Lithuanian societies had at first a purely literary and scientific character. Such were the fraternities of university students known as the Philomaths, Philarets and others. Young men gathered there, read classic works and presented their own productions, and dis-

cussed social and scientific problems. Novosiltsoff suspected revolutionary tendencies, and disapproved of the societies because they were centres whence Polish culture radiated and retarded the progress of Russification. Among the members of these societies were men who subsequently became Poland's greatest poets, scientists, statesmen and patriots. The above mentioned manifesto of Alexander I abolished all these societies. The most promising young men, such as Adam Mickiewicz and Thomas Zan, were either exiled to Siberia or interned in remote provinces of Russia. Like Joachim Lelewel, many of the university professors lost their positions. Prince Adam Czartoryski was relieved of his office of Curator of Education, and his place was taken by the rabidly anti-Polish Novosiltsoff. The University of Wilno declined rapidly and the Russification of the country was begun in an intensive manner.

The "Dekabrist" revolution in Russia had its frightful echo in Poland. During the inquest of the St. Petersburg revolution the prosecutors came across some evidence involving the Polish National Patriotic Society. The first two months of 1826 witnessed an orgy of arrests in Poland. Convents, palaces, town halls and jails were filled with prisoners, and Constantine and Novosiltsoff raged in their fury. All remembered Lukasinski's trial and trembled for the fate of the arrested. The preliminary inquiries lasted a whole year and the nation had become greatly depressed. Novosiltsoff endeavored to bring the trial before a court martial, and thanks only to the great influence of Prince Lubbecki at St. Petersburg, law prevailed and the accused were granted a trial before the Senate sitting as a court of justice. The atmosphere of Warsaw

**The Trial of  
Members of  
the Polish  
National Pa-  
triotic Society**



was very heavy. There was hardly a family that did not have one or more of its members among the accused. The trial was the object upon which the thought of the whole nation concentrated. All performances, gatherings, balls and games were suspended during its duration. It was universally realized that grave matters were at stake. On its outcome hinged the question of whether the Poles had a right to resent the violation on the part of Russia of the rights guaranteed to them by the Congress of Vienna. On June 10, 1828, the long awaited moment came. The Senators announced their decision. With only the two exceptions of Vincent Krasinski and Czarnecki, they declared unanimously that the accused were not guilty of high treason, but merely of belonging to secret societies, which were prohibited by law, and sentenced them accordingly. The decision was received with enthusiasm throughout Poland. It was felt that Poland's honor had been saved. In their arguments the Senators pointed out that the accused, acting in defence of their rights guaranteed to Poland by the Congress of Vienna and sworn to by the Tsars of Russia, exercised their constitutional prerogatives in endeavoring to preserve the integrity of their nation. The judgment of the Court was resented by the Tsar. By an imperial rescript publication of the opinion of the Senate was forbidden and all the accused men were exiled to Siberia. This opened the eyes of the most conservative among the Poles as to how Russia understood and respected constitutional rights.

While the older and more conservative men were deeply mortified over the state of affairs the younger spirits flared up in indignation. The fire of patriotic exaltation inflamed the minds of a group of sub-sergeants, who were studying military arts in a school

organized by Constantine at the summer palace of the late King Poniatowski. A young lieutenant by the name of Peter Wysocki, a hothead without experience or executive ability, conceived the idea of reviving the Patriotic Society founded by Lukasinski, and enlisted the co-operation of the sub-sergeants. The society was organized in December, 1828, and the young men swore to offer their lives in defence of the liberties of their country and to spread broadcast the gospel of freedom.

About this time a war broke out between Russia and Turkey. Austria secretly backed Turkey, and as usual in such dangerous times the foreign governments became milder in their dealings with the Poles. The bureaucratic oppression in Galicia was made less severe and there was a let-up in the Russian persecutions in Lithuania. In May, 1829, Tsar Nicholas I decided to come to Warsaw for his coronation as King of Poland. Wysocki and his associates planned to take advantage of the occasion and to start a revolution. Calmer judgment prevailed, however, and they agreed to postpone action until the meeting of the Diet, which, although the constitution provided biennial sessions, was only the fourth since the Congress of Vienna and was bound to break up in a deadlock with the Government. The Diet met in May, 1830, and proved indeed to be as recalcitrant and independent as its immediate predecessors. The Deputies refused to vote money for the erection of a statue to Alexander I as well as to give the Church jurisdiction in matrimonial matters and they did not mince words in criticising the Government. The Tsar, who attended the session was greatly displeased with their behavior and left the city fully determined to abolish the Constitution.

**The  
Coronation of  
Nicholas I  
at Warsaw**

He did not, however, prorogue the Diet and failed to give the awaited signal for an uprising.

In July the news of the revolution in Paris reached Warsaw. The Bourbon King, placed on the throne of France at the intervention of foreign powers, was deposed, and a more liberal constitution adopted.

**The Outbreak  
of the Uprising**

Shortly afterwards some of the Italian states rose against Austria, and the Belgian people revolted against the Dutch rule. These revolutions had a stimulating effect on the minds of the redblooded Poles. The society of the sub-sergeants carried on feverish propaganda, but it had nobody big and popular enough to organize and direct a successful campaign against Russia. Perspicacious men such as Maurice Mochnecki urged the leader of the revolutionaries to make adequate preparations before starting the conflagration. He begged Wysocki to organize a strong revolutionary government that should take the reins of the movement into their hands lest it disintegrate. Wysocki refused to heed the advice. He was convinced that all that was needed was the starting of the revolution, and then the nation would unanimously support it and the regular government would take care of all the necessities. He, as well as others, thought that when the crisis came the greatest of the nation would immediately cluster around the banner of the revolution and that General Joseph Chlopicki, the one-time hero of the Legions, by popular acclaim, would become the military dictator and would lead the nation to victory. In his enthusiasm the youthful patriot overestimated the moral strength and political wisdom of "the known and trusted in the nation," and, regardless of persuasions, went on true to his convictions. Novosiltsoff saw what was going on and hurriedly left for

St. Petersburg, as did also some Polish dignitaries who were hated by the people. Revolutionary pamphlets were circulated among the people and occasionally some jester would post on the door of the Palace of Belvedere, the residence of Constantine, a notice: "House for rent." Constantine seemed to give little credence to the wild stories which were being circulated about an uprising but the secret police was diligently at work and could, at any moment, unearth the conspiracy. It was necessary to act promptly. To make things worse, Nicholas, who considered himself honor-bound to crush all revolutions no matter where they occurred, was getting ready to send an expedition against the restless spirits of France and Belgium, and ordered some Polish regiments for that duty. This was like pouring oil on a smouldering fire. The 29th of November was set for the beginning of the uprising. At a given hour one detachment of conspirators was to enter the Belvedere Palace and to assassinate Constantine. Another was charged with the duty of disarming the Lithuanian guard that was attached to the Grand Duke in his capacity as Military Commander of the Lithuanian and Ruthenian provinces. It was a body of men sixty-five hundred strong, well equipped and possessing considerable ordnance. In order to disarm this guard it was necessary to descend upon them unexpectedly, and to do the work quietly and promptly. Simultaneously, another detachment was to rouse the population of the city and to gather the Polish army stationed in the barracks. None of the plans were carried through successfully. Constantine crept under his wife's very voluminous skirts and could not be found. Instead, the conspirators killed his lieutenant and the vice-president of Warsaw, a contemptible Polish spy who happened to be at the

palace. When somebody, mistaking the lieutenant for the Grand Duke, cried out that Constantine was dead the conspirators hastily departed. A few companies of the ducal guards were, in the meantime, approaching the Belvedere in great haste. Their disarming was unsuccessful, as the signals failed to work, and not all of the Polish regiments joined the conspirators. The populace, however, took possession of the arsenal, and carried away all the rifles and cartridges. Several Polish generals, who refused to join the revolutionaries, paid the penalty of death. Flaming beacons in the streets cast their lurid gleam afar on the eventful night of November 29, 1830, which marks the beginning of another Polish war against foreign oppression.





FIG. 192—THE EXILES' MARCH TO SIBERIA

## CHAPTER XVIII

### The War With Russia and the Aftermath

Adam Czartoryski said that the war with Russia, precipitated by the conspiracy of the young patriots on November 29, 1830, came either too early or too late. Some writers think that it should have been opened in 1828, when Russia was experiencing reverses in Turkey, and was least able to spare any considerable forces for a war with Poland. Many military critics, among them the foremost Russian writer, General Puzyrewski, maintained that in spite of the inequality of resources of the two countries, Poland had all the chances of holding her own against Russia if the campaign had been managed skillfully. Russia sent over a hundred and eighty thousand well trained men against Poland's seventy thousand, twenty thousand of whom were fresh recruits who entered the service at the opening of hostilities. "In view of this, one would think that not only was the result of the struggle undoubted, but its course should have been something of a triumphant march for the infinitely stronger party. Instead, the war lasted eight months, with often doubtful success. At times the balance seemed to tip decidedly to the side

Causes of the  
Polish Failure

of the weaker adversary who dealt not only hard blows, but even ventured daring offensives.”\* When this war ended in the defeat of Poland it was not the fault of the Polish soldier who does not know fear and who is ever ready to offer his life upon the altar of his country; it was not the fault of the country which made all sacrifices in the name of the cause for which the war had been declared and never tired of giving support in both life and money; it was rather the fault of the military leaders in whom the people had supreme confidence, and upon whom they bestowed dictatorial power.

It had so long been preached in Poland that anarchy and a lack of concord were the causes of national downfall that when war came, afraid lest some discord ruin the new opportunities, the people demanded absolute power for their leaders and tolerated no criticism. The pendulum swung to the other extreme. Unfortunately the men chosen to lead because of their past achievements were either senile or utterly incompetent to perform the great task imposed upon them. And what was worse, they had no faith in the success of the undertaking. By procrastination they ruined all chance of the victory which might have been theirs if the line of battle had been summarily established in Lithuania, and if the Russian forces slowly arriving had been dealt with separately and decisively. The first clashes of a Polish outpost with a Russian corps under Paskiewich show what feats of bravery the enthusiastic Poles could perform even when fighting against such tremendous odds as in the battle at Stoczek. Despite a superiority of two to one and of competent guidance

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\* Puzyrewski: “Woyna polsko-rosyjska” quoted by W. Studnicki “Sprawa Polska” p. 235.

the Russians suffered complete defeat. Because of their spirit and temperament the Poles are more adapted to offensive than to defensive warfare. The Polish Generalissimo Chlopicki knew this well, yet



FIG. 193—GENERAL JOSEPH CHLOPICKI,  
Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Armies

because of his opposition to the war, criminal under the circumstances, and his hope that by negotiations the conflict might be averted, he tarried, allowing the Russians to gain by the delay, to cross rivers unob-



structed and to concentrate large forces at convenient points in Poland proper. Dilatory tactics characterized the whole preliminary period of the war. Taken by surprise at the rapid succession of events during the night of November 29th, the Administrative Council assembled immediately to take the reins of government into their hands and to decide on a course of action. The unpopular ministers were removed



FIG. 194—JULIAN URSYN NIEMCEWICZ (1757-1841)  
Patriot, writer, intimate friend and companion of Kościuszko

from the Council and men like Prince Czartoryski, the historian Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz, Joachim Lelewel and General Chłopicki, took their places. Submitting to strong pressure brought to bear upon him, Chłopicki, who condemned the conspirators and considered the uprising an act of madness, consented to command the army temporarily, in the hope that it

would be unnecessary to take the field. The perspicacious and far-seeing Maurice Mochnacki did not trust the newly constituted ministry, fearing that it did not possess sufficient self-reliance and determination for spirited action, and decided to overthrow it and substitute in its place the Patriotic Club, organized by him. On December 3rd a great public demonstration was held in Warsaw. Amid a storm of enthusiasm Mochnacki furiously denounced the



FIG. 195—MAURICE MOCHNACKI

dealings that were going on between the Government and Constantine who was camped outside the City in a suburb, protected by his guard. "Negotiations should be carried on not from Warsaw with Constantine, but from Wilno with Nicholas," Mochnacki shouted to the animated crowd. He advocated the transfer of the campaign to Lithuania and the selection of as remote a field of operations as possible to spare the country the devastation incident to war, and

to shield the native sources of food supply. The meeting adopted a number of demands to be communicated to the Administrative Council, among which the most urgent were the establishment of a revolutionary government and the immediate attack upon the forces of Constantine. Intensely dramatic was the scene when the delegation appeared at the session of the Council and demanded action. The ill-boding murmur of the surging crowd outside the building gave grave weight to their demands. When Prince Czartoryski told the delegates that Constantine was ready to forgive the offenders and that the whole matter was being amicably settled, the passionate Mochnacki angrily interrupted: "These are jests, sir. We did not rise for the sake of receiving kindness from Constantine! Let the Government not play comedy now. It may end in tragedy for the revolution or for its foes!" The city was seething. The Government realized that it had to concede to the demands of the people, but fearing an immediate break with Russia, permitted Constantine to depart with his troops, dragging the unfortunate Lukasinski with him in chains. It was an unpardonable blunder to allow the Grand Duke to escape instead of holding him as a valuable hostage, to be released in exchange for some future political gain and it was nothing short of dastardly crime to allow the vindictive Russians to lead away with them the unselfish and heroic patriot Lukasinski.

After Constantine's departure the Polish army, with all but two of its generals, Vincent Krasinski and Kurnatowski, joined the people and the uprising of the young conspirators turned into a regular war between Poland and Russia. The remaining four ministers of the pre-revolutionary cabinet left the Administrative Council, and their places were taken by Mochnacki

and three of his associates from the Patriotic Club. The new body was known as the Provisional Government. To legalize its actions the new government ordered the convocation of the Diet and meanwhile proclaimed Chlopicki as Dictator. In his day Chlopicki had been an able and glory bedecked soldier who, because of the chicanery of Constantine, retired from the army and lived in seclusion. When called upon to lead the nation against Russia he was nearing senility, and did not possess the executive ability and resourcefulness required by the exigencies of the moment. He overestimated the power of Russia and underestimated the strength and fervor of the Polish revolutionary army. By temperament and conviction he was inveterately opposed to a war with Russia, in the success of which he did not believe, and if he insisted upon a dictatorship and accepted it, it was only because he intended to use his extraordinary powers to maintain internal peace and to save the Constitution. On assuming the great office he sent two delegates to Emperor Nicholas and awaiting a favorable reply, refused to mobilize the forces of the nation and to free Lithuania from the Russian garrisons. The people chafed under his inactivity and their erstwhile enthusiasm turned to restlessness and despair, but their faith in the Dictator was still unshaken.

Meanwhile the deputies to the Diet began to arrive at the capital and at their first session declared themselves unequivocally for war with Russia. At the same time Chlopicki's delegates informed the Dictator that the Emperor did not care to enter into any negotiations, but demanded unconditional surrender and complete submission to his good graces. Whereupon Chlopicki, having irretrievably wasted

**The Deposition of Tsar Nicholas**

valuable time, resigned. On January 25, 1831, the Diet proclaimed the dethronization of Nicholas I and thus lawfully broke the personal union which existed between the Kingdom of Poland and Russia by the terms of the Vienna Congress treaty. The bond uniting the two nations was severed. The proclamation declared that "the Polish nation is an independent people and has a right to offer the Polish crown to him



FIG. 196—JOACHIM LELEWEL, Teacher, Patriot and Statesman

whom it may consider worthy, from whom it might with certainty expect faith to his oath and whole-hearted respect to the sworn guarantees of civic freedom." Five men were selected to constitute the government. They were Prince Adam Czartoryski, Chairman, Vincent Niemoyowski, the famous deputy from Kalisz, who during the preceding decade had

fearlessly exposed the Russian machinations to cramp constitutional life in Poland, Theophile Morawski, Stanislaw Barzykowski, and the celebrated educator Professor Joachim Lelewel of the Wilno University. The new government set itself energetically to work at the great task imposed upon it, and soon a considerable army was mustered and equipped for action.

Chlopicki was persuaded to accept the active command of the army and Prince Michael Radziwill was made Dictator. It was too late to move the theatre of hostilities to Lithuania. By the end of January Russian forces appeared in Poland commanded by Field Marshal Deebitch. After a series of minor battles in which Dwernicki and other generals distinguished themselves, the Polish forces assembled on the right bank of the Vistula to defend the capital. On February 25th the famous battle of Grochov took place, noted for the dogged determination of the adversaries. Over seven thousand Poles fell on that field. The number of killed in the attacking army was considerably larger. The increasing assaults of the doubly strong Russian army were repeatedly repulsed and Deebitch was forced to retire to Siedlce. Warsaw was saved, and the Polish army remained triumphant and confident. Chlopicki, whose soldierly qualities reasserted themselves at the sound of battle, was wounded in action and his place taken by John Skrzynecki who, like his predecessor, had won distinction under Napoleon for personal courage and had been general of the line in the Polish army. Disliked by Grand Duke Constantine, he had retired from service and had spent his advancing years in lazy speculations over transcendental questions. He shared with Chlopicki the conviction of the futility of a war with Russia, but with the opening of hostilities

The  
Dictatorship of  
Skrzynecki



(Painting by Woyciech Koszanki)  
FIG. 197—THE DEFENSE OF OLSZYINKA DURING THE BATTLE OF GROCHOW

took command of a corps and fought creditably at Grochov. When the weak and indecisive Radziwill surrendered the dictatorship, Skrzynecki was chosen to succeed him. Unfortunately, he also lacked the qualities of firmness and high generalship essential to meeting a difficult situation. He endeavored to end the war by negotiations with the Russian Field



FIG. 198—GEN. JAN SKRZYNECKI,  
Successor of Gen. Chłopicki in supreme command of the Polish Army

Marshal, and, in his political artlessness, hoped for benign foreign intervention. Sympathetic echoes of the Polish aspirations reverberated throughout Europe, and the astounding heroism of the Polish army won popular admiration for the country and her endeavors to free herself from oppression. Under Lafayette's presidency, enthusiastic meetings had been held in



Paris. Some money for the Polish cause was also collected in the United States and flags sent to the Polish heroes. The chancelleries of France and England, however, did not share in the feelings of their people. Louis Phillippe, elevated to royal dignity by a revolutionary tide, thought but of securing for himself recognition on the part of all European governments, and Lord Palmerston was in too friendly

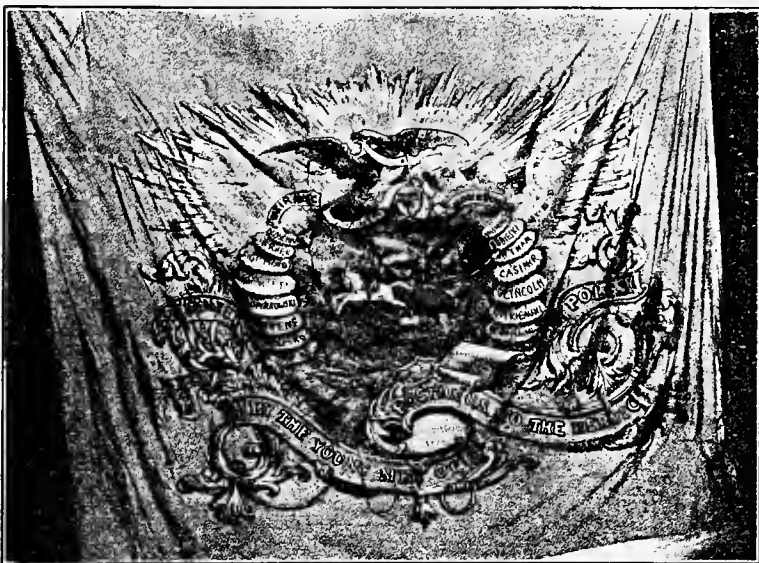


FIG. 199—A BANNER PRESENTED TO THE POLISH INSURRECTIONISTS OF 1830-1831 BY THE YOUNG MEN OF BOSTON, MASS.

At present in the Polish Museum at Rapperswil, St. Gallen, Switzerland

relations with Russia at the time even to listen to Polish entreaties. Moreover, England regarded with alarm the reawakening of the French national spirit and had come to the conclusion that its policy ought to be not to weaken Russia, "as Europe might soon again require her services in the cause of order,

and to prevent Poland, whom it regarded as a national ally of France, from becoming a French province of the Vistula."\* Austria and particularly Prussia adopted a most hostile attitude and hampered the cause of Poland by a benevolent neutrality toward Russia. They closed the Polish frontiers and prevented



FIG. 200—GEN. JOSEPH DWERNICKI  
One of the ablest commanders of the campaign

the transportation of munitions of war or supplies of any kind. Under such circumstances the war with Russia began to take on a somber and disquieting aspect. No amount of devotion and sacrifice could

\* Morill, l. c., p. 260.

avert the impending catastrophe. The Poles fought desperately and attempts were made to rouse Volhynia, Podolia, Zmudz and Lithuania. With the exception of the Lithuanian uprising which took on a serious aspect under ardent leadership, in which the youthful Countess Emily Plater and several other women distinguished themselves, the guerilla warfare carried on in the frontier provinces was of



FIG. 201—COUNTESS EMILY ZYBERK-PLATER  
One of the organizers of the uprising in Lithuania and an active participant in several battles

minor importance, and served only to give the Russians an opportunity of wreaking their vengeance on the peaceful population. Notorious was the slaughter of the inhabitants of the small town of Oszmiana in Lithuania. Meanwhile, new Russian forces under Grand Duke Michael arrived in Poland but met with many defeats. They were frequently out-manoeuvred by superior Polish strategy. Constant warfare, however, and bloody battles such as that at Ostrolenka in which eight thousand Poles lost their lives, con-

siderably depleted the Polish forces and cast despondency over the country. Regrettable mistakes on the part of the commanders, constant changes and numerous resignations and above all the indolence of the Generalissimo who had not ceased to count on foreign intervention, added to the feeling of despair. The more radical elements of the community severely criticized the government for its inactivity, its lack of energy and resourcefulness, and urged immediate land reforms and the recognition of the peasants' rights to the soil they tilled. By identification of their interests with the national liberty, the masses of the people could be gained for further efforts. Such a course of action was strongly indicated and there should have been no delay in adopting it. There was no time for academic discussion, yet the Diet fearing lest the reactionary governments of Europe might regard the war with Russia as social revolution procrastinated and haggled over concessions. The original enthusiasm of the peasantry became dampened, and the incompetence and ineptitude of the government more apparent. The thundering denunciations of the democrats were unavailing. In the meantime, the Russian army, commanded after the death of Deebitch by General Paskievitch, was concentrating and moving in a huge semi-circle toward Warsaw. Skrzynecki failed to prevent the juncture of the enemy's forces. Popular clamor demanded his deposition. The Diet acted accordingly and General Dembinski temporarily assumed command. The atmosphere was highly charged. Severe rioting took place and the government became completely disorganized. Count John Krukowiecki was made the President of the Ruling Council. He took everything in hand with much energy and determination, but had no faith in the success of the campaign and accepted

the highly responsible position to satisfy his personal ambition. He believed that when the heat of the aroused passions had subsided he could end the war on, what seemed to him, advantageous terms.

After a desperate defence by General Sowinski, Warsaw's suburb of Wola fell into Paskievitch's hands on September 6th. The next day saw the second line of the capital's defensive works attacked by the Russians. During the night of the 7th Krukowiecki capitulated, although the city still held out. He was immediately deposed by the Polish government and replaced by Bonawentura Niemoyowski. The army and the government withdrew to the fortress of Modlin, on the Vistula, subsequently renamed Novo-Georgievsk by the Russians, and then to Plock, where the dramatic climax of the war was reached. New plans had been adopted when the staggering news was received that the Polish crack corps under Ramorino, unable to join the main army, had laid down its arms by crossing the Austrian frontier into Galicia. It became evident that the war could be carried on no longer. On October 5, 1831, the Polish army of over 20,000 men crossed the Prussian frontier, and amid scenes of heart-rending despair and grief laid down their arms at Brodnica in preference to submission to Russia. Only one man, a colonel by the name of Stryjenski, won the peculiar distinction of giving himself up to the grace of Russia. All the others chose voluntary exile rather than life under Russian rule. Following the example of Dombrowski of a generation before, General Bem endeavored to reorganize the Polish soldiers in Prussia and Galicia into Legions and lead them to France. The Prussian government frustrated his plans in spite of the sympathy shown

**The Close  
of the War**

by the people. The immigrants left Prussia in bands of from fifty to a hundred, and their journey through the various German lands was a "triumphal march." The population of the principalities through which they passed greeted them with enthusiasm. Banquets and festivities were given in their honor, cities were illumined, fiery speeches were made and great hospitality was shown. Poetry vied with prose in extolling Polish heroism and patriotism. Even some of the German sovereigns, such as the King of Saxony, the Princess of Weimar and the Duke of Gotha shared in the general outburst of sympathy. It was only upon the very insistent demands of Russia that the Polish committees all over Germany had been closed. Meanwhile, "the storm birds of the revolution flew across central Europe and brought with them the breath of freedom, awakening the feelings which were slowly taking hold of the German people and kindling in them the striving for liberty which seventeen years later found expression in deeds which shook the foundations of absolutism and reaction."\*

In the meantime Russia proceeded "to restore order" in the conquered country, for the possession of which she never obtained legal title. Neither the Polish Government nor the powers which signed the treaty of Vienna gave sanction to the incorporation of Poland into the Russian Empire. It was done by force of arms and had no authority under the law of nations. Until the outbreak of the present war the country had been held by virtue of military occupancy alone. The importance of this fact cannot be underestimated in considering Poland's future status.

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\* Sokolowski, l. c. Vol. IV, p. 635:

Tragic was Poland's lot when she fell prey to Russia and ceased to have an army of her own! All the leaders of the Patriotic Club and the members of the Diet were condemned to death; all those who served in the Polish army and returned to Poland, following the Imperial amnesty, were drafted into the Russian army for periods of fifteen to twenty-five years. In addition, twenty thousand men were recruited from Poland. By an ukase of 1831 forty-five thousand persons belonging to the gentry of Lithuania and Ruthenia were forcibly settled in Russia. Tens of thousands of fatherless Polish boys were taken from their mothers and sent off to Russia to be raised as Orthodox Russians in military camps or to become settlers in remote provinces. The estates and all other properties of those who took part in the war were confiscated. In this way 2,349 estates were taken from their owners in Poland and 2,890 in Lithuania and given as compensation to Russian generals and officials. The Universities of Warsaw and Wilno, the Lyceum of Kremienetz in Volhynia and various other schools, the Society of the Friends of Science and other scientific and civic organizations were ordered closed. The libraries and many scientific and art collections were removed to Russia. The country was put under military law which lasted uninterruptedly until 1856 and practically since 1861, as at no time has the Kingdom been entirely free from extraordinary administrative regulations. In order "to exterminate all traces of Polish influence" on November 11, 1831, Nicholas ordered the abrogation of the existing judicial system in Lithuania and the adjoining provinces. The indemnity imposed upon Poland amounted to twenty-two million roubles. The burden of maintaining a Russian army of one hundred thou-

**The  
Immediate  
Consequences  
of the War**

sand men was laid on the outraged, ruined and bleeding country where there was hardly a family which had not lost some member either by execution or through exile. General Paskievitch was made Duke of Warsaw and given dictatorial powers over the conquered territory. An elaborate system of espionage and flogging was instituted in the place of constitutional government. The possession of arms was punishable by death. To keep the population in dumb obedience, citadels were built in Warsaw and Wilno and the guns so mounted as to face the cities. The people were threatened with the utter destruction of their two principal cities in the event of an uprising. A so-called "organic statute" guaranteeing certain constitutional rights, designed to beguile public opinion abroad, was promulgated in 1832 but never put into operation. In spite of the fact that Pope Gregory XVI in his bull of June 9, 1832, addressed to the Polish clergy, condemned the war with Russia, the Government in its vindictiveness did not spare the Catholic Church and adopted a number of restrictive measures, particularly in Lithuania and Ruthenia. A large number of convents and churches were closed and the children of parents belonging to other churches were ordered to be baptized in the Orthodox Church. The hardest blow was dealt to the Uniate Church which, since the partition of Poland, had been singled out by Russia for particular repression, as it was the last existing vestige of ancient Polish influence and bound the people of the outlying provinces to Western civilization. The same dissenters, for the protection of whom Peter the Great and Catharine II found it necessary to interfere in Polish internal politics, became the subjects of the most rigorous persecution. Only four days after the fall of Warsaw two monasteries re-



ceived notice that their estates were confiscated and that the Uniate monks would be replaced by Orthodox friars. Twenty more such institutions were closed before the end of the year 1831. "It was with exuberant joy that Emperor Nicholas received every news of the closing of another Uniate monastery: "Thanks be to God; we have again destroyed an enemy stronghold."\* With the aid of a renegade Uniate Bishop Siemaszko, the government resolved to extirpate the Uniate faith and did not stop at anything to achieve this aim. On February 24, 1839, the Uniate Bishop sealed a formal act of separation from the Church of Rome. Only the Chelm (Kholm) diocese which was within the limits of the Congressional Kingdom of Poland, because of the determined opposition of the local clergy and population, was exempted. Those who clung to their religion outside of this single diocese were regarded as dangerous political offenders and were dealt with accordingly. During the first week following the dissolution of the Uniate Church hundreds of priests and monks were exiled to Siberia; many were denied food and beaten to death. The women were even more resolved to remain true to their faith than the men and refused apostasy. The sisters of a convent in Minsk were punished for their obstinate devotion by outrageous cruelties, flogging and subjection to atrocious insult. One of them, Baptiste Downar, was burned to death in a bake oven by the Orthodox nuns. Nepomucena Grotkowska had her head split with an axe by a Russian Mother Superior. Some of the sisters who survived the two years of inhuman sufferings, were sent to an Orthodox convent in Miad-

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\* Bishop Edward Likowski, *Historia Kościoła Unickiego*, Vol. II, p. 78.

zioly, where the superior officer tortured them in an unspeakable manner. On cold days they were put in sacks and in the presence of the populace of the town, thrown into a lake and dragged by means of ropes from shore to shore. Many drowned. After six years of such persecution, five sisters managed to escape and went to Rome to lay their story before the Pope. Slowacki, one of Poland's greatest poets had depicted their lot in one of his most renowned poems, and more recently Stefan Żeromski described the suffering of the Uniates in some of his short stories. In spite of the persecution many Uniates remained true to their faith and though officially belonging to the Orthodox Church they took every occasion to manifest their true attachment. During the course of the present war, when Russian armies retired from these districts the people gave vent to their religious emotions, welcoming the Polish priests and the Polish legions who, knowing their feelings, opened for them their ancient churches.

The intense sufferings of the Polish, Lithuanian and cognate peoples who had once formed the Polish Republic, could not remain without an echo in Polish literature which, since the days of Poland's partitions took a powerful upward swing and reached its zenith during the period between 1830 and 1850 in the unsurpassed patriotic writings of Mickiewicz, Slowacki and Krasinski. In "Iridion" the latter commands his Greek hero to go north and in the name of Christ to stop in "the land of graves and crosses." "Thou mayst know it by the silence of its warriors and the melancholy of its little children. Thou mayst know it by the huts of its poor, destroyed by fire and the palaces of its exiles, long since laid in waste."

**The Reflection  
in Literature  
of the National  
Tragedy**

The writings of the three poets have had such a tremendous influence upon the Polish mind as to warrant at least a brief analysis in connection with the political developments of the nation since 1830. Never since the days of ancient Greece has there been another example of a nation receiving an exclusively poetic education until the tragic fate of Poland after her unsuccessful war with Russia. Life became stifled; every expression of thought and action was rendered impossible by a stupid and rigid bureaucratic régime. And at that time among the tens of thousands of exiles on foreign soil sprang forth the providential and since the days of the Prophets, the unexampled, triple blossom of poetry drawing its vital sap from the bitter sufferings of the soul of the nation. In intensity of feeling, depth of thought, love of country and mastery and beauty of expression, the three poets have no peers in the literature of the world. Had they written in French, English or German instead of in Polish, their names would have been known to every schoolboy the world over as are the names of Dante, Shakespeare and Goethe. It is profitless, perhaps useless to endeavor to say who of the three was the greatest, as it is useless to try to measure the elemental powers of nature. Each of them had the grandeur and force which nature bestows upon human genius, and each found a different mould for an adequate expression of his soul. Because of the greater simplicity of his style and the directness of presentation, Mickiewicz reached more Polish hearts than the other two and came to be regarded as the greatest interpreter of the people's hopes and ideals. He is the Zeus of the Polish Olympus and the immortal incarnation of Polish national spirit. He wrote at a time when Romanticism prevailed in European literature. His

Adam  
Mickiewicz



FIG. 202—ADAM MICKIEWICZ (1799-1855)

writings bear the impress of that literary epoch, but they deal with intense and palpable realities. His two monumental works, marking the zenith of his power, are "Dziady" (Ghosts) and "Pan Tadeusz." The latter is universally recognized as "the only successful epic which the XIXth century produced." George Brandes says that "Mickiewicz alone approached those great names in poetry which stand in history as above all healthy, far healthier than Byron, healthier even than Shakespeare: Homer and Goethe."\* The poetic serenity of the description of Lithuanian life at the opening of the last century is the more remarkable when considered in the light of the poet's volcanic nature and his intense suffering over the tragic fate of his native land to which he could never return. His passionate nature finds its truest expression in "Dziady," which undoubtedly constitutes the acme of poetic inspiration. It deals with the transformation of the soul from individual to a higher national conception. The hero, Gustavus, who has suffered great misfortune, wakes up one morning in his prison cell and finds himself an entirely changed man. His heart, given over to individual pain and individual love, dies. The Gustavus, bewailing his lost personal happiness lives no more, and Konrad, his divine ego, takes his place. All the creative powers of his nation are concentrated in him. Here Mickiewicz bares his own soul. He is filled with enough moral strength to challenge even God. He feels for millions and is pleading before God for their happiness and spiritual perfection. It is the Promethean idea, no doubt, but greatly deepened in conception and execution and applied to but one part of humanity, the Polish nation whose intensity of suffering was the greatest in all mankind.

\* Poland, London 1903, p. 279.

In 1835 Mickiewicz came under the influence of Towianski, a mystic, and ceased to write. Toward the end of his days he freed himself again of this peculiar thrall which Towianski was able to exert over him, as over the two other poets, and became again a man of reality.

As a young man Mickiewicz took a leading part in the literary life of the University circles at Wilno, which were mentioned in the last chapter. When the societies were closed in 1823 by the order of the Russian Government he was arrested and exiled to Russia. While in Crimea he wrote his exquisite sonnets. Subsequently he emigrated to France, where most of his life was spent, and died in Constantinople in 1855, while organizing a Polish legion against Russia during the Crimean war. His spirit was ever imbued with exalted patriotism and his genius was active in pointing toward means of freeing the country from foreign oppression. He was a champion of action and it is characteristic of the greatness of his soul that he was ever above the petty strifes that were tearing apart the Polish emigrants, and which absorbed their thoughts and energies. At the time of the greatest intensity of that strife he wrote the celebrated "Books of the Pilgrims" a work of love, wisdom and good will written in exquisite style. They have been called "Mickiewicz's Homilies" and have exercised a soothing and elevating influence. Despite the fact that Mickiewicz's themes and heroes are connected with Polish life, his writings still touch upon most of the problems and motives of the world at large, thus assuring to his works everlasting value and universal interest. The same in an equal measure is true of the other two poets. They dealt with the most profound problems of existence, looking at them always through the prism of their ardent pa-

triotism. Like Mickiewicz, Slowacki and Krasinski were compelled to live outside their own country.

Slowacki's longing for his home in Volhynia and later in Lithuania, where he spent his childhood and adolescence, and his love for his mother are truly pathetic. A few stanzas of one of his poems "I am so sad, O God!" may give an idea of the fine sentiment which permeated his whole existence:

Juliusz  
Slowacki

"To-day o'er the wide waste of ocean sweeping,  
Hundreds of miles away from shore or rock,  
I saw the cranes fly on, together keeping  
In one unbroken flock;  
Their feet with soil from Poland's hills were shod,  
And I was sad, O God!

"Often by strangers' tombs I've lingered weary,  
Since, grown a stranger to my native ways,  
I walk a pilgrim through a desert dreary,  
Lit but by lightning's blaze,  
Knowing not where shall fall the burial clod  
Upon my bier, O God!

"Sometime hereafter will my bones lie whitened  
Somewhere on strangers' soil, I know not where:  
I envy those whose dying hours are lightened,  
Fanned by their native air;  
But flowers of some strange land will spring and nod  
Above my grave, O God."

(Translation by Paul Soboleski in Warner's "World Literature.")

Poets are seldom born to be happy. It was not given Slowacki to see his native land again. On April 3, 1849, at forty years of age, he died of consumption in Paris, and flowers of a strange land blossomed on his grave.

Albeit all three great Polish poets were under the Byronic spell, none other was to such a marked degree as Slowacki. And yet in spite of that his message is not that of doubts and questions, but of action and suffering. "Although his head was in the clouds, his feet were on the earth." Much as he loved Poland, he was keenly conscious of her faults.



FIG. 203—JULIUSZ SŁOWACKI (1809-1849)



Hence his bitterness on one hand and his idealism on the other. He would wish to liberate "the angelic soul of Poland" from "the hideous rags," and "the burning shirt of Deianira's" in which it had been wrapped and would like to see her a great, naked, beautiful statue struck out "of one lump of rock." He would wish for his nation such spiritual power as would make it immortal. And this desire for internal perfection, seen also in Mickiewicz's "Books of the Pilgrims," runs through his works like a red thread. He would not for a moment think that there is an abyss which could not be bridged over between the ideal and the reality. He was convinced that the ideal exists in the national soul but had been encumbered by extraneous foreign growths which should be removed. There is hardly anything more beautiful than Slowacki's conception of the genesis of the discrepancy of the two elements. The struggle of the two constitutes the pith of his drama "Lilla Weneda." The plot turns around a war between two primitive pagan peoples, the Weneds and Lechits. The first are the forebears of the Polish ideal, the latter the forebears of the Polish nation. Derwid is the chief of the Weneds and his harp is the symbol of the ideal, a treasure of the tribe. With the fall of the Weneds, the harp comes into the possession of the Lechits, who had not come up to the appreciation of the treasure. Yet "the harp will conquer nations." Slowacki believes that his life mission is to champion the "harp" idea. After he succumbed to the influence of the Towianski philosophy, which was a modification of the Hegelian system, he began to identify the cause of Poland with that of Divinity and of Destination. Poland is to lead all other nations to their spiritual salvation. He believed in metempsychosis. By each successive change the spirit comes nearer to the ideal.

Poland is the last link on the road toward the ideal. Her suffering has brought her soul nearer perfection than the soul of any other nation. She is the "King-Spirit." In 1848 in that year of "the spring of the nations" the hopes of Slowacki rose high, and though suffering from a fatal disease, he organized a Con-



FIG. 204—ANDREW TOWIANSKI, Philosopher and Mystic

federacy and planned to take part in an armed uprising against Russia. But on April 3, 1849 he died.

Of the three poets Slowacki was the most revolutionary, the most radical and the most democratic. In this respect he formed an extreme contrast to his warm friend Zygmunt Krasinski who, by birth, tradition and temperament was an aristocrat and had a

Zygmunt  
Krasinski



FIG. 205—ZYGMUNT KRASIŃSKI (1812-1859)

horror of democracy and radicalism; who saw in those tendencies of the Polish nation the explanation for its late misfortunes and the cause of its ultimate destruction. The social unrest of Europe at the time raised in his mind most disquieting thoughts about Poland and he gave expression to them in his "Undivine Comedy." The philosophy of action and vengeance found in Mickiewicz's and Slowacki's work is foreign and repugnant to Krasinski. His "Undivine Comedy" was conceived to demonstrate their futility. It is Christian love and virtue that conquers in the end. In this respect he was a precursor of Tolstoy. It required a great deal of boldness to teach such a philosophy of inaction and resignation to the Poles, who were chafing under oppression and were gnawed by despair, and to combat the democratic currents which were permeating the hearts of the people who believed that by the adoption of these principles alone, could governmental tyranny be allayed. The seeds of his unpopular philosophy did not, however, fall on utterly barren ground. There was too much despair in the national soul for the glory of quiet martyrdom not to find any sympathetic echo.

Brandes asserts that in few literatures has Romanticism attained to an expression of such beauty as in the Polish. The reason for it can be easily explained. The essence of Romanticism is to be found in the dissatisfaction of the human spirit with existing reality. In normal communities the dissatisfaction and the resultant sufferings and longings lie usually in individual planes. In the tragic conditions of Poland it was elevated to a social conception, hence the greater breadth and intensity of Polish Romanticism. By heroic efforts the nation endeavored to turn away the trend of hostile reality. The efforts



FIG. 206—FREDERICK CHOPIN (1810-1849)

resulted only in greater misfortunes. Despair and pessimism began to affect the national spirit. To combat this evil force of bitter reality it was necessary to create an equally strong spiritual force. Hence the conception of Poland as a Christ of the nations evolved with such strength and beauty by the three poets, and with particular emphasis by Krasinski. By their powerful flights of fancy, by the intensity of their feeling, by the grandeur of their genius and the beauty of their expression, the three poets have immortalized Poland, her literature, her sufferings and her ideals. They have left an indelible imprint upon the spiritual evolution of their nation. The same spirit and longings of the Polish soul have been inculcated in the soul of every civilized human being the world over by the musical productions of another Polish genius, Frederick Chopin, who was born in Warsaw and who died in Paris in the same year as Slowacki. His sensitive soul was imbued with the same sufferings that permeated the hearts of the three great poets and the Polish people.

The tens of thousands of Polish emigrants who fled from Russian vengeance arrived in France.

**The Emigrants** While the population met them with enthusiasm as champions of liberty, Louis Philippe and the then Premier, Casimir Périer, for the same reason received them with great reserve, and to keep them away from Paris designated the cities of Avignon and Chateauroux for their temporary settlements. Périer refused to grant an audience to Bonawentura Niemoyowski, the President of the last Polish Government, for fear that such a hearing might be construed as an act of diplomatic demonstration. It was an attitude which the emigrants had not anticipated but which remained unaltered after the monarchy was succeeded by the

Second Republic. Even Lamartine, the poet and historian, then Minister of Foreign Affairs, told the Poles that "the dead cannot be resuscitated." But the Poles never can or will believe that their nation is dead. Each generation since the last dismember-



FIG. 207—BONAWENTURA NIEMCEWICZ, PRESIDENT OF THE  
LAST POLISH GOVERNMENT

ment has proved by the seas of blood shed for the cause of independence that the Polish nation is alive and virile, and that there can be no permanent peace in Central Europe until the Polish nation is again made free to organize its own State. The efforts of the

emigrants of the period under consideration are but another chapter of the epopee of toil and privation, devotion and martyrdom for a sacred cause. Immediately upon their arrival in France the emigrants organized themselves in political societies to further their aims. It should be remembered that the flower of Polish thought and achievement was represented among those who came to France. All the generals, officers, statesmen, scientists and writers assembled there, among them Prince Czartoryski, Joachim Lelewel, Maurice Mochnacki, General Bem, Mickiewicz, Slowacki, Krasinski and the galaxy of other poets and writers. Those who still believed that through diplomatic intervention a good deal could be accomplished clustered around the illustrious Prince Adam Czartoryski, who had many influential connections in the chancelleries of Europe, and who maintained a large political bureau in his palace, "Hôtel Lambert," in Paris, through which he kept in touch with most of the capitals of Europe. Others formed the Democratic Society and associated their hopes with the democratic currents of the time. They criticized Czartoryski's faction, holding justly that diplomacy without a strong army behind it is bound to be ineffective. The failure of the Polish representatives in London may serve as an illustration of the truth of this assertion. Both Grey and Brougham, members of Palmerston's cabinet, were close personal friends of Czartoryski, and both were very friendly to the Poles. In the name of England, Grey had presented a sword of honor to Kosciuszko, assuring him of England's friendship for Poland. Brougham had written splendid dissertations concerning Poland's political rights. And yet, as cabinet officers, they dared do nothing for the outraged and dispossessed nation. The Russian Ambassador, Count



Lieven and his wife, the sister of General Beckendorff, who was the closest friend of Tsar Nicholas I and the organizer of the Russian secret service, were able to exercise such pressure upon Lord Brougham that he refused to grant a hearing to the venerable Polish historian Niemcewicz, Kosciuszko's friend and companion. In 1831, after Grey entertained Czartoryski at a private dinner he received a most acrimonious and resentful letter from Lady Lieven. Similarly disappointing were the hopes of the Democratic Society, as the expected social revolutions were slow to come, and when they finally did come, brought naught to Poland.

Tsar Nicholas I, in vindictiveness not a whit inferior to Ivan the Terrible, his celebrated predecessor on the Russian throne, resolved to blot out the Polish nation forever. His inhuman tyranny, carried out with heartless rigor by Paskiewicz and his associates, has cast an indescribable horror over "constitutional" Poland. It should be borne in mind that the constitution has never been, and legally could not be rescinded. The slightest suspicion was sufficient to subject the unfortunate victims to cruel flogging, tortures, jailing and exile. Executions were a daily occurrence; life was utterly stifled; schooling was practically discontinued; and shameless provocation was practiced incessantly. When the secret service agents "discovered" a plot which never existed among the boys of one of the upper grades in a Warsaw high school, the Tsar ordered that the three upper grades in the high schools all over Poland be closed. Those who knew the attitude of this despot toward education will not be surprised at this deed of his. The following quotation from Prof. Vladimir G. Simkhovitch of Colum-

**The Further  
Consequences  
of the Polish  
War with  
Russia**

bia University, may give an idea of the mentality of the Tsar, which will help the reader to grasp what his rule in a conquered nation must have been:

"Nicholas I was a narrow-minded man, but with strong convictions, and with a temper that brooked no contradiction. He made it his paramount task to educate his people for an autocratic régime. He therefore resolved to do away with all elements and conditions leading to independent thought or to a desire for freedom . . . . The students in the universities were ordered to wear a special military uniform, and regulations were issued prescribing how they should appear in public, how they should cut their hair. The university course also felt the heavy hand of Emperor Nicholas. Thus, for instance, all courses in European public law were abolished, because 'rebellions in foreign lands have disfigured this science and shattered its very foundations.' Comparative constitutional law was discontinued because of 'the weakness of its principles and its unsatisfactory results.' Courses in social statistics and logic were abolished. Philosophy and psychology could be taught only by Greek orthodox professors of theology, and then with the explicit order to teach according to the truth of revealed religion. The professors were instructed to submit to the government the lectures they intended to give, and also the lists of books recommended for collateral reading. The deans were to see to it that professors' lectures are identical with those that were approved, and they were to report the slightest deviations, 'even the most harmless ones.' The tuition fees of the students were furthermore greatly increased, so as to keep out poor people, 'whom education may make dissatisfied with their lot, or with that of their friends.'

"Of the gymnasiums, the classical fell into disgrace. The classical writers talked too much about civic matters, and referred to republics. By the end of the reign of Nicholas I, only eight classical gymnasiums were left in existence.

"Primary education under Nicholas existed only on paper. The Pedagogical Institute was closed, 'being unnecessary,' and unnecessary it really was in Nicholas's reign. Denominational parochial schools were tolerated, and in 1839 there were 2,000 such schools, with 19,000 pupils. But there is no way of telling whether they really existed. Many things existed in Russia on paper only.' " \*

\* "History of the School in Russia," Educational Review, 1907, :. 506-7.

Some of the emigrants nourished such an impatient desire to do something for the country, as to undertake the rashest kinds of expeditions designed to stir up local rebellions and disturbances. Such was the attempt of Colonel Zaliwski, early in 1833. With a small band of ill-provisioned, penniless companions, with no passports, he reached Poland, having braved unlimited perils. Overawed by oppression, the population failed to respond to his urgings. Here and there he found a few followers, but pursued by Russian troops he sought refuge in Galicia, where he was arrested by the Austrian police. A similar attempt by Zawisza ended in the loss of life of many of the noble souls blinded by patriotism and goaded on by despair. Another result of the numerous unfortunate expeditions and small uprisings was a closer understanding between the three powers. In Münchengraetz, in Bohemia, the Tsar met Emperor Francis I and the Prussian King Frederick Wilhelm III in September, 1833, to ratify the "Holy Alliance" and strengthened the ties that bound them together because of Poland. At this meeting also the lot of the free Cracow republic was doomed. It was agreed to discontinue its existence and to incorporate it in Galicia at the first opportunity. Meanwhile the representatives of the three powers began to exert growing pressure and became the de facto government of the Republic. All these repressive measures, however, were unsuccessful in suppressing national unrest. As somebody well expressed it, the war was going on, merely the form had changed. The repressions were met by constant uprisings, organized by local secret societies in conjunction with or independently of the Polish political organizations abroad. After the flower of the nation's manhood had been mowed down, all the strong and en-

**Revolutionary  
Activities**

terprising spirits who were left at home took part in the preparations for another open outbreak of hostilities. The secret police in all parts of Poland had their hands full trying to uncover the conspiracies. Political suits were incessant; hundreds of men were thrown into dungeons; many, like the noble Simon Konarski and Father Sciegenny, were executed; others were exiled for life to Siberia; and others were tortured inhumanly. In Galicia, Smolka and Dunayewski were sentenced to death in 1845, but their sentences were commuted to long imprisonment. The tide of the revolution in 1848 released them, and subsequently Smolka became the President of the Austrian Parliament and one of the greatest statesmen of the century and Dunayewski was Bishop of Cracow and Cardinal.

The manifold local uprisings occurring in all sections of Poland and the existence of secret organizations gave to the Polish "Democratic Society" in France the erroneous impression that the time was ripe for starting a general revolution throughout Poland. The leading spirit in this enterprise was Ludwik Mieroslawski, who prepared a sweeping plan of campaign without giving much consideration to the feasibility of carrying it out even in part. The men of cooler judgment urged that he desist from undertaking rash steps, but without avail. He was, however, prevented from progressing very far with the preliminary arrangements by the vigilance of the Prussian police. He and a few of his fellow workers were intercepted in Posen in February, 1846, and a number of his sympathizers in Lemberg were arrested on a charge of complicity in the conspiracy. This ill-timed launching of a movement would have been

**The End of  
the Cracow  
Republic and  
the Slaughter  
of the Galic-  
ian Gentry**

harmless had not the three partitioning powers made use of it to put an end to the free Republic of Cracow. Immediately following Mieroslowski's arrest in Posen, Austria, by consent of the Russian and Prussian Governments, sent a large army to occupy Cracow. A series of encounters followed throughout Galicia, during which occurred one of the most brutal slaughters of the gentry by the peasant rabble that Poland had ever known. To eradicate the existing political ferment the Austrian Government decided to make use of the artificially fostered enmity which the peasants entertained against their landlords because the latter were, by law, compelled to collect taxes and select recruits for the Austrian army. Officials of the Austrian Government spread news among the peasants that the revolutionary movement of the gentry was aimed at the subjugation of the peasants into still greater economic dependence, and that the magnanimous Austrian Government was sending troops to defend them against the oppressors. The ignorant and excitable mobs broke loose under these instigations and the protection of the military and civil authorities, and the carnage and havoc wrought by them were atrocious. Particularly distinguished for cruelty was a highwayman by the name of Jacob Szela, who was subsequently awarded an estate in Bukovina by the Austrian Government. This dastardly crime of Austria was but the crowning of the policy of nourishing social discontent in Galicia. On several occasions the representatives of the gentry in Galicia had petitioned the government to set their serfs free, and in every instance the government had refused to grant permission. When, in 1848, at the first news of the conflagration that had set Europe on fire, the Galician landowners again resolved to abolish serfdom, the

Austrian Government again interfered, but soon afterward, in the middle of April of the same year, it proclaimed the emancipation of the peasants as an act of grace of the Emperor. The parcels of land which the peasants had been renting were donated to them by the government. Reimbursements were promised to the owners. The sudden change in land ownership caused by the arbitrary act of a despotic government and the grave economic problems it created and left unsolved, precipitated a severe crisis in Galicia, which, closely following the illegal dissolution of the Cracow Republic whose semi-independent status was guaranteed by the Treaty of Vienna, created a strong feeling of resentment.

The progress of events of that celebrated year of 1848 gave rise to new hopes. Italy, France, Germany and Austria had been shaken by revolutions. Everywhere the people requested armed intervention on behalf of Poland in addition to their particular demands. The Poles did not remain passive onlookers in this mighty awakening of Europe to the stirring up of which they had contributed in no mean measure. The emigrants left France for Poland, and on their way through the German states and Bohemia were hailed enthusiastically. In Berlin the population demanded the immediate release of Mieroslawski and his colleagues, which King Frederick Wilhelm IV not only granted without delay, but greeted the released prisoners standing with bared head. He also permitted the formation in the Duchy of Posen of a Polish army, which was to fight beside the united German nation against tyrannical Russia. The army soon numbered ten thousand men and Mieroslawski became its commander. The poet Mickiewicz went to present the

**The Year**  
**1848**

Polish question to the newly elected Pope Pius IX and formed a Polish Legion in Italy. At the same



FIG. 208—LUDWIK MIEROSLAWSKI

time Galicia urged a war with Russia upon the Constitutional Austrian monarch.

Soon, however, the revolutionary wave subsided and with its ebb came a dampening of enthusiasm for the cause of Poland. The reaction became apparent in Prussia first. Against the Poles, a German committee was formed in Posen, which demanded the division of the Duchy into two parts, one German and the other Polish. The consent of the King to the formation of a Polish army was rescinded, particularly in view of the threatening attitude assumed by the Russian ambassador and the massing of strong Russian forces at the frontier. The warning issued by Tsar Nicholas in his memorable manifesto in which he said: "Nations be submissive, for God is with us!" had, no doubt, its desired effect. As the Poles did not want to disband, severe encounters followed between them and the Prussian troops. Finally submission became inevitable, and being unable to reach their own country, they scattered to help the revolutions in Italy, Baden and Hungary.

In Galicia, the Ruthenian clergy aroused a feeling of animosity among their peasants toward the Poles, and in this they were strongly encouraged by the Austrian Government which was under stipulated obligations to the Tsar for the effective aid he had rendered by sending a great army to suppress the Hungarian revolutionaries so ably led by the Polish Generals Dembinski, Wysocki and Bem. The latter was military commander of the Viennese burghers early in 1848, when they defended their city against the Austrian Imperial troops; later he joined the Hungarians and won a famous victory in Transylvania, and after the collapse of the Hungarian revolution went to Turkey and embraced Islamism, as several other Poles had done, to be able to serve in the Sultan's army against Russia. The failure of the Hun-



garian uprising was a great blow to the cause of Poland. Its success would probably have resulted in the emancipation of Galicia. As it was, the year 1848 ended in a triumph of reaction and the retention of the painful status quo as far as Poland was concerned, with the single exception that the Poles re-



FIG. 209—GENERAL JOSEPH BEM

ceived representation in the newly established constitutional régime in both Austria and Prussia, and through their representatives they could denounce openly all the iniquities to which they had been subjected and voice the sentiments of the nation for freedom and independence.

The disappointment with the results of the revolutionary era of 1848 was disheartening. In Congressional Poland dead silence and complete apathy followed, lasting until the opening of the Crimean War. Interest in economic and intellectual pursuits ceased. During this quiet period Russia proceeded in her wanton ways. The Russian language was introduced in all governmental offices, which had been systematically filled with Russian officials. The Russian system of weights and measures and of passports was transplanted; the post office and the control of highways was taken over by the Russian Government, and the tariff frontier separating the Kingdom from the Empire was removed. During the decade from 1846 to 1855 the population of Poland decreased about one million, and when the Crimean war broke out new hopes seemed vain because the exhaustion of the country was too great to make possible any serious uprising against Russia in spite of the reverses she was experiencing at the hands of the Allies: Turkey, France and England. Ukraine alone rose, led by Polish conspirators, and in Turkey Polish Legions were formed with the help of France and England. In the spring of 1855 and again in September of the same year Napoleon III instructed his Ambassador at London to take up with the English Government the settlement of the Polish question. The matter did not, however, come up for consideration at the Paris peace conference in 1856. And once more were the Poles made to realize the painful truth that their hopes in diplomacy were but an illusion, a pernicious *fata morgana*.

**The Illegal  
Annexation of  
the Congressional King-  
dom to the  
Russian  
Empire**

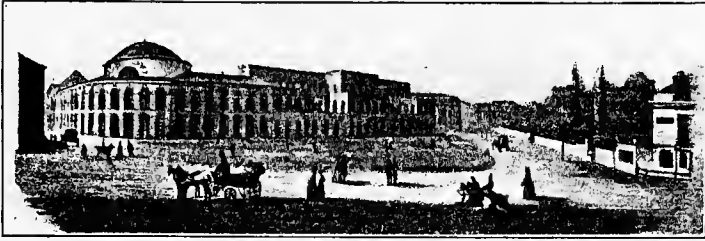


FIG. 210—THE BANK OF POLAND, FOUNDED IN 1825 IN WARSAW

## CHAPTER XIX

### The Uprising of 1863 and the Era of Positivism

In 1855 Nicholas I died. He was succeeded by his son Alexander II, who had been heralded as a man of liberal proclivities, of broad mind and of warm sympathies for the Poles. Upon his arrival at Warsaw in May, 1856, he was received with great hopes and expectations. The impatiently awaited political credo of the new Tsar brought grave disappointment. He expressed himself in full sympathy with the policy of his father, proposed to continue it and warned the Poles against any dreams. "Point de rêveries, messieurs," he said, and left the indolent Prince Gorchakoff and the bitterly hated Mukhanoff to continue the administration of the conquered country in their habitual fashion. When the suggestion was made on the part of the Poles that a law school be opened at Warsaw, Gorchakoff opposed it, and in his report of August 25, 1857, he argued that "the founding of such a school at Warsaw would act as a new obstacle toward the fraternization of the Polish youth with the other parts of the Empire and toward the instilling in them of feelings of loyalty to the sovereign." The Tsar was of the same opinion.

The  
Shattering of  
Polish Hopes  
by Tsar  
Alexander II

The actual results of this policy were, however, quite contrary to the anticipations of official Russia, as the Poles, studying in Russian universities, came into sympathetic contact with the young Russian revolutionaries, and when they returned home they hardly entertained any strong attachments for the government.

Viceroy Gorchakoff advised against the re-establishment of representative government in Poland. "There will be time to do this," he said, "when the whole Empire is ready to benefit in an equal measure from liberal local government, after the institutions of credit, mortgages and other public improvements, as exist in Poland, will be known in the other parts of Russia." Owing, however, to the depression in the Russian governmental circles which followed the Crimean war, the rigor of administrative oppression was somewhat abated. The publication of some of Mickiewicz's works was allowed, permission was granted for the establishment of a College of Physicians and Surgeons, and for the founding of an Agricultural Society. Youth flocked to the college, drawn there not altogether by the love of medical studies, but because it afforded an opportunity for university life and association. Likewise the Agricultural Society gathered around it men of all pursuits. In addition to landowners and country squires, the Society had in its membership merchants and manufacturers, scientists and poets, all craving some sort of organized activity. Count Andrew Zamoyski, an able and influential man of fine character and constructive mind, became the heart and soul of the Society which exercised a strong influence upon public opinion, and which devoted as much consideration as the meddling Russian authorities allowed to the burning social and economic problems of the time,

chief among which was the agrarian question. It also served as the only organized body of opinion to present the needs of the country to the government. Some of their memorials, however, though containing very moderate demands, were resented in St. Petersburg. Because of their conservatism, the members of the Society and their political sympathizers were known as the Whites, in contradis-



FIG. 211—COUNT ANDREW ZAMOYSKI

tinction to the younger men, known as the Reds, who were chafing under the bureaucratic oppression, and who bound themselves in secret societies to give vent to their feelings and to prepare for another attempt to overthrow the detested Russian rule. The Reds scorned the compromises indulged in by the Whites and regarded all Russian concessions as harmful, because they served only to delude the nation

and to retard an armed uprising. The Whites were opportunists and hoped by rational endeavor to strengthen the nation economically as well as in every other direction before any new war should be attempted. Widely separated as they were in their views and methods, the two parties still stood firmly united in their intense hatred of the government. Infinitesimal was the faction which advised loyalty to Russia in the hope of regaining the guaranteed autonomy and of establishing an economic union with the Russian Empire. Chief among those Polish sympathizers with Russia was Margrave Alexander Wielopolski, a man of education and strong will, but of an impulsive, arbitrary, pugnacious and obstinate character. When, in 1861, the Russian Government realized that it must make certain concessions to the Poles, its attention was called to Wielopolski, whose pro-Russian political philosophy found an early expression in a pamphlet written by him after the Galician slaughter in 1846, entitled "Lettre d'un gentilhomme polonais au prince de Metternich." In that pamphlet he pointed out the futility of expecting any effective help from the West European countries and advised a political and economic union with the Russian nation. This political philosophy, as well as the character and egotism of Wielopolski, made him a most unpopular man in Poland, and yet he was selected by the government to pacify the country and to effect a reconciliation with the Russian rule. The choice was unfortunate and the results disastrous.

The echoes that reached Poland from the Apennine Peninsula, where the Italians under Garibaldi, with the help of Napoleon III, were regaining their independence, and the hopes of an early revolution in Russia, stimulated the activities of the Reds in Poland. To

**Political Dem-  
onstrations**

stir up the patriotic emotions and yet to do it within the boundaries permitted by law, the Reds utilized every conceivable occasion. They organized manifestations that aroused the masses and kept Europe apprised of renewed activity in the Polish volcano. Holidays, religious processions, funerals and historic anniversaries were grasped as opportunities to sing



FIG. 212—MARGRAVE ALEXANDER WIELOPOLSKI

patriotic songs, to pray for the redemption of the country, to display national emblems and to stir up feeling in one way or another. The first of these demonstrations was held in June of 1860. The occasion for it was the funeral of Madame Sowinska, the wife of the defender of a suburb of Warsaw against Pas-kievitch in the war of 1832. Tens of thousands of per-

sons took part in the funeral cortege. A few days later another immense gathering took place, and then again another. There was no end to demonstrations of the kind. The authorities were unable to stop this form of patriotic activity, particularly as the demonstrations were so solemn and orderly as to afford the Russian government no opportunity for interference. The government could not prevent the people from wearing nothing but mourning clothes and of refraining from gaiety of any kind. When the Russian, Austrian and Prussian monarchs came to meet at Warsaw in October, 1860, the triumphal arches built in the streets for their reception were burned and Francis Joseph was met at the railroad station with cries of: "Long live Solferino and Magenta!" The monarchs met with a similar unpleasantness when the air of the theatre was surcharged with obnoxious gases during the gala performance given in their honor.

In attempting to stimulate the Agricultural Society to a more radical policy with reference to agrarian reforms than the Society was willing to adopt, the Reds called a huge street demonstration on the day scheduled for the opening of the annual convention of the Society. Immense crowds gathered in the streets of Warsaw on February 25, 1861, and with torches, crosses and historic banners proceeded toward the building where the convention was assembled. They were dispersed by the police and the soldiery. Two days later the demonstration was repeated on a still larger scale. A Russian general, unauthorized by his superiors, ordered a charge against the unarmed crowd. Five men were killed and a large number wounded. This slaughter of innocent men roused the country. Contributions poured in daily for the erection of a lasting monu-



ment in memory of the victims and for the support of their families. Gorchakoff realized that some concessions must be made by the government lest a fierce revolution break out immediately. He allowed the holding of demonstrative obsequies in honor of the dead, in which the whole city took part and turned over the policing and administration of the city to a



FIG. 213—DEMONSTRATION AT THE FUNERAL OF THE FIVE VICTIMS KILLED IN THE STREETS OF WARSAW BY THE RUSSIAN SOLDIERY ON FEBRUARY 27, 1861. THE CLERGY OF ALL CREEDS ATTENDED THE OBSEQUIES

citizens' committee which had done splendid work during the forty days it had been in existence. Meanwhile, the hated Mukhanoff was relieved from duty by the Viceroy, and on March 25th, a month after the last demonstration, the Tsar proclaimed an ukase by which he called into life a Council of State, com-

posed of citizens, lay and ecclesiastical, upon whom devolved the duty "to discuss the needs of the country, to receive petitions and to hear complaints." The ukase also created elective administrative councils in the provinces, counties and municipalities of the kingdom; it restored the Commission for Public Education and Religious Creeds; it allowed the reopening of the higher institutions of learning; and it provided for the reorganization of public instruction. Margrave Alexander Wielopolski was chosen to direct the



FIG. 214—SOUVENIR MEDAL IN MEMORY OF THE DEAD AND WOUNDED IN THE STREETS OF WARSAW

work of the Commission or Ministry of Education and Creeds. He was also soon made head of the Department of Justice and became the most powerful man in Poland. He brought to his office great abilities and good intentions, but his temper and impatience prevented him from achieving the things he most desired: general approval of his endeavors and the conciliation of the nation. Popular opinion remained inimical to him, and Andrew Zamoyski, the leader of the nobility, could not persuade himself to

support the autocratic and violent Margrave, although he did not oppose him. To curb his opponents and the malcontents, Wielopolski did not hesitate to use the most drastic measures, and thereby antagonized the clergy and outraged the country. The closing of the Agricultural Society ordered by him, provoked a demonstrative outburst of indignation, and public feeling was only the more embittered by the hundreds of victims who fell in the bloody street riots which took place in Warsaw on April 8, 1861.

Such was the inauspicious beginning of Wielopolski's administration! It was necessary for him to resort to the use of military patrols to preserve order in the capital and to invoke rigid censorship to forestall severe criticism. This condition of things did not, however, diminish his energy in carrying out his program of reforms. He began by discharging from government positions all Russians and supplanted them by Poles, reorganized the courts, and removed all the disabilities the Russian Government had imposed upon the Jews. They were given full rights of citizenship and representation in the Council of State, and in the administrative provincial and local councils. To stimulate the polonization of the Jewish element he encouraged their education in the Polish schools, and forbade the use of the Jewish jargon in legal and commercial transactions. Public education was one of his chief concerns. He labored to restore Polish schools to their former European standards, and in the curricula worked out he laid particular emphasis upon French attainments and culture. He built a large number of new primary and secondary schools, and in 1862, during his second term of office, the Warsaw University was reopened under the name of the Superior School, with four departments, an elective

**Wielopolski's  
Administration**

rector and a large body of able professors and instructors.

Liberal in educational and religious matters, he was extremely conservative in his agrarian policy. He had no sympathy with the popular demand for a radical solution of the land problem. Instead, he advocated a modification of the existing conditions by the substitution of rent payments for personal services,

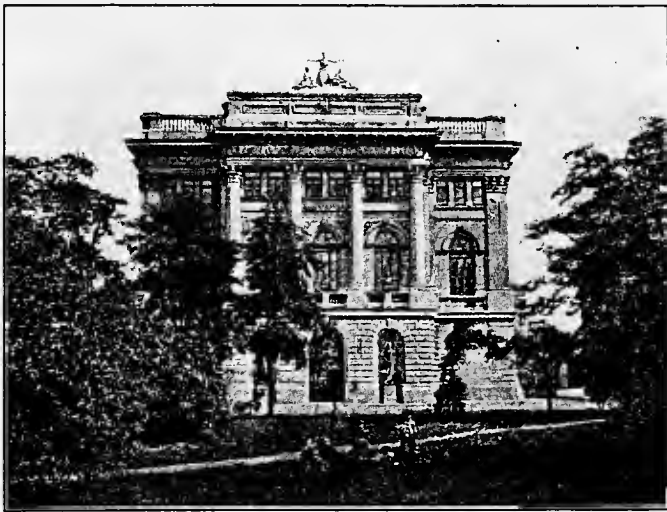


FIG. 215.—THE LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WARSAW

and was unalterably opposed to all state legislation aimed at any compulsion to sell land to peasants in accordance with a stipulated schedule of prices. It was rather unfortunate that he encountered such relentless open and tacit opposition to everything he did or proposed. It served to enrage him the more and to resort to most brutal means to conquer the opposition which, in turn, grew more determined from day to

day. His position became untenable, particularly after the death of Prince Gorchakoff, his staunch supporter. The Reds were ceaseless in denouncing the Margrave and in organizing demonstrations whenever and wherever possible. The Whites, despite the closing of the Agricultural Society, continued to keep together in secret societies and to group around their leader, Count Zamoyski. They looked with favor upon the reforms, but were prevented from lending active support by the repulsive character of Wielopolski, and because of his failure to apply the program to Lithuania and Ruthenia.

Both Lithuania and Ruthenia became restless. On August 21, 1861, Kovno celebrated the anniversary of the Union of Lublin, which was consummated in 1569, during the reign of Zygmunt II August, and which for centuries had united the Lithuanians and Ruthenians with the Poles as brethren and free men. A still greater demonstration was held at Horodlo on October 10th of the same year, in which a countless multitude of Lithuanians, Poles and Ruthenians celebrated the memorable deed of 1413, which was conceived in love and dedicated to liberty. In the same historic town they once more swore to uphold the union. To stem the revolutionary tide, the new Viceroy, Count Charles Lambert, goaded on by Wielopolski, determined to employ severe measures of repression. In spite of this, the funeral of the patriotic Archbishop of Warsaw, which took place on the day of the Horodlo anniversary, was seized as an excuse for a demonstrative gathering at the capital. The Reds issued a proclamation for a similar demonstration to be held five days later on the anniversary of Kosciuszko's death, October 15th. The government was apprised of this and declared martial law

**The Rising  
of the Revolu-  
tionary Tide**

throughout the kingdom. This step served but to provoke bloodshed and did not stop the demonstration. On the morning of that day all the churches of the city were thronged to capacity, masses celebrated and religious and patriotic songs chanted. The Governor General surrounded the churches with troops and ordered wholesale arrests of all communicants. In two churches the congregations resolved to remain throughout the day and night. The next morning the troops forcibly entered the churches and arrested over three thousand persons. In remonstrance against this outrage the administrator of the archdiocese ordered the closing of all churches for an indefinite period of time. In proof of their solidarity all the Protestant temples and Jewish synagogues similarly closed their doors. Following this incident Count Lambert left Poland and Wielopolski submitted his resignation and went to St. Petersburg. In the conferences with the Tsar he attributed the causes of his failures to the insufficiency of the concessions granted, and urged among other reforms the separation of the administrative and military branches of the government, as was provided in the constitution of 1815. The Tsar was not ready to follow his advice at the time. Meanwhile, the successors of Count Lambert ruled the country with an iron hand. Arrests were made without discrimination, and thousands of persons were deported to Russia and Siberia, chiefly from among the Whites. The Reds, through the secrecy of their proceedings and their splendid organizations which were spread all over the country, were more protected than the conservatives, who were usually taken unawares, often on the slightest suspicion, in the majority of instances imaginary and groundless. As the repressions grew, resistance became more active and better organized. The emi-

grants in France and Italy renewed their efforts in various directions. With the assistance of Garibaldi and under the direction of General Mieroslawski a military school was established at Genoa in September, 1861, to train officers and subalterns. At the request of the Russian Government, however, the school was closed by order of the Italian authorities in June, 1862. These renewed revolutionary activities led the Tsar



FIG. 216—THE MAIN BUILDING OF THE NEW POLYTECHNICAL INSTITUTE AT WARSAW

to consider more seriously the advice of Wielopolski. He entrusted to him first the selection of a new archbishop who would open the churches and prohibit future patriotic demonstrations in these edifices, and then, in spite of the vehement protests of the Russian reactionaries, consented to grant to Poland a much wider measure of home rule than heretofore, and to separate the military from the civil authorities. Following the example of his grandfather, the Tsar sent

his brother Constantine to Warsaw as Viceroy of Poland, and made Wielopolski the head of the civil government, June 8, 1862. The home rule granted was very considerable. It did not, however, restore the autonomy of 1815, and did not revive the national Polish army.



FIG. 217—JOSEPH KORZENIOWSKI (1797-1863)  
Educator and Writer

It was during this period of the shortlived Polish autonomy that Wielopolski carried out his educational reforms. In addition to the reopening of the University of Warsaw, mentioned above, he founded a Polytechnical School and an Institute of Agriculture and Forestry at Pulawy, near Lublin. He re-

**Shortlived  
Polish  
Home-Rule**



organized the Warsaw School of Fine Arts and opened a High School for girls at the capital. Instruction in all the schools was exclusively in Polish and emphasis was laid on the teaching of Polish history and literature. The name of the Polish writer, Joseph Korzeniowski, should be mentioned in this connection, as he was Wielopolski's chief adviser in educational matters, and as his name has since become known to the Anglo-Saxon world by the literary genius of his nephew, Joseph Conrad.

Had home rule been granted earlier, before the revolutionary propaganda took such a strong hold on the people, Polish political life might have taken a different course, for a while at least. As it was, the Reds, believing that the concessions made on the part of the government were calculated merely to pacify the strong revolutionary spirit which was animating the country, and that they would be rescinded or curtailed after this object had been attained and the revolutionary societies disbanded, resolved to continue on the warpath and to stop at nothing short of complete independence. Their determination, however, might have been paralyzed by the cooler councils of the conservatives had somebody other than the impetuous and tactless Wielopolski headed the civil government.

To forestall the possibility of a *modus vivendi* between the government and the people an irresponsible band among the Reds decided to employ terroristic tactics. In June, 1862, a Russian military officer belonging to the revolutionary party shot and wounded the military governor in retaliation for the death sentence imposed upon his three colleagues in the army. Upon the arrival of Grand Duke Con-

stantine an entirely unwarranted attempt was made upon his life by a Polish tailor, a member of the terroristic organization. Several weeks later two successive attempts were made on the life of the Margrave, but both failed. These mad acts met with the deserved condemnation of the country. It was shared by both the Whites and the Reds. The Central Committee of the Revolutionary Party declared that it had nothing to do with them. But in spite of that the government proceeded to avenge the irresponsible acts of the terrorists. Even the most conservative among the Whites, who, like Count Andrew Zamoy-ski, condemned the terror in no mistaken terms, were exiled from the country. Wielopolski raged with fury. Many persons on mere suspicion were put into jail or sent to Siberia. To cap his policy of senseless vengeance, the Margrave conceived a dangerous expedient of "kidnapping the opposition." He determined to pick out a large number of men from the city working classes and from the floating element in the country estates who constituted the bulk of the revolutionary contingent, and to enroll them forcibly in regiments stationed in remote regions of Russia. This lawless and arbitrary act roused the country and expedited and armed uprising. The Central Committee of the Revolutionary Party made frantic efforts to postpone the outbreak until sufficient stores of ammunition arrived from abroad, but could not control the situation when the time arrived for carrying into effect Wielopolski's order. On January 22, 1863, the Central Committee, assuming the name of the Provisional National Government, proclaimed the revolution.

The night of January 22, 1863, was the beginning of a new uprising against Russian rule. It broke out at a moment when general quiet prevailed in Europe and in Russia, and when the Revolutionary Party had not sufficient means to arm and equip the bands of young men who were hiding in forests to escape Wielopolski's order of conscription into the Russian army. Altogether about ten thousand men rallied around the revolutionary banner; they were recruited chiefly from the ranks of the city working classes and minor clerks, although there was also a considerable admixture of the younger sons of the poorer country squires and a number of priests of lower rank. To deal with these ill-armed bands the government had at its disposal a well trained army of ninety thousand men under General Ramsay in Poland, sixty thousand troops in Lithuania and forty-five thousand in Volhynia. It looked as if the rebellion would be crushed in a short while. The die was cast, however, and the provisional government applied itself to the great task with fervor. It issued a manifesto in which it pronounced "all sons of Poland free and equal citizens without distinction of creed, condition and rank." It declared that "land cultivated by the peasants, whether on the basis of rent-pay or service, henceforth should become their unconditional property, and compensation for it would be given to the landlords out of the general funds of the State." The revolutionary government did its very best to supply and provision the unarmed and scattered guerrillas who, during the month of February, met the Russians in eighty bloody encounters. Meanwhile, it issued an appeal to the nations of western Europe, which was received everywhere with a genuine and heartfelt response, from Norway to Portugal.

**The  
Revolution  
of 1863**

Pope Pius IX ordered a special prayer for the success of the Polish arms, and was very active in arousing sympathy for the suffering nation. The provisional government counted on a revolutionary outbreak in Russia, where the discontent with the autocratic régime seemed at the time to be widely prevalent. It also counted on the active support of Napoleon III, particularly after Prussia, foreseeing an inevitable armed conflict with France, made friendly overtures to Russia and offered her assistance in suppressing the Polish uprising. On the 14th day of February arrangements had already been completed, and the British Ambassador in Berlin was able to inform his government that a Prussian military envoy "has concluded a military convention with the Russian Government, according to which the two governments will reciprocally afford facilities to each other for the suppression of the insurrectionary movements which have lately taken place in Poland . . . The Prussian railways are also to be placed at the disposal of the Russian military authorities for the transportation of troops through Prussian territory from one part of the Kingdom of Poland to another . . . "\* This step of Bismarck's led to protests on the part of several governments and roused the Polish nation. The result was the transformation of the insignificant uprising into another national war against Russia. Encouraged by the promises made by Napoleon III, the whole nation, acting upon the advice of Wladyslaw Czartoryski, the son of Prince Adam, took to arms. Indicating their solidarity with the nation, all the Poles holding office under the Russian Government, including the Archbishop of Warsaw, resigned their positions and submitted to the newly consti-

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\* J. Ellis Barker, l. c., p. 106.

tuted Polish Government, which was composed of five most prominent representatives of the Whites. This transformation of the insurrection into a war changed the whole aspect of the situation. An army of thirty thousand men was soon organized and new additions were made. The rich elements in the cities as well as



FIG. 218—SYMBOL OF WAR  
(From the series of drawings on "War" by Arthur Grottger)

in the country districts offered large sums of money. The nobility of Galicia and the Duchy of Posen supported the war with money, supplies and men. Lithuania rose and soon the flame of war spread over Livonia, White Russia, Volhynia, Podolia and even in some places in Ukraine. The diplomatic intervention of the Powers in behalf of Poland, not sus-

tained, except in the case of Sweden, by a real determination on their part to do something effective for her, did more harm than good, as mere verbosity often does. It alienated Austria which hitherto had maintained a friendly neutrality with reference to Poland and had not interfered with the Polish activities in Galicia. It prejudiced public opinion among the radical



FIG. 219—A LITHUANIAN INSURRECTIONIST  
(From the Series "Lithuania" by Arthur Grottger)

groups in Russia who, until that time, had been friendly because they regarded the uprising as of a social rather than a national character and it stirred the Russian Government to more energetic endeavors toward the speedy suppression of hostilities which were growing in strength and determination. By bringing about a transfer of the reins of government from the hands of the progressives into those of the conservatives,

foreign intervention was indirectly responsible for the alienation of the former enthusiastic support which the peasants gave to the uprising. The conservative government did not make such sweeping promises of land distribution as were given in the declaration of the revolutionary provisional government. Prince Peter Kropotkin in his "Memoirs" gives interesting information as to the consternation the grim turn



FIG. 220—A BATTLE  
(From the series "Polonia" by Arthur Grottger)

taken by the war was creating in the official circles of Russia, and how the failure of the Polish government to satisfy the peasants was craftily exploited in the interests of Russia. To quote Kropotkin:

"Full advantage was taken of this mistake (on the part of the Polish government) when Nicholas Milutin was sent to Poland by Alexander II with the mission of liberating the peasants in the way he intended doing it in Russia, whether the landlords were ruined or not. 'Go to Poland; apply there your red program against the Polish landlords,' said Alexander

II to him, and Milutin, together with Prince Cherkassky and many others, really did their best to take the land from the landlords and give good-sized allotments to the peasants. . . . One can imagine the effect which such a policy had upon the peasants. A cousin of mine was in Poland or in Lithuania with his regiment of uhlans of the guard. The revolution was so serious that even the regiments of the guard had been sent from St. Petersburg against it, and it is now known that when Michael Muravioff was sent to Lithuania and went to take leave of the Empress Marie, she said to him: 'Save at least Lithuania for Russia!' Poland was regarded as lost.

"The armed bands of the revolutionists held the country,' my cousin said to me, 'and we were powerless to defeat them, or even to find them. Small bands over and over again attacked our smaller detachments, and as they fought admirably and knew the country and found support among the population, they often had the best of the skirmishes. We were thus compelled to march in large columns only. We would cross a region, marching through the woods, without finding any trace of the bands; but when we marched back again we learned that the bands had reappeared in our rear; that they had levied the patriotic tax in the country; and if some peasant had rendered himself useful in any way to our troops, we found him hanged on a tree by the revolutionary bands. So it went on for months, with no chance for improvement, until Milutin and Cherkassky came and freed the peasants, giving them the land. Then—all was over.'

"I once met one of the Russian functionaries who went to Poland under Milutin and Cherkassky. 'We had full liberty,' he said, to turn over the land to the peasants. My usual plan was to go and convoke the peasants' assembly.

"Tell me first,' I would say, 'what land do you hold at this moment?' They would point it out to me.

"Is this all the land you ever held?' I would then ask.

"Surely not,' they would reply with one voice. 'Years ago these meadows were ours; this wood was once in our possession, these fields, too,' they would say.

"I would let them go on talking and then would ask:

"Now, which of you can certify under oath that this or that land has ever been held by you?' Of course, there would be nobody forthcoming—it was all too long ago. At last some old man would be thrust out from the crowd, the rest saying:



“He knows all about it; he can swear to it.’

“The old man would begin a long story about what he knew in his youth, or had heard from his father, but I would cut the story short . . . .

“‘State on oath what you know to have been held by the gmina (the village community) and the land is yours.’ And as soon as he took the oath—one could trust the oath implicitly—I wrote out the papers and declared to the assembly:

“‘Now, this land is yours. You stand no longer under any obligations whatever to your late masters; you are simply their neighbors; all you will have to do is to pay the redemption tax, so much every year, to the government. Your homesteads go with the land: you get them free.’” \*

How Muravioff, the Hangman, proceeded in Lithuania is too weird to describe. In addition to the

**The End of  
the War**

thousands who fell in battles, one hundred and twenty-eight men were executed by his order, and nine thousand four hundred and twenty-three men and women were exiled to Siberia. Whole villages and towns were burned to the last beam; all activities were suspended and the gentry was ruined by confiscation and exorbitant taxes. Count Berg, the newly appointed Governor-General of Poland, followed in Muravioff’s footsteps, employing inhumanly harsh measures against the country. The Reds criticised the Conservative government for its reactionary policy with reference to the peasants but, deluded in its hopes by Napoleon III, the Government counted on French support and persisted in its tactics. It was only after the highly respected and wise Romuald Traugutt took matters in hand that the aspect of the situation became brighter. He reverted to the policy of the first provisional government and endeavored to bring the peasant masses into active participation by granting to them the land they worked and calling upon all

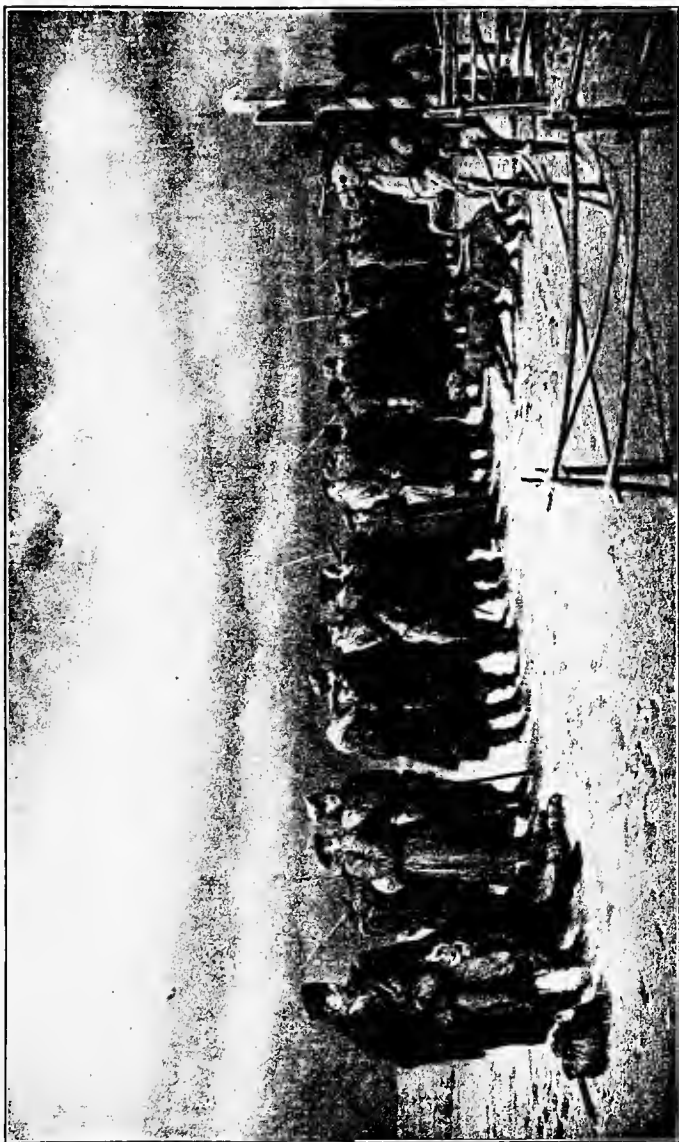
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\* P. Kropotkin: “Memoirs of a Revolutionist.” Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1899, pp. 174-180.

classes to rise. The response was generous but not universal. The wise policy was adopted too late. The Russian Government had already been working among the peasants in the manner above described and giving to them liberal parcels of land for the mere asking. They were completely satisfied, and though not interfering with the revolutionaries to any great extent, became lukewarm to them. Fighting continued intermittently for several months. Among the generals Count Joseph Hauke distinguished himself most as a commander of the revolutionary forces and took several cities from the vastly superior Russian army. When Traugutt and the four other members of the Polish Government were apprehended by Russian troops and executed at the Warsaw citadel, the war in the course of which six hundred and fifty battles and skirmishes were fought and twenty-five thousand Poles killed, came to a speedy end in the latter half of 1864, having lasted for eighteen months. It is of interest to note that it persisted in Zmudz and Podlasie, where the Uniate population, outraged and persecuted for their religious convictions, clung longest to the revolutionary banner.

After the collapse of the uprising the Russian Government was at liberty to indulge in vengeance and the opportunity was not missed. According to Russian official information, three hundred and ninety-six persons were executed and eighteen thousand six hundred and seventy-two were exiled to Siberia. Large numbers of men and women were sent to the interior of Russia and to Caucasus, Ural and other sections. Altogether about seventy thousand persons were imprisoned and subsequently taken out of Poland and stationed in the remote regions of Russia. The government confiscated sixteen hun-

**The Ven-  
geance of the  
Russian  
Government**



(Arthur Grottiger pinx)

FIG. 221.—“ON THE WAY TO SIBERIA”

dred and sixty estates in Poland and seventeen hundred and ninety-four in Lithuania. A ten per cent. income tax was imposed on all estates as a war indemnity. Only in 1869 was this exorbitant and ruinous tax reduced to five per cent. on all incomes. Besides the land granted to the peasants, the Russian Government gave them additional forest, pasture and other privileges (known under the name of "servitudes") which have proven to be a source of incessant irritation between the landowners and peasants, and of serious difficulty to rational economic development. The government took over all the church estates and funds, and abolished monasteries and convents. With the exception of religious instruction, all other studies in the schools were ordered to be in Russian. Russian also became the official language of the country, used exclusively in all offices of the general and local government. All traces of the former Polish autonomy were removed and the kingdom was divided into ten provinces, each with an appointed Russian military governor and all under complete control of the Governor-General at Warsaw. All the former government functionaries were deprived of their positions, and in Poland alone about fourteen thousand Poles were thrown out to care for themselves and their families as well as they could.

In Lithuania the Russian officials set themselves to the task of obliterating Polish culture. As in Poland, all libraries and museums were removed to Russia. Associations of every kind were closed. The continuation of a Polish newspaper that had been published in Wilno since 1750 was prohibited. The confiscated estates were awarded to Russian officials. Every opportunity was used to dispossess Polish landowners from their homesteads. Over eight hundred families were

**The Lot of  
Lithuania**

forced to sell their estates and all of them went to Russians, as, by the ukase of the Tsar proclaimed in 1865, only Russians had the right to buy land in Lithuania and Ruthenia. As long as Russian rule lasted the Poles could not acquire land in two sections of the former Polish Republic. The impoverished Polish nobles who did not own any real estate were ordered to leave the country and were forcibly settled in Russia. Polish speech was prohibited in public places. Severe punishment was prescribed for teaching reading or writing outside of school buildings. Polish display signs over stores, Polish posters or advertisements of any kind came under the ban of the law. Even the cab drivers had not escaped the watchful eye of the Russian officials: they were ordered to dress, as well as to fix the harness of their horses, in the Russian style. The names of the cities were Russified and Russian colonization was strongly encouraged. Particularly severe limitations were imposed upon the Roman Catholic Church. During the seven years following the revolution only ten priests were ordained in Lithuania. Meetings of priests were prohibited as were also public prayers, processions, renovation of church buildings or displays of crosses. A very strict police control was exercised over the priests. As in Poland, Roman Catholic religious orders were abolished. Thousands of Catholic communicants were forced to join Greek Orthodox churches and many Roman churches were transformed into Orthodox places of worship. Efforts were made to supplement the prayers in Polish by special prayers in the Russian tongue. Religious instruction in the Lithuanian schools was to be given in Russian. As a result of these Russian iniquities with reference to the Roman Catholic Church in Poland and Lithuania, Pope Pius IX severed diplo-

matic relations with Russia in 1865. The Poles were removed from all government positions, from service on railways, banks and similar public institutions. The publishing of books and periodicals in either the Polish or Lithuanian language was made illegal. Only



FIG. 222—THE CHURCH OF ST. ANN IN WILNO

in 1904 were the Lithuanians again granted the use of Latin characters. The laws of 1864 were later reconfirmed in 1894, and the rigor continued unabated. In recognition of the distinguished services rendered to the cause of Russia by Muravioff, the Russian Gov-

ernment erected a monument to him at Wilno in 1898, and in 1904 a monument was raised there in honor of Catherine the Great. Fearing lest the two bronze monuments be used for making howitzers by the Germans, the Russian authorities ordered their transfer to Moscow at the time of their recent hasty evacuation of the ancient Lithuanian capital in 1915, and it



FIG. 223—"CSTRA BRAMA," AN ANCIENT CITY GATE OF WILNO

was with sincere joy that the population saw these emblems of oppression and outrage leave the country on their way east.

Following the introduction of "reforms" a severe and stupid censorship was saddled upon Poland and Lithuania, which stifled every thought and which often distorted the meaning of the most innocent expressions by the censor's substitution of words that were more to his

The  
Censorship

liking and sounded less revolutionary. Madame Modjeska, in her "Memoirs," relates some of her experiences with the Warsaw censor and the difficulties she experienced in introducing plays she liked.

"It was very easy to get approval of the modern French plays. Even when the plays were not highly moral, they were kindly dealt with, but our censor always objected to the poetic drama. He seemed to have a special pleasure in cutting my speeches in such a way that it was quite impossible to get any sense out of them. It was annoying and sometimes quite ridiculous, and our actors had a great deal of fun every time a play came from the censor's office. Every noble sentiment was forbidden. Even some of the words were found disloyal, among others, the word 'Slave.' In one of the melodramas it was cut out and replaced by the word 'negro,' and the sentence, which ran as follows: 'He was a slave to his passion,' was changed to 'He was a negro to his passion!' On another occasion a Catholic priest had to say, 'I love my country and my people, and I shall never leave them.' The words 'country and people' were replaced by 'wife and children!' In another play the words 'He walked arm in arm with the emperor and whispered in his ear,' were changed to 'He walked three steps behind the emperor and whispered in his ear!' On still another occasion the censor refused to allow the playing of Slowacki's 'Mazepa' because there was a Polish king in it. He said to me:

"'A Polish King? Who ever heard of such an absurd thing! Polish Kings never existed. There are only Russian emperors of Poles and of all the Russias; you understand, Madam?' When I tried to persuade him of his error, he cut me short with the words:

"'Do not think of it. It will never do, never!'"\*

The novel, the drama and the newspapers had to adapt themselves to these conditions of censorship and to establish certain conventions of style which would be understood by everybody. In this way a peculiar type of writing developed. The public could read between the lines and a great many things were

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\* Memories and Impressions of Helena Modjeska. An Autobiography, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1910, pp. 185, 190.





FIG. 224—ORNAMENTS WORN BY THE WOMEN OF POLAND IN TOKEN OF NATIONAL MOURNING (1863)

said and a great many books were published whose intent and ideas were not in conformity with the standards of the censor.

Passive and powerless resignation took hold of the country in the face of the fresh calamities which befell it. Life became divested of all possibilities for normal development and a deep gloom settled upon the hearts and minds of the people. The profuse bloodletting weakened the national body and sapped its vitality. Poland became painfully conscious of the fact that she was abandoned by everybody and that her ideals were farther from realization than ever before. She saw that under the new régime she would be unable to continue the traditions of her cultural past and to take an active part in the progress of civilization. An European nation, par excellence, with an ancient, distinct and fine culture, was, by force of arms, stripped of its heritage and forced, bound hand and foot, into a narrow mould of foreign, semi-Oriental life that was suffocating and loathsome. The Russian bureaucrat, the chinovnik and the Cossack became the absolute masters of the life and death of the people. All the multifarious and onerous taxes collected in the country went to strengthen the resources of the Russian Empire, and only such crumbs were appropriated for improvements in Poland as the vindictive Russian Government would grant. The inhabitants and rightful owners of the country had no voice in the management of it, even in an advisory capacity. Their children had to attend Russian schools, a few of which had been established, and the youth went to a Russian university. Everything Polish was discriminated against and the feelings of the people outraged at

**The Era of  
Positivism and  
its Reflection  
in Literature**



(Wojciech Kossak pinx)

FIG. 225--A COSSACK CHARGE IN THE STREETS OF WARSAW

every turn. The ignorance and superstition of the peasantry was fostered by the patronizing officialdom. The activities of the local self-government of the peasants were carefully supervised and guided by the Russian agents. The governors and the curators of



(Portrait by Pillatti)

FIG. 226—JOSEPH IGNACE KRASZEWSKI (1812-1887)

education were ruthless in their oppression, and the only method of obtaining individual relief from their official iniquities was by bribery. Russian bureaucratic corruption was by force of circumstances grafted upon Polish everyday life.

The nation had to submit to this order of things. As no political life was possible, the leaders urged the adoption of a program fitted to the circumstances: work along general organic development, with particular encouragement of modern commerce, industry and advanced agriculture. Darwinism and Spencerism, then coming to the front, furnished the philo-



FIG. 227—BOLESŁAV PRUS,  
the pseudonym of Alexander  
Głowacki (1847-1912)

sophical basis for the new social and economic policy which in contradistinction to the idealistic tendencies of the former generations was styled as that of Positivism.

Literature which nowhere else perhaps, reflects the intellectual and spiritual life of the people so faithfully as in Poland, echoed almost immediately the new tendencies. Joseph Ignace Kraszewski, the Po-

lish Dickens, a man of a versatile mind and of a remarkable facility of writing, though belonging to the passing generation, well appreciated the spirit of the new age and contributed a number of novels exalting the ideal of work and accomplishment ("Resurrecturi") and ridiculing the unproductive dreamer ("Blue Almonds") and the sluggish ways of the country



FIG. 228—ELIZA ORZESZKOWA (1842-1910)

squires ("Morituri"). When the Positivist pendulum swung somewhat too far and threatened to divert the mind of the people from the past national ideals, Kraszewski began his remarkable series of historical novels for which, as well as for his indefatigable efforts in promoting the education of the masses, his

name will long be remembered in Polish history. It was the fund collected on the occasion of his 75th birthday that made possible the establishment of the "School Mother," an organization to promote elementary education among the people. It was launched in Galicia in 1882 and has been carrying on very useful and effective work ever since.

The truest exponents of the positivist era in Polish literature are Boleslav Prus, Eliza Orzeszkowa



FIG. 229—ALEXANDER SWIENTOCHOWSKI  
Editor of "Prawda" (The Truth), a very influential progressive  
weekly magazine published in Warsaw

and Alexander Swientochowski. In their short stories, novels, dramas and feuilletons they portrayed and analyzed the changing social and economic conditions and the problems which these changes created in the environment and in the individual and collective psychology. The relations of the peasant to the other classes of society, the emancipation of women and their new opportunities, the relation of the individual to society, the clashes between individual and social

duties, the ignorance of the masses, the struggle of the peasant with the efforts of the Prussian colonization commission, the ferment in the life of the Jews under changing conditions, found a sympathetic and highly artistic description and analysis in the writings of that period. All three of the above mentioned writers were ceaseless in their propagation of humani-



FIG. 230—HENRYK SIENKIEWICZ (1846-1916)

tarian ideals and of strict performance of duty. They fought obfuscation and slothfulness and preached the gospel of work and accomplishment. Their influence was profound and lasting. Their writings, remarkable for style and beauty and scintillating with modern ideas, are lasting contributions to the thesaurus of the world's literature. Another writer of the same period who achieved great fame was Henryk Sienkiewicz.



He also started out as a champion of Positivist ideals, but his great talent was more at ease in painting pictures of by-gone days and he struck a deep chord in the Polish soul by rekindling the pride of past glory. His incomparable descriptions of the picturesque life of Poland of the XVIIth century with its



FIG. 231—STANISLAV MONIUSZKO (1819-1872)  
Composer of Polish National Music

wars and glories, its free expansion and remarkable characters added greatly to the strengthening of patriotic and national feelings of a generation brought up under the indescribable oppression of Russia and Prussia. A similar "sursum corda" was afforded by the national music and national operas of Stanislaw Moniuszko of which "Halka" is the most popular, and



FIG. 232—JAN MATEJKO (1838-1893)  
Master of Polish Historical Painting

by the historic paintings of the great masters Jan Matejko and Arthur Grottger.

Although the Positivist era deprecated poetry, the period abounded in a number of poets of great distinction, of which at least two, Adam Asnyk and Maria Konopnicka, should be mentioned because of the influence they exercised on their generation.



FIG. 233—STANISLAW WYSPIANSKI (1869-1907)  
Poet and Painter, the greatest of modern Polish writers

Asnyk, a peer in style and delicacy of feeling, became the poetic interpreter of the tendencies of his time and Konopnicka was the inspired champion of the down-trodden and of those who toil in the factories and fields.

The end of the NINETEENTH century witnessed another mighty turn in the evolution of Polish letters and

poetry. Jan Kasprawicz, Kazimir Tetmayer and Jan Staff, in verse; Sieroszewski, Żeromski, Reymont, Weyszenhof and Danilowski, in prose; Żuławski, Przybyszewski, and above all the giant Wyspianski, in drama, created a new epoch-making era in Polish literature. The creative genius of the nation, prevented from finding adequate expression for itself in



FIG. 235—STEFAN ŻEROMSKI  
(pseudonym: Maurycy Żych)

the multifarious endeavors which normal national life affords, concentrated, as it were, in the sphere of literature and the other forms of art. There is hardly another people among whom art, science and literature occupy such an exalted position as among the Poles and where so much talent is devoted to these pursuits of life.

The "red program" of Milutin, referred to in the above quotation from Kropotkin, coupled with the ruinous Russian system of taxation and administration, had thrown out of the saddle a vast number of families belonging to the gentry class. Unable to meet the onerous requirements imposed upon them or to adapt themselves to changed conditions, they were driven to the wall. Thousands of families became ruined and flocked to

**Social and  
Economic  
Changes  
Following the  
Collapse of the  
Revolution**



FIG. 234—GEORGE ŻULAWSKI  
(1874-1915)

Poet, Philosopher and Dramatist. Died on the field of honor during the Great War as an officer of the Polish Legions.

the cities, swelling the ranks of "the intellectual proletariat" as they were called. It was a hard task for them to become accustomed to urban occupations. Ill prepared to compete with the city element they could not avail themselves of the opportunities for commercial and industrial pursuits offered at the time, because of their proud family traditions. The opportunities were considerable on account of the extension of the domestic market resulting from the change in the status of the peasantry and from their

acquisition of a purchasing power which they had not possessed in by-gone days. Gradually, however, adaptation to environment took place, technical experts developed and the economic evolution of the country received a powerful boom. When, in the seventies, Russia, needing additional funds to finance the war with Turkey, considerably raised the custom duties and built a high protective wall, Polish manufactures found themselves practically without foreign competition and with enormous markets in

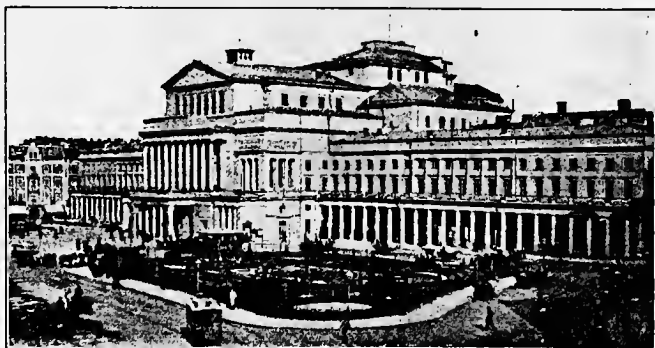


FIG. 236—GRAND THEATRE OF WARSAW

the east. Agents of the industrial countries arrived in considerable numbers and established large factories, taking advantage of the great natural resources of the country, its abundance of coal, iron, zinc and lead and of the immense supply of relatively cheap labor. The small peasant landowners were unable to eke out enough from their farms to meet the high Russian taxes, and tens of thousands of them flocked to the cities. In a decade or two the country's economic basis of existence swung from agriculture to industry. In 1909 over a million and a

quarter tons of iron ore were extracted and about four and a half million tons were smelted. The annual production of calamine was 100,000 tons and that of coal was estimated as sufficiently large to supply all France.\* Poland became one of the most highly developed industrial countries of Europe with a density of population surpassed by Belgium alone. Warsaw, on account of its central geographic position, grew by leaps and bounds, and reached, including the population of its suburbs, the million mark. New



FIG. 237—THE CITY OF ŁÓDZ, THE MANCHESTER OF POLAND

cities sprang up and small towns, like Łódź, developed prodigiously. It was due to the enterprise of the foreign and native capitalists, to the skill of the Polish engineers and technicians, and to the intelligence and conscientiousness of the Polish workmen that industries could not only maintain themselves profitably, but even increase in bulk and productivity in spite of the difficulties placed in their way by the regulations

\* S. Posner: "Poland as an Independent Economic Unit" London: Geo. Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1916, pp. 11-12.

of the Russian government. Fearing lest the Polish industries supplant the Russian manufactures, the government so regulated railway tariffs that it was much cheaper to ship the same kind of goods from points in Russia to destinations in Poland, than from the same places in Poland to points in Russia. Factory regulations were made more cumbersome in Poland than in Russia and taxation higher. The purposeful undevelopment of railway facilities in Poland interfered with proper local distribution and tended, in addition to other causes, to thwart the

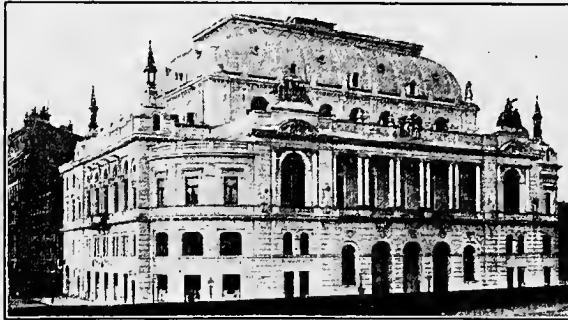


FIG. 238—THE PHILHARMONIC HALL AT WARSAW

development of those industries of the preceding period which had been producing exclusively for the Polish market and to specialize in exports to the Empire. This led to centralization of capital in certain industries like the textile and steel and iron, and deterred diversification of production. Some of the daily necessities of life, like products of leather, horn, bone and wood, building materials, soap, candles, glass, porcelain, were imported in large quantities from Russia. It became more profitable to specialize in certain staple commodities for export and to dis-



regard the home market. From a political standpoint this development had important consequences and created a peculiar situation. Foreign capital, attracted to the country by the latent possibilities and enormous financial gains, had turned Poland into an economic dependent of Russia and created a new political philosophy, of the "dollar diplomacy" type, based on loyalty "without reservations" because of the lucrative Far East markets of the Russian Empire. The rich manufacturers became the spiritual heirs of the

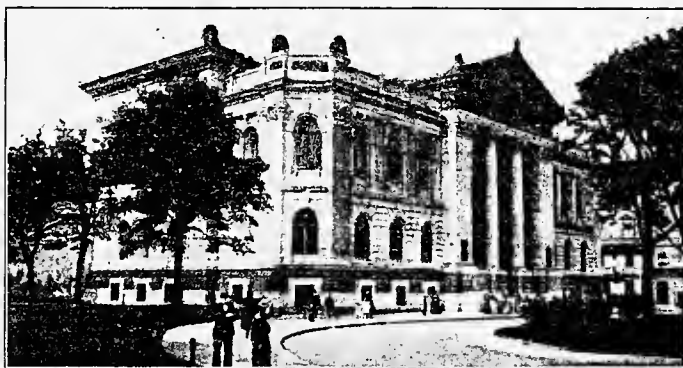


FIG. 230—THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS AT WARSAW

old Polish "kinglets," the magnates, who, for personal gain, had sacrificed the vital interests of the nation.

In spite of the industrial expansion of the country hundreds of thousands of manual workers were impelled to seek work abroad, especially in the United States and also in Germany whither they flocked in large numbers every spring for work in the fields. Many thousands among the young Polish engineers and chemists were induced to go to Russia and many of them, attracted by the very high compensation professional service commands because of its scarcity,

settled there permanently. The large exodus of the most robust and enterprising elements among the working class was due to a number of causes, chief among which were the lure of the high American wages for unskilled labor, the oppression on the part of the government and the economic exploitation on the part of the industrial corporations.

The fact that a large percentage of the business capital in Poland was foreign and the government intensely inimical to progress, was responsible for the disregard on the part of the industrial corporations for the broader social needs of the country and their unscrupulous exploitation of the working masses. Unable, on account of government prohibitions, to organize themselves into trade unions for bettering their condition, the workmen formed secret societies, chiefly of a socialistic character. A powerful, though officially non-existent, Socialist Party arose and found tens of thousands of sympathizers among the intellectual elements of the cities who were attracted to the organization not only because of their sympathy with the exploited workman and their love for democracy, but also because of the fact that the more important wing of the Polish Socialist Party, known as the P. P. S., strange as it may seem for a Socialist body, inscribed in its platform the blunt demand for Poland's independence. The development of the philosophy of Polish Socialism constitutes one of the most interesting chapters in the evolution of political thought. The foremost Socialist writers like Boleslav Limanowski, Ignace Daszynski, Kazimir Krauz and Titus Filipowicz emphasized the importance of an independent state for the proper development of the masses of the Polish people, and pointed out the psychological and socio-

**Socialism and  
the People's  
Party**

logical weaknesses of internationalism. The famous speech of Bebel, delivered in October, 1891, at a Socialist Congress, created a deep impression in Poland. In the course of that speech Bebel said: "If France and Russia should join in a war against Germany, then the Germans will fight for their existence and the war will become a struggle of extermination. The Socialists will then be compelled to help those classes whom they always fought, as the triumph of barbarism will mean a setback of many years to socialism. It is urgently necessary to push Russia to the East and to revive a new Poland, a democratic Poland." This speech by the high priest of socialism, seconded a year afterward by Engels and Liebknecht, was a revelation to the narrow Polish sectarians and dreamers. It became clear that to advocate a national Polish state was not preaching treason against the principles of socialism. As a consequence, the break from internationalism was precipitous and popular. Only a small minority refused to follow the general current and banded together under the name of the "Social Democratic Party of Poland and Lithuania."

The only other party which, like the socialists, stood on a basis of complete national independence was the People's Party which, as its name indicates, comprised mainly the lower elements of the urban and the rural populace. The banner of independent Poland was thus wrested from the hands of the nobility by the toiling masses of the cities and villages, who had just begun to come into their own. The two independence parties could not work openly in Russian Poland but they none the less reached a high degree of development in both Russian Poland and Galicia, and wielded considerable political influence. The beginnings of the People's Party are

traceable to the organization by T. T. Jez (Col. Zygmunt Milkowski) of the "Polish League" in Switzerland in the eighties at the time when Russian governmental repression and the loyalism of the Polish upper and middle classes reached their high water marks. The occasion for the launching of the League at that moment was the impending war between Austria and Russia. Its aim was the creation of a war fund for the equipment of an army against Russia



FIG. 240—THOMAS THEODORE JEZ  
Pseudonym of Zygmunt Milkowski (1821-1915), Soldier, Publicist, Novelist

and the stirring up of the public opinion of Europe which had entirely forgotten Poland. It was for the purpose of accumulating means for active steps against Russia that the National Treasury at Rapperswil in St. Gallen, Switzerland, was created. As the war did not come to pass, the organization, having changed its name to "National League" limited its immediate aims to the fostering of national and patriotic sentiments among the people and to the

raising of their educational and economic standards. The leaders of the People's Party in Russian Poland were Joseph Potocki and the noted publicist, John Poplawski, who afterward, together with Roman Dmowski, distorted the movement, narrowed its scope and breadth, turned it into a jingo mould and made it subservient to Russian interests under the name of the National Democratic Party. That wing of the People's Party in Russian Poland, which refused to join the National Democrats clustered around the National Peasant Union and the National Workmen's Alliance and remained true to the banner of independence. In recent years large numbers of former adherents realized that they have been misguided by the National Democratic leaders and went over to the independence organizations. This secession from the National Democratic Party has been known as the Fronde and has contributed toward the breaking of the backbone of Mr. Dmowski's strength and of his political machine. In Galicia a Peasant Party has been founded and led by Mr. and Mrs. Wyslouch. The Party has adhered steadfastly to the ideals of national independence and has exercised a most wholesome, constructive influence. In 1895 the Party was able to elect to the Provincial Diet seven deputies, famous among whom became the peasant Jacob Boyko, an orator of great power and a man of vision and ability.

The economic development of the Prussian part of Poland followed entirely different lines than that of Russian Poland but in their political attitude toward the Poles the Prussians were not a whit superior to the Muscovites. Extreme hatred of everything Polish is their historical tradition. The entire country which they claim is built on lands taken

**The  
Brutality of  
the Prussian  
Régime**

by force of arms from the Slavs, chiefly the Poles. Brandenburg, the nucleus of the State, was the first German outpost in Slavic territory. East Prussia, a Polish fief, went to them as a heritage of the bloody Order of the Cross; the purely Polish province of West Prussia and the Duchy of Posen, the cradle of the Polish nation, were their share of the partition pillage while Silesia, an originally Polish land, was wrested from Austria only half a century ago. In their haughty disdain and dislike of everything non-Prussian, they subjected the tenacious and irrepressible Poles to all kinds of indignities and iniquities conceivable. And yet, to quote the words of Mr. Asquith, uttered recently in reply to the parliamentary speech of Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg, "the attempt to Germanize Poland has been at once the strenuous purpose and colossal failure of the Prussian domestic policy." To a great extent this failure was due to the untiring efforts of the Polish clergy to protect the Church from the onslaught of the "Kulturkampf." The coincidence of the persecution of the national and the religious attachments of the Poles, both in Russia and Prussia, has tended to strengthen the historic tradition that originated with the Vasa period in the XVIIth century, that Polish nationality and Roman Catholicism are inseparable and has assured to the clergy an important position in Polish life. To this day one can find among the backward peasants in Russian and Prussian Poland many who, when asked about their nationality will reply that they are Catholics, and who will speak of a German as a Lutheran and of a Russian as an Orthodox. In the Duchy of Posen, since the dawn of the "organic" or "positivist" era the priests have been active in organizing co-operative societies, loan associations, trade circles and benefit funds among the

city workingmen and peasants, and have stimulated self-help and developed political and social instincts. The great success obtained has been due in no mean degree to the administrative and financial genius of Father Wawrzyniak. In politics, however, they were extreme loyalists and at times subordinated the na-



FIG. 241—FATHER WAWRZYNIAK

The highly gifted organizer of the Polish peasants in opposition to the Prussian Colonization Commission

tional interests to those of the Church. Yet, during the "Kulturkampf" the loyal Archbishop of Gnesen, Cardinal Ledochowski, two other bishops and many priests were arrested and some exiled from the country. The "Kulturkampf" of Bismarck was particularly bitter in the Polish provinces because here it

was not only directed against the Catholic Church but also against the Polish race. All schools, religious orders and civic agencies were closed and the jails filled to overflowing with recalcitrant peasants and workmen. Under the pretext of freeing the Polish schools from the control of the clergy the Prussian government entrusted all the supervisory activities in the Polish schools to German inspectors. Soon the Polish language was barred from all grammar and high schools in the Duchy of Posen, West Prussia and Silesia, and the teachers were selected exclusively from among the Germans. When the German Imperial Union was established, the Polish provinces, in spite of the specific guarantees given to them in the Treaty of Vienna, were made a part of Prussia with no recognition of their national character and all the protests of the Polish representatives proved of no avail. The world failed to take cognizance of this breach of international law. When, in 1873, Prussia introduced certain internal reforms granting more home rule to her cities, the Polish provinces were excluded from the provisions of the new law. In 1876 the Polish language was superseded by the German in all official, civil, judicial and administrative transactions. The guaranteed and sworn Polish autonomy dwindled, and in order to obliterate all traces of the national character of the provinces, the Government proceeded to change the names of places, substituting German designations for the ancient Polish ones, and accordingly Leszno was named Lissa, Chelmno--Kulm, Pila became known as Schneidemühl, and so along the line with every town and hamlet. The Poles were deprived of their constitutional right to assemble and hold peaceful meetings if Polish were spoken at such gatherings. To circumvent this restriction, business



at Polish assemblies was transacted with the aid of blackboards and chalk. The law did not prohibit the employment of these accessories at Polish gatherings. In 1885 an order was issued by Bismarck directing all Poles who were not Prussian subjects to leave the country immediately. Within a short time over forty thousand persons were compelled to leave their estates or to abandon posts at which they had been working for years and to seek new homes in other parts of Poland. In 1886 a Colonization Commission was established with the aim of buying out land from the Poles and settling it with German colonizers. One hundred million marks was voted for this purpose at the outset. A brutal anti-Polish orgy spread over all Prussia and Germany. Under the protectorate of Bismarck a special society was formed to agitate German public opinion against the Poles. The Government subsidized this society by large allowances and carried out its recommendations. This society, known as the H. K. T. from the initials of its three founders, Hausemann, Kennemann and Thiedemann, has carried out, with the personal encouragement of Kaiser Wilhelm II, a most pernicious and vituperative propaganda by means of special publications, pamphlets, meetings and dramas, and has been responsible, in a large measure, for fostering intense animosity between the two races. "Ausrotten!" (Exterminate!) became the slogan of the German nation with reference to the Poles, and for the realization of this inhuman aim no amount of money was too large. Over ten billion marks were spent for the purpose. Polish merchants, manufacturers and workmen were systematically and openly boycotted and German trade in Poland was heavily subsidized. The Polish village communities were deprived of their right of supervision over the village schools and, in

Russian fashion, private instruction outside of the school buildings was made punishable by heavy penalties. Children became the peculiarly favored butt of the H. K. T. assaults. In schools they were flogged for speaking or praying in Polish. When, in 1901, the parents of the children of the little town of Wrzesnia, rose against this barbarous practice on the part of the teachers, they suffered heavy penalties. The echo of this case reverberated loudly all over the world, and for the first time called the attention of the civilized nations to Prussian Kultur which, with reference to the Poles, bore such a striking resemblance to the Tsar's conception of government.

Following the Russian policy in Lithuania and Ruthenia, which forbade the acquisition of real estate by Poles, and realizing that all the efforts of the Colonization Commission were in vain in view of the unexampled attachment of the Polish peasant to his native land, the Prussian government determined in 1904 to arrest the growth of Polish homesteads by making the building of houses on newly acquired properties dependent on special permission, which seldom, if ever, was given. This new limitation did not stop the efforts of the Poles to get hold of as much real property as possible. To overcome the restriction, the peasants have followed the example of one Drzymala and live in houses built on wheels, in this manner circumventing the spirit of the restriction, for the law does not as yet prohibit a Pole from living in a wagon. It is incredible that a civilized government should drive people to resort to such means of defence in the struggle for self-preservation. The Prussian inhumanity had at least one redeeming feature, for by its constant pressure it created a healthy reaction. German thoroughness and efficiency have called forth an equal measure of preparation and co-operation. Ger-

man methods were imitated to defeat German aggression. The Peasant Bank of Posen and its large number of local branches has successfully competed with the Colonization Bank. In thrift and productiveness the Polish peasant became equal, if not superior, to the German Michel. In endurance and education he is similarly his equal. He is as progressive and as prosperous as the German peasant and his standards of life and requirement have become infinitely higher than those of his brother in Russian Poland, to whom the Russian Government has denied all the achievements of European civilization. The German system of compulsory education though resented by the Poles because of its policy of Germanization has served, however, to develop the mental faculties of the Polish peasantry. There is no illiteracy in the German part of Poland. On the other hand, the German hammer stunned, as it were, the higher creative faculties of the Poles. Very few great artists and writers have appeared in Prussian Poland, though there have been several notable exceptions. The cities in German Poland are well ordered and managed and the population prosperous. In spite of all the repressions, the number of daily Polish newspapers and the consumption of Polish literature in German Poland has increased. Even Silesia, which was separated from Poland in the XIVth century has recently seen an awakening and the people are becoming conscious of their true national affiliation.

The Austrian defeats in the war with France in 1859 and subsequently in the war with Prussia in 1866 wrought conspicuous changes in the political structure of the Hapsburg domains. When Austria was compelled to relinquish to the Hohenzollerns the leading part

**Galician  
Home-Rule**

in German affairs, she turned her attention to the peoples inhabiting her own empire. A union was formed with Hungary and autonomy was granted to the various component nationalities of Transleithania and Cisleithania. Galicia received a considerable measure of home rule, a Provincial Diet at Lemberg and a recognition of her national and cultural needs. The Polish language became the official language of the Province and all instruction in schools, universities, technical and other colleges was ordered to be

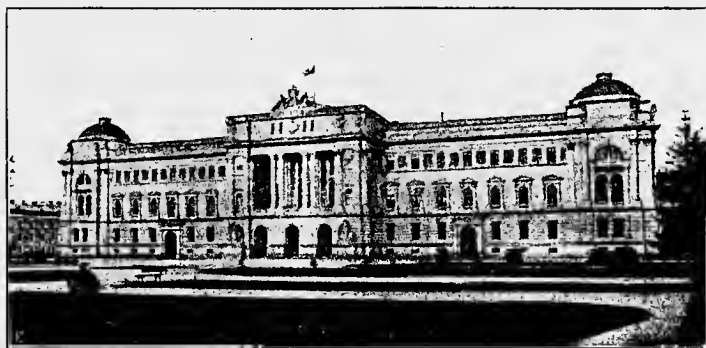


FIG. 242—THE GALICIAN DIET AT LEMBERG

carried on in the native tongue of the population. Count Agenor Goluchowski, the former Prime Minister of the Empire, was appointed the first Polish Governor under the new order of things and numerous reforms were effected. The Government granted several special concessions in the interests of the large landowners and became otherwise liberal in its attitude to the Polish province. In recognition of the special privileges, as well as in token of gratitude for the introduction of home rule, the aristocracy and rich nobility of Galicia sent an address to the Em-

peror replete with expressions of unbounded loyalty and thankfulness, ending with the now famous declaration: "By Thee, Sovereign Lord, we stand and to stand we wish." The extremists went so far



FIG. 243—COUNT AGENOR GOLUCHOWSKI, the first Polish Governor of Galicia

in their loyalty to the throne as to oppose vigorously a plan of Francis Smolka to transform the Dual Empire into a confederation of national states. This loyalty was awarded by a change in the ancient policy

of the Government. The former practice of favoring the peasants as against the landlords which led to the bloody carnage of 1846 was now forever abandoned.

The loyalist or conservative Polish party in Galicia, as well as in the other parts of Poland, gained



FIG. 244—FRANCIS SMOLKA, celebrated Polish statesman

additional strength after Napoleon's defeat in the war of 1871. France, the only ally Poland had on whom any hopes at all could be placed, after the humiliating experience at the hands of Prussian military supremacy, lost her former position and influence as a first class European power and could not be counted on any more. Loyalism and positivism seemed to be the

only rational slogans for the Polish life under the circumstances and any hopes for a speedy regaining of an independent political existence could seemingly



FIG. 245—PRINCE LEON SAPIEHA  
Eminent Patriot and the first Marshal of the Galician Diet

be entertained but by dreamers. And yet new currents were at work and when, during the Russo-Turkish war in 1877 the revolutionaries of 1863 planned, with the tacit aid of England and of Turkey to raise again the banner of protest against Russian

oppression, the landed gentry under the leadership of Prince Sapielha of Galicia supported the project. When, however, the impending entry of Austria into the war had been averted, "the Confederacy of the Polish Nation" was disbanded. The only way unselfish patriots actively demonstrated their feelings toward Russia was by organizing in Turkey a Polish legion which fought through the campaign under Jagmin, alongside of the Turkish army.

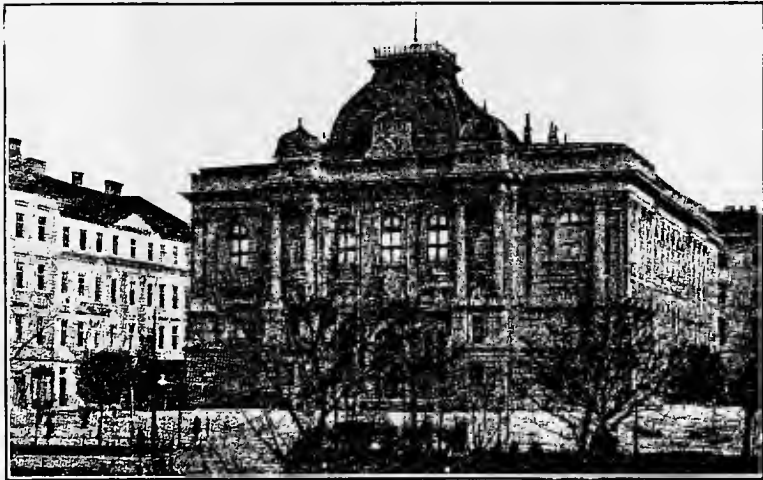


FIG. 246—THE INDUSTRIAL MUSEUM OF LEMBERG

The program of organic development could be applied in Galicia more successfully than in the other parts of Poland because of the large measure of political freedom enjoyed by that province of the ancient Republic. The provincial government devoted a great deal of thought, energy and money to the education of the people and numerous schools of all grades were established. In 1910 in Galicia there were over



five thousand country schools alone. Likewise efforts were made to organize the creative powers of the people and to keep alive national traditions and patriotism. To counteract the injurious effects the artificial state frontiers had created by thwarting free intercourse between the three sections of Poland and by fostering provincial insularity, steps were taken to hold frequent national gatherings in Galicia.

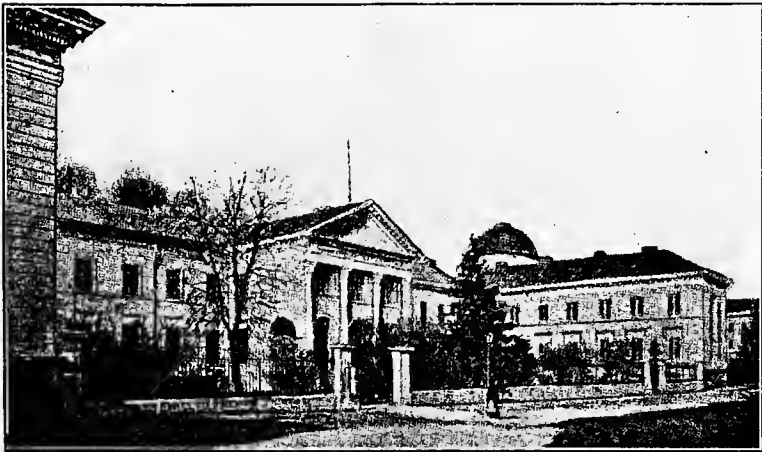


FIG. 247—THE OSSOLINSKI INSTITUTE AT LEMBERG, comprising a gallery of paintings and sculpture, a very large numismatic collection and a library of 142,000 volumes and 5,000 manuscripts

Various anniversaries of events and activities were celebrated and national associations of all kinds were encouraged to meet at Cracow or Lemberg. Summer university courses were opened in the famous mountain resort at Zakopane and at all these occasions thousands of men and women assembled from all the parts of Poland. To train the youth of the Province in bodily vigor and to prepare them for a possible call to arms against Russia, societies were formed,

known as "Nests of Falcons," or "Sokols" in Polish, where military training was given under the guise of athletic exercises. The boy-scout movement of a later period was enthusiastically received in Galicia and encouraged with a similar purpose in mind.

In spite of the inadequate means due to the



FIG. 248—HOME OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS OF FINE ARTS AT CRACOW

lack of industrial development of Galicia, the insufficiency of business and agricultural capital, the extremely heavy taxation prevailing there as everywhere else in Austria and the policy of the Viennese government to favor particularly the western provinces of the Empire, Polish self-help was able, with comparatively small equipment at its command,

to work wonders in every line of human endeavor. The cities developed, manufactures increased and in many branches entered into successful competition with the industrially older sections of the Empire. The productivity of the farms grew as education became more broadly disseminated; modern agricultural methods have been adopted and co-operative rural credit has been organized. The oil industry,

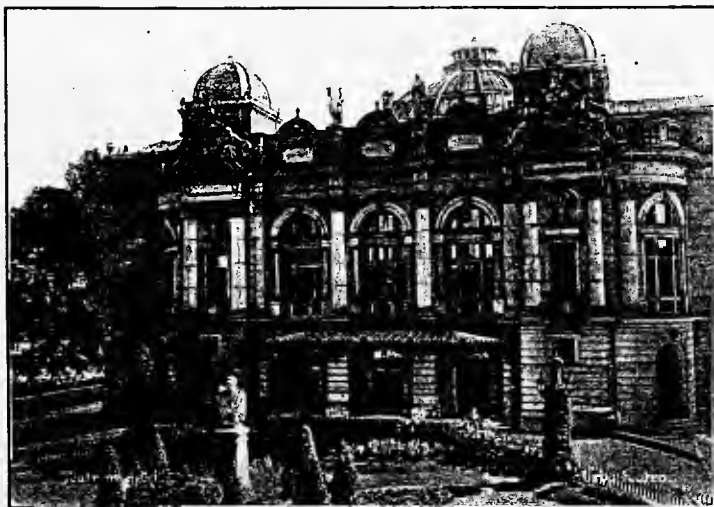


FIG. 249—CITY THEATRE OF CRACOW

after going through several crises, reached a stage of rational development. Thanks to the ingenuity of the Polish chemists important by-products of kerosene oil began to be manufactured as far back as 1853 and found immediate industrial application. The oil fields of Galicia extending over 19,760 acres have been systematically worked. Plans have also been made for the exploitation of recently discovered vast

coal fields; the mineral wealth of the country is under proper control and the numerous natural spas are being built up. Only the salt and potash mines, because they form a monopoly of the Viennese government have not had adequate attention. Local administration in Galicia has become efficient; cities have been well managed and improvements of all

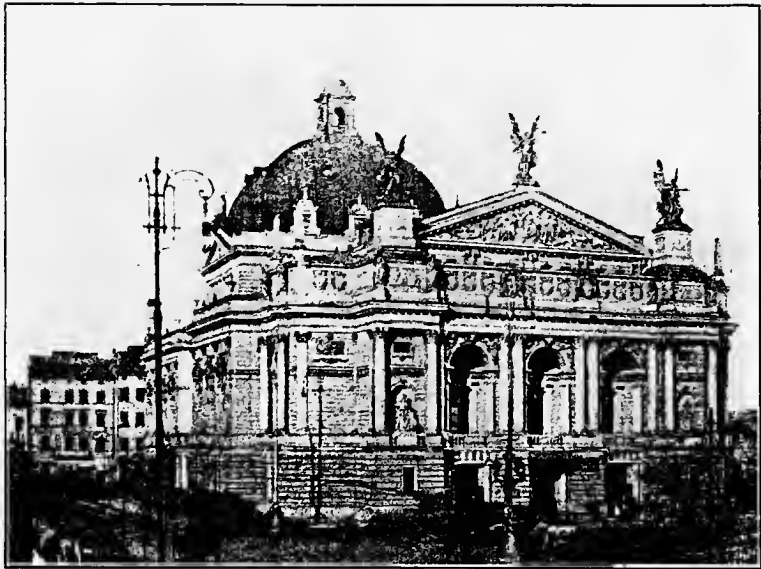


FIG. 250—THE THEATRE OF LEMBERG

kinds introduced. The co-operative movement has reached a development that compares favorably with any other country in Europe; the spirit of self-reliance and mutual help has become thoroughly instilled into the minds of the people and labor has become well organized and politically rife. Through the university extension courses, popular education

made great advances and thanks to the compulsory education law illiteracy has been almost entirely abolished. Scientific research and literary and artistic life have developed in Galicia more fully than in any other part of Poland. The Polish universities at Cracow and Lemberg, the Polytechnical School at Lemberg, which is one of the largest in Europe, the Agricultural Academy at Dublany, as well as the Cracow Academy of Sciences, have made substantial

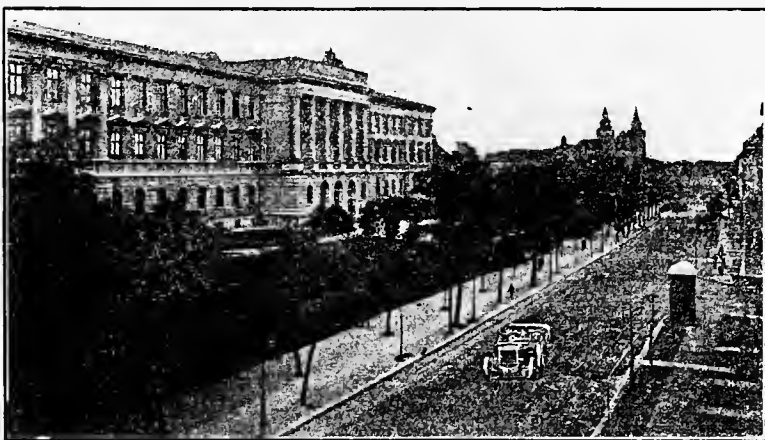


FIG. 251.—POLYTECHNICAL INSTITUTE OF LEMBERG

contributions to the sum total of human knowledge. The large public and semi-public libraries contain valuable collections and stimulate research.

Polish literature has flourished particularly in Galicia. Half of the 800 periodicals appearing in Poland are published in this fragment of the ancient Republic. Some of the greatest modern writers, poets and dramatists who, like Wyspianski, are comparable with the masters of the Romantic period, could

publish their works or have them performed only there. Many of the scientific and literary workers left Warsaw and settled in Cracow because only in Austrian Poland could they pursue their work in science and art without police interference. One cannot help contemplating how much more hopeless, sombre and gloomy would have been Poland's lot



FIG. 252—THE AGRICULTURAL ACADEMY AT DUBLANY

without this oasis of freedom that was afforded in Galicia!

Desirous as she was to do all in her power to help the other parts of Poland, Galicia was physically unable to give shelter and work to all of the spirits that craved freedom and a safe place to work. Hence the exodus of hundreds of Polish artists and scientists in search of opportunity. Like Domeyko, the

geologist, who after the war of 1831 went to Chile, made the first survey of that country and subsequently organized national education there, or like Strzelecki who went to explore the mountains of South Australia, they scattered to almost all of the large



FIG. 253—ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AT CRACOW

centers of activity in the Old and New Worlds. There is hardly an important university or a great temple of art where Polish workers of first magnitude could not be found. Marie Skłodowska-Curie, Nencki, Kostanecki, Mikulicz, Marchlewski, Laskowski, Rudzki, Narutowicz, Arctowski and Babinski are only a few

among the scientists who have worked outside of their native country. Similarly a very large number of Polish artists and musicians have attained distinction and fame in foreign lands.

The whole administration of Galicia has been in Polish hands, thus affording to the natives numerous opportunities in official life. Many Poles have distinguished themselves as administrators and legislators and have been, like Goluchowski, Badeni or Madeyski, called upon to fill the most responsible positions in the Imperial Cabinet. Dunayevski re-

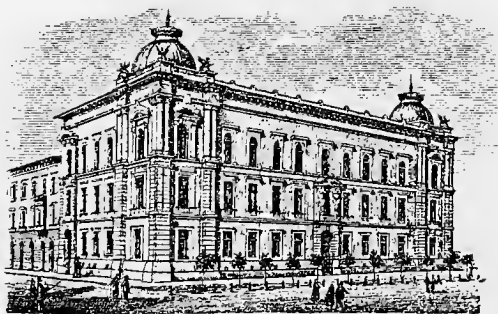


FIG. 254—ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS AT CRACOW

organized the finances of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and many other Poles, like Bilinski and Korytow-ski, followed him as finance ministers. Similarly, the diplomatic and consular service, the army and the navy, were open to Poles and they availed themselves of the opportunities, for the holding of a high official position by a Pole in Austria was not made contingent upon the renunciation on his part of his national attachments as has been invariably the case in Russia and Prussia. The Polish representation in the Austrian Parliament has been considerable, as the popula-



tion of Galicia constitutes twenty-eight per cent. of the total population of Austria, and the Polish Parliamentary Club frequently held the balance of power between the various factions of the Austrian House of Representatives. On many occasions this position of the Club has been utilized to wrest from the Legislature or from the Government concessions in favor of Galicia and the development of her economic resources by better railroad and canal facilities. Until the outbreak of the present war the governors of Galicia had invariably been appointed from among the Poles. The powers of the Galician Diet, sitting at Lemberg, the capital of the Province, have not been as broad as the Galicians would have wished to have them, and neither the Governor nor the Marshal, or the Speaker, of the Diet have been directly responsible before that body or removable by it, yet it has been able to express the will of the people in all matters pertaining to the collective life of the Province.

There has been, however, a considerable disturbing element in the peaceful evolution of Galicia and that is the Ruthenian question.

**The Ruthenian Problem**

The native population of the country districts of Eastern Galicia is preponderately Ruthenian. It consists almost entirely of farmers or farm laborers. Only nine per cent. of the population of Lemberg is Ruthenian and but a sprinkling of Ruthenians follow intellectual or business pursuits. That section of Ruthenia which constitutes the eastern part of Galicia came under Polish influence in the opening centuries of the formation of the Polish State and the upper strata of the people, as well as the cities, have undergone complete polonization; the lower classes, however, preserved their language, although all of them speak Polish perfectly well. Like the majority of the Ukrainians, the East

Galician Ruthenians joined the Church Union in the XVIth century. Not having been forced, like their brethren in Russia, to abandon their faith they remained Uniates or Greek Catholics. Their political and social conceptions are the same as those of the Polish peasantry and about twenty per cent. of the Ruthenian population intermarries with the Poles. Their folkways, however, and character are different from those of the Poles. They are perhaps more musically gifted and more easy going, but less ambitious, less self-reliant and less thrifty than the Poles. They lack historical tradition of a politically organized national state of their own as well as the higher standards of culture and civilization to compete successfully with their Polish neighbors. Because of the existing social and property relations in Galicia, the mind of a Ruthenian peasant invariably associates the Pole with the master or landowner. This accounts for the basic, purely economic source of any ill feeling that may be found in the heart of a Ruthenian in relation to a Pole. This state of mind, engendered by the resentment usually felt by an economic inferior to his superior, has been taken advantage of for political reasons, first by the Austrian government and then by the agents of Russia. When the Bismarckian crusade began and the Polish deputies denounced it in the Austrian parliament and demanded remonstrance against the Prussian outrages, the German government, likewise took recourse to the Ruthenians and began to assist them in order to reduce Polish influence at Vienna. Several years ago, at the time of the renewal of the treaty between Austria and Germany the Galician Poles vigorously opposed the alliance and in the course of this campaign the insidious work of the Prussian government was exposed in the famous Krysniak case that stirred

the whole of Poland. The documents purloined from the office of the Colonization Commission laid bare before the world the shameless German dealings with the Ruthenians calculated to injure the Poles of Galicia.

The truly national Ruthenian movement, making its demands for an independent sovereign state, began in the sixties of the past century. It became well defined only in the eighties. As yet it can hardly claim to have reached any other than the Austrian Ruthenes, because Russia has stifled every expression of it in Ukraine. In Galicia the majority of the Ruthenians stand on the ground of loyalty to Austria and only a small faction hopes for the union of all Ukrainians in the Orthodox faith and under Russian protection. For obvious reasons the last named faction has had the support of the Russian government although Russia has been extremely hostile to the dreams of Ukrainian independence and equally antagonistic toward the plans for a formation of an autonomous Ruthenian state in a possible federation of nationalities making up the Hapsburg Empire. The National Democrats, the Chauvinist element of Poland, small but noisy, like jingoes everywhere, have similarly deprecated the nationalist Ruthenian movement and have given the false impression that Poland was opposing the free play of Ruthenian national life. All sorts of preposterous charges have been made by Ruthenian political leaders against the Poles and yet upon a close analysis any unbiased scrutiny will reveal no real discrimination on the part of the Poles against the Ruthenians of Galicia. They have enjoyed the same suffrage rights and as much freedom in the political life of the country as the Poles; they have their own schools, supported out of the general tax proceeds, where the language of instruction is Ru-

thenian. Moreover, all children in the Polish public schools of East Galicia are compelled to learn the Ruthenian tongue. The Ruthenian language has equal standing with the Polish in the Provincial Diet and the Marshal in his opening speech addresses the Chamber in both languages. The deputies are privileged to speak either Polish or Ruthenian. Similarly in all branches of provincial administration in East Galicia as well as in the courts, Ruthenian is on par with Polish. The Ruthenians have more parishes than the Poles and their parishes are better equipped, for it has always been the Polish policy to foster the Greek Catholic Church in order to make the inducements of the Russian Orthodox Church less attractive. No doubt there have been instances where political gerrymander was practiced in Eastern Galicia or election frauds perpetrated by unscrupulous party organizations. Likewise, public officials of lower rank have at times used their power against the Ruthenians, but a dispassionate student will find that no bona fide charge can be brought against the large body of Polish citizenry in Galicia or against the government of the Province. Similar gerrymander or petty election frauds have been practiced elsewhere to defeat rival political parties and they were as frequent in West as in East Galicia. The politicians of the reactionary camp have been active in preventing the peasants and workingmen from asserting themselves politically and to achieve their aims they employed insidious methods against the Polish democratic elements as well as against the Ruthenians. These acts of political unfairness cannot be regarded as arising from racial animosity. Seldom, if ever, was there any discrimination against the Ruthenians on the score of racial or religious affiliations, but when the Ruthenes become so unreasonably aggressive as to

demand from the Poles the giving up of some of the very few mainstays of culture they themselves possess instead of sharing them jointly, they meet with a justifiable rebuff. In recent years Lemberg witnessed a student disturbance over the demand for "utraquisation" or the making of the two languages official languages of instruction, thus doubling the number of chairs and introducing confusion at the University. The Ruthenians already had a few chairs where instruction was in Ruthenian. The Poles naturally refused this utterly unreasonable demand and suggested that the Ruthenians establish a separate university of their own. This can hardly be interpreted as an act of unfairness or hostility to the Ruthenian people and yet they seemed to regard it as such. The Poles well realize that the national Ruthenian movement has taken a firm root, they respect it as long as its manifestations do not overstep the bounds of civilized political struggle and are ready to meet the reasonable demands of the Ruthenians. After the re-establishment of Poland's independence that will undoubtedly follow the present war, a satisfactory modus vivendi will be found for the two nationalities in Galicia, that will be based on justice and mutual good will.





FIG. 225—A GENERAL VIEW OF WILNO

## CHAPTER XX

### Constitutional Russia and the Poles

The year 1905 is a milestone in the political history of Poland, just as it constitutes the beginning of a new era in the political life of Russia. The repeated defeats of the Russian autocracy in the war with Japan paved the way for the new order of things. The new era was ushered in by a series of assassinations, in the course of which the Grand Duke Sergius and the omnipotent Plehve fell; after numerous revolutionary outbreaks in the various parts of the Russian Empire; and after a general strike of a magnitude never before known in the history of the world. It was this strike, which had held a whole Empire in its deadly grip for weeks, that finally brought the proclamation of the constitution by Tsar Nicholas II on October 30, 1905. This historic imperial proclamation established a parliament, known as the Duma, and guaranteed certain civic liberties to the peoples of the vast domains of the Empire. As is well known, many of these liberties granted under duress were revoked as soon as the bureaucracy was able to gather itself up and to muster its forces. The Duma was stripped of its

**The Russo-Japanese War and the Political Awakening of Russia**

original powers, suffrage limited and so manipulated as to assure a majority to those elements who regarded the constitutional régime as prejudicial to the interests of Russia.

The period immediately preceding the proclamation of the Constitution as well as the so-called constitutional era saw an awakening of political life and patriotism in Poland, and the mounting of hopes, so soon to be dispelled by painful disillusion. The political ferment which the Russian reverses in the Far East had caused in the whole Empire had its first expression in a manifestation organized by the Polish Socialist Party at Warsaw on November 14, 1904. The manifestation inaugurated an endless series of uprisings which spread like wildfire through the wide domains of the Tsar. In January, 1905, the demonstrative workmen's procession to the Imperial Palace in St. Petersburg, headed by the ill-famed priest Gapon, took place and the bloody reception it received but added oil to the conflagration. Strikes in cities and in country districts were ceaseless and violent. The Government was bombarded with memorials and demands from various national, political, civic, industrial, agrarian and scientific bodies. University students struck and a great many of the professors endorsed their action and demands. The University of St. Vladimir in Kieff was the first to strike. When the despatch to the effect that "Vladimir is sick" reached the student leaders at Warsaw a mass meeting was called at the University and amidst great enthusiasm the resolution to boycott the University, its régime and policy was adopted. Demands were made for a Polish University with Polish professors and instruction in Polish. The Russian matriculates expressed their sympathy with the demands of the Polish students and joined in the strike. The students

of the Warsaw Polytechnical School, the Veterinary College and of the Institute of Agronomy and Forestry at Pulawy immediately followed suit and made similar demands. The boys and girls of all the primary and secondary schools joined in the boycott of the prevailing educational régime. The unflinching perseverance of the youth and the support given to them by their parents were truly remarkable and touching. For the poorer boys who could not be sent abroad to be educated in Galicia or in the West of Europe, the strike, which lasted practically until the beginning of the present war, often meant the curtailment of careers. When the Government finally consented to legalize private Polish colleges many thousands of boys entered these institutions, although many parents could ill afford to pay the rather high tuition fees which, of necessity, were charged by the schools, and in spite of the fact that these private schools gave none of the privileges to which the graduates of the government schools were entitled. The boys of the private schools had no privileges while serving in the army and their diplomas did not unlock for them the doors of the universities, except those of Galicia. It was only after a number of years that the Swiss and other European universities began to recognize the diplomas of the Polish schools, but the Russian authorities never consented to do so. The only other act of the Government prior to the proclamation of the constitution which was of benefit to Poland was the Edict of Tolerance, promulgated by the Tsar on April 30, 1905. Within a short time after its issuance two hundred odd thousand Uniates of the border territories of Poland, who had been forced to accept the Greek Orthodox rites and to be Russians, joined the Church of Rome and became officially Poles once more. Several months previous to that



the Government restored to the Lithuanians the right to use Latin characters, of which they had been deprived for several decades. This was all the government did for the Poles although several imperial rescripts had been issued carrying promises of reforms none of which has ever been inaugurated. The trifling concessions above mentioned could not satisfy the Polish demands and, as a result, the portentous rumble of the political volcano continued, becoming constantly aggravated by powerful ejections of revolutionary lava directed by the Fighting Squad of the Polish Socialist Party.

When the news of the proclamation of the Constitution reached Poland it was received with elation by the country. Even those who had been pessimistic about the Russian autocracy ever doing anything for Poland entertained the confident hope that matters would assume a different aspect when the will of the Russian people made itself known and felt. They soon painfully convinced themselves that the Government under the constitution was as irresponsible and its acts as wanton as before, that the constitution was a decoy and that the Russian people would have little opportunity to transmute its will into action, and even if it could have done this, the results would have been far from what the Poles had anticipated. In short, the constitutional era of Russia had but tragic disillusionment and sordid reality for Poland. Three days after the proclamation of the constitution, Russian troops fired at the people in the streets of Warsaw when they gathered, in holiday raiment, with their womenfolk and children, with banners and crosses, to rejoice over the dawn of a new life. On the Theatre Square twenty-six innocent persons were killed and seventy wounded on the day

**The Severity  
of the Russian  
Rule**

of the celebration, and a few days later the whole of Russian Poland was under martial law. This was the first gift the Poles received from constitutional Russia. The official reason given for this extraordinary procedure was that "the Polish political leaders revealed the impudent desire to tear Poland from Russia." Nine days later, on November 19, the reason was declared to lie in "the fact that the idea of Polish autonomy has taken hold of all the classes of the Polish population and of all political parties." On December 1, 1905, martial law was recalled by an ukase of the Tsar because "complete quiet already prevailed," and yet in spite of the ukase, the Governor-General restored martial law on December 21st on the ground that rumors were abroad about impending revolutionary outbreaks. All these rumors were purposely created to deprive Poland of the fruits of the constitutional régime. The established martial order which lasted for several years, gave to the governors full opportunity to deal with the population as they pleased and accordingly, during the month of January, 1906, seventeen persons were executed without any trial in Warsaw and Lublin alone. The jails became overcrowded with persons who had nothing to do with politics but attempted to make use of some of the guaranteed constitutional liberties. By sheer administrative wilfulness the government officials ordered the arrest of peasants and landlords by the hundreds because they invoked their constitutional right and employed the Polish language at the legal communal meetings. Failure to pay taxes promptly on specified dates was made occasion for the imposition of huge fines, and the payments were exacted by means of military dragoonades, accompanied by incredible atrocities and outrages. This state of affairs lasted for almost three years, rendering the constitu-

tional era in Poland the most cursed period of Russian slavery, just as it was the blackest and bloodiest chapter in the life of the Jews in Russia. The pogroms organized by the Government had never been so numerous and effective and cruel as they were in constitutional times and the Government attempted to introduce them into Poland. Thanks, however, to the intelligence and high moral sense of the native population, all attempts failed, although one was started by the Russian soldiery in Siedlce and the provocation agents were busy in rousing the street rabble of the town, but did not succeed.

The concessions which the government made during the unsettled revolutionary days allowed the foundation of schools and the organization of educational and cultural societies. An association known as the Polish School Mother was formed which had an enrollment of hundreds of thousands.

Numerous libraries were founded, courses for illiterates established throughout the country and agricultural clubs and trade unions organized. All these institutions were gradually suppressed by the Government during the constitutional era. The trade unions were suspected of socialism; the Society for the Distribution of Scholarships was charged with subsidizing Polish schools and was disbanded; and the gymnastic societies were closed as early as September 4, 1906. In 1909 the government closed the Catholic Union which maintained a number of day nurseries, libraries and schools, and carried on lecture work and other similar activities through its three hundred and sixty branches.

Following the course of events of the last one hundred years in Poland, the reader might have observed that it has been characteristic of the Polish

**The Suppres-  
sion of Polish  
Educational  
Activities**

people that whenever they had a chance to govern themselves without foreign intervention they have thrown most of their energies into the development of education. So it was during this transition period. The above mentioned organization, known as the "Polish School Mother" came into existence almost spontaneously and in a short time maintained an enormous number of primary schools and libraries throughout the country in spite of the difficulties put in its way by the government, which demanded the redtape legalization of every school and of every teacher connected with it. The work of the organization was purely educational, and yet it became the target of attacks on the part of the Russians. The officials of the County of Chelm, in the Province of Lublin, were first to petition the government to close the Polish schools of that section as they "create a ferment and endanger the existence of State schools." The "Union of True Russians" of Warsaw seconded the petition and went so far as to request the closing of all of the schools of the "Polish Mother." Under the influence of these requests the Russian Government began to make the work of the schools more difficult. In one instance at a meeting of the delegates of the Society a prominent Pole from Posen spoke. For the offense of allowing a "foreigner" to speak at the meeting the government imposed upon the society a fine of three thousand roubles, and a month or so afterward, on December 14, 1907, the organization was dissolved upon order of the Russian authorities. At the time of the closing of the schools there were sixty-three thousand children attending the grammar classes and twenty-four hundred in the kindergarten. In addition to the large amount of real estate owned by the Society and the school buildings, it had a fund of eight hundred and

ten thousand roubles. To those who know what drafts have constantly been made on the Poles in addition to the heavy government taxes which they have had to pay, the financial showing of the institution and the success of its work must appear truly remarkable. The organization of any other association with a similar educational object was forbidden, because the government entertained the "moral conviction" that any new society would be but a continuation of the old. All other educational institutions such as the People's University, the courses for illiterates, the Library Association and the Society for Polish Culture were likewise doomed and one after another had to suspend their useful work. The regulations concerning Polish colleges which were sanctioned by the Government in 1905 during the school strike, grew more restrictive. In 1908 the Government decided to reopen the University and the Polytechnical School, which had been boycotted by the Polish youth because of their Russian character. In order to stimulate enrollment the Government lowered the requirements for entrance and a large number of Russian graduates of the inferior Greek Orthodox religious seminaries began to arrive to register at the Warsaw University. With a few exceptions, no Poles matriculated in either the University or the Polytechnical School. The filling up of the University with a low grade of Russian students led to several hostile demonstrations on the part of the boys of the private Polish colleges, and the Government took this occasion as a pretext for closing sixteen of the colleges with an enrollment of six thousand students, and the threat was made that should such a hostile demonstration be repeated, all the other Polish schools would meet with a similar end.

In spite of the fact that the first Duma was, in its majority, composed of representatives of the liberal and radical elements of the Russian people, its declarations failed to mention Poland or to assert any clear-cut intentions concerning it. The speech from the throne totally ignored Poland and was addressed exclusively to the Russian people. Similarly, the oath which the Polish deputies had to sign was to the effect that they would labor for the benefit of Russia alone.

**The Attitude  
of the Duma  
Toward the  
Poles**

The attitude of the second Duma toward the Polish question was even less sympathetic than that of the first. It went out of existence without having formulated any definite policy with reference to Poland, and the imperial manifesto dissolving the second Duma contained ill forebodings for the future. It clearly stated that the Russian Duma should, in its spirit, be wholly Russian and that "other nationalities composing the Empire should have in the Duma representation of their needs, but they should not and will not have a representation large enough to afford them the possibility of deciding questions purely Russian." It must be added that the Polish representatives in the first two Dumas, without exception exhibited staunch loyalty to the Government and voted in favor of the Government budget for the army. After the dissolution of the first Duma they took no part in the famous protest of the deputies, which was formulated at their specially called meeting in Finland. And yet in accordance with the will of the sovereign the number of Polish deputies from Poland was cut down from thirty-six to twelve, while from the provinces of Wilno and Kovno a representation of at least three Russian deputies was made mandatory. In Lithuania and Polish Ruthenia separate

electoral colleges were established on the basis of nationality, thus assuring representation to the Russian minorities. In this way the total number of Polish deputies in the Third Duma numbered but eighteen, eleven of whom were from Poland proper and the remainder from the border territories. In order to forestall any criticism of this arbitrary act of the Government, the Governor-General of Poland issued a warning "that the publication of any articles or news inimical to the Government would be punishable by three months imprisonment or a fine of three thousand roubles." In protest against this deprivation of an adequate representation all the parties of Poland, except the National Democrats, boycotted the new elections.

The Third Duma, composed of a majority of conservatives and reactionaries, concerned itself with the Polish question in a most inimical fashion. Taking advantage of the fact that there lived in Chelm, or Kholm as the Russians call it, and its vicinity a considerable number of people of Greek Orthodox faith, most of them of Uniate antecedents, the Duma resolved to protect them against Polish influence and accordingly voted to cut off parts of the Provinces of Lublin and Siedlce and to form a separate Province of Chelm. In 1912 this new Province was created. The population of the new province at the time of its establishment, consisted of four hundred and sixty-seven thousand Roman Catholics and two hundred and seventy-eight thousand followers of the Greek Orthodox Church. In spite of the fact that the new province had a preponderance of the Polish element the law establishing it provided that no Poles or Catholics could buy land outside of city limits; that no Poles from other parts of Poland could settle in it; and that no Poles could hold any official position, no

matter how trivial. The Code Napoleon was supplanted by the Russian civil law which did not recognize civic equality. The system of communal self-government and other Polish institutions were abolished and supplanted by those of Russia. None of the other draconian Russian laws has so severely hurt the national consciousness of the Poles as this further diminution of Polish territory whose integrity was guaranteed by the treaty of the Congress of Vienna. It was a flagrant violation of an act guaranteed by the Powers of Europe and yet not a single voice of protest was raised by any of the governments.

After many years of deliberation over the introduction of a system of municipal self-government in Poland, Premier Stolypin finally presented a draft of a proposal to the Third Duma. The bill was pure mockery. It gave extraordinary representation to the scattered Russians living in Poland and made the will of the government officials superior to the enactments of the city boards. It is not worth while to go into the details of that document. It is important, however, to record the fact that when it came before the representatives of the Russian nation assembled in the Duma, it was considered too polonophile and was amended in such a way as to become a veritable caricature. They provided, for instance, that the governor of a province shall have a right to suspend the enactments of city councils not only on the ground of their illegality, but also when, in his opinion, "they shall be contrary to the interests of the State." No more latitude could be given to administrative lawlessness. They also struck out the provision which allowed a limited use of the Polish language in meetings and in official papers. The Polish language could be used in certain documents and only as a supplement to the Russian text. When this project



came up for approval in the Council of the State it was further emasculated and the provision allowing the use of the Polish language was entirely eliminated.

Another severe blow was dealt to Poland by the representatives of constitutional Russia in the enactment by which the Warsaw-Vienna Railroad was taken over by the Government. The Duma, which was usually very slow in the transaction of business, acted with remarkable celerity in buying out this important Polish highway of commerce. Soon after the taking over of the railroad on the 14th day of January, 1912, the government proceeded to discharge the Polish employees. Not only were the heads of the departments and the engineers, firemen, conductors, switchmen and office clerks discharged, but even porters and sweepers were replaced by Russians. Over fourteen thousand families were thus deprived of a means of livelihood at a single stroke. It would be a long story to relate the many iniquities perpetrated upon the Poles by the representatives of the Russian people, of whom so much was expected in the pre-constitutional days, as contrasted with the Russian Government. In certain instances even the progressive and radical members of the Duma joined hands with the representatives of the Black Hundred when Polish matters were concerned. The Poles had the painful opportunity to learn that the Russian Duma and the Russian Government were much alike in their attitude toward Poland.

The Polish representation in the Russian Duma, with several exceptions, consisted exclusively of members of the National Democratic Party, which, as has been stated in the previous chapter, was an offshoot of the Polish National League. Because of greater political experience gained through their con-

**Polish Representation in the Duma**

nection with the National League from which they seceded and because the progressive elements in Poland could not work openly in the face of government restrictions and finally boycotted the spurious parliamentary elections, the National Democrats were able to carry most of the districts and became the official representatives of Poland in the Duma. The character of their political doctrine foretold their activities, but their comport and ineptitude were both humiliating and disappointing. They lacked manhood and daring to protest sincerely and effectively against the Russian iniquities, and courage and ability to carry through anything of benefit for their country. The considerable following which the National Democrats had in the first decade of the constitutional era is but an indication of the extent of disorganization in Polish life and of the degree of disorientation among the people who were deprived of all semblance of open political life for several generations. It is also a testimonial to the efficiency of the organization of the Party which was not at all sensitive as to the means it employed to achieve its ends. Even physical force and intimidation were resorted to not infrequently. The distasteful methods and behavior of the National Democrats coupled with their complete failure to accomplish anything at St. Petersburg were bound to call forth a strong wave of reaction against them in spite of the protection which was afforded to the Party by the Government as against their opponents and in spite of demagogue-like tactics skillfully adopted by the leaders. When, in 1908, Mr. Dmowski and his associates took part in the Pan-Slav Congress at Prague contrary to the age-old traditions and wishes of the Polish nation, a great many of his former supporters left him, individually or collectively like the National Workmen's union.

This schism in the ranks caused his personal downfall at the following elections and led to the gradual decline of the National Democratic Party which shriveled to naught during the present war.

In summing up it may be said without exaggeration that no influence in the whole course of modern Polish history has been more harmful to Poland than that of the National Democrats. They have demoralized Polish political life, dragged politics into the mire of personal ambitions and petty racial animosities. By siding with the Russian Government in its persecution of the national aspirations of the Ukrainians they have contributed much toward the deepening of ill-feeling between the Ruthenians and the Poles in Galicia, and by their exploitation of anti-Semitism for political purposes, they have branded the Polish people with the stigma of religious intolerance. The Polish nation, which was singularly free from this charge, has been presented to the world in recent years as a Jew-hater. It is important that the world should know what elements were responsible for the anti-Jewish orgy which had taken hold of certain classes of the Polish population in the years immediately preceding the present war.

The Jews constitute one-seventh of the population of Poland. For various reasons, but primarily because of the fact that for almost a century Poland had no government of its own, the large mass of the Jewish population has not been assimilated. The bulk of the Jewish people lives in cities. In some of the smaller towns the proportion of Jews is much larger than that of the Gentiles. Over thirty per cent. of the inhabitants of the City of Warsaw is Jewish. In the larger cities where they constitute a minority the Jews are usually clustered together and

**The  
Jewish  
Problem**

preserve the spirit of the old ghetto. The majority of them live in penury, squalor and ignorance. The occupations of a great many of the Polish Jews are chiefly of a commercial nature. They act as agents, merchants, salesmen, shop keepers, hawkers, money lenders. A considerable part, however, is engaged as artisans and in domestic industry. In their habits of life they cling to mediæval modes and dress in long black robes. The stigma of a distinctive dress, which was thrust upon them centuries ago in many of the countries of Europe has been accepted as a mark of their racial attachment and those from among the Jews who divest themselves of it are considered by their co-religionists as renegades. Their standards of life are low and backwardness so strongly entrenched that it will probably take many generations of most enlightened policy to force this citadel of mediævalism. Through historic evolution the Jews in Poland have become, in a degree, monopolists of commerce and banking. There are certain branches of business, like marketing of grain and lumber, for example, which they have almost entirely to themselves and owing to race solidarity and efficient business organization they can beat off any undesirable newcomer. In relation to their Gentile neighbors, on the whole the Jews entertain no ill-feeling but do not identify themselves with the Polish nation, although there is a natural strong sentiment for Polish life and traditions. When the Jews leave their ghetto and become educated and associate with the Poles, this unconscious sentiment, which is latent in the Polish Jewry, sprouts into Polish patriotism, as has been demonstrated on many occasions in the course of history. During John Sobieski's time the famous defender of the fortress of Trembowla, Captain Chrzanowski was of Jewish antecedents. In

Kosciuszko's time Berek Joselowicz organized a Jewish regiment. During the war of 1831 and the insurrection of 1863 the Jews were active in the defense of their country. Mr. Wohl, the treasurer of the Revolutionary Government in 1863, was a Jew. During the patriotic procession which took place in Warsaw in 1862, when the cross fell from the hands of a priest who was killed by a Russian charge, a Jewish lad picked it up and, raising it high above his head, led the procession to the church. Jews, like the bankers Baron Kronenberg and Jean de Bloch of Warsaw, contributed materially toward the economic upbuilding of the country, and a number among the Polish historians, scientists and publicists, like the well known Julian Klaczko, Leopold Méyet, Prof. Joseph Nusbaum, Prof. Simon Askenazy, Samuel Dickstein, Wilhelm Feldman, Alexander Kraushar, Prof. Beck, Prof. Sternbach and many others are of Jewish faith or blood. In the present war a number of Jewish men have enlisted in the Polish Legions and have fought valiantly. On the other hand, there have been numerous instances, where the Polish Jews have played an unenviable rôle in relation to their mother country.

The attitude of the Poles to the Jews has seldom been marked by any deep-rooted hatred. The Jews have often been made the butt of humor, but have seldom been the scapegoat in a serious outbreak of animosity. Until the recent artificial arousing of anti-Semitism in Poland by the National Democrats, there was only one anti-Semitic periodical published in Warsaw and that was edited by a Jewish apostate. This weekly was patronized chiefly by backward village priests and has died a natural death for want of support. The Polish landlords and magnates, and even the kings, almost invariably employed Jewish

financial advisers, and in this way the Jews became an important factor in the life of Poland. Serving the interests of their masters, they inevitably came into conflict with the masses of the people, whom they exploited on behalf of their employers as well as on their own, and in this way often earned the dislike of the peasants. The laws since the early days of Polish history, with the exception of the era of decadence, have been tolerant to the Jews, as has been pointed out in the various preceding chapters. Of all the literatures of the world, Polish literature has probably portrayed the Jew with the most sympathetic feeling. How do the Eli Makover and Meyer Ezofowicz of the Polish woman writer Eliza Orzeszkowa or the cymbalist Jankiel, of Mickiewicz, compare with the Shylock of Shakespeare? And these are but two in a long array of Polish writers who have treated the Jew with utmost kindness and affection. The Russian government, with its policy of divide et impera, determined to break this harmony between the Poles and the Jews and to achieve that purpose has employed both the Russian Jews and the Polish National Democrats. By a policy of pogroms, persecutions and restrictions the government forced hundreds of thousands of Russian and Lithuanian Jews, known as Litwaks, to migrate to Poland, where they were given special protection against the Poles. The Litwaks, because of a keener cunning and because of their intimate knowledge of Russian ways and Russian markets became dangerous competitors of the native Jews of Poland. In addition, because of their still lower standards of life they were better prepared to undermine the economic opportunities of the Polish Jews. Though persecuted in Russia and subjected to pogroms, the Russian Jews in Poland were un-

conscious, and sometimes conscious, tools of Russification as in addition to their jargon they spoke Russian and either could not, or would not, employ the use of the Polish language. This was naturally resented by the Poles who looked with apprehension upon the enormous influx of a nationally and economically undersirable element. A free nation can exercise its sovereign power with reference to foreign immigration; Poland, without a government of its own, could do nothing to prevent this unwelcome addition to its densely populated country. It should be remembered that Poland is the second country in Europe in point of density of population, Belgium being the first. Even without immigration Poland could hardly accommodate her native population and for years there has been a large exodus of peasants as well as of the Jewish city element. The infiltration of the Russian Jews helped to sweep out of the country the native Jews, whose places were then taken by the former, a people foreign in race as well as in national sympathy. It became a problem of great concern to the Poles. The National Democrats decided to take advantage of the general uneasiness engendered by this policy of the Russian government and to exploit it in the interests of their party and indirectly in the interest of Russia. They succeeded thoroughly in their pernicious endeavor. At election periods appeals were made to the lowest instincts of the masses. The publication of a daily, replete with vituperation and insinuations, under the name of "A Gazette for Two Groschen" was begun in Warsaw with the strong financial backing of a number of well known anti-Semites. This publication did more than any other single influence in tearing open a large wound on the body politic of Poland. It alienated two sections of the nation from each other and

widened the breach which separated them. It precipitated an internal economic war under the form of a boycott after the Jewish electors of Warsaw, who had the majority of votes, refused to support a Polish candidate because he was not free from objections on the ground of race hatred. Though able to elect a Jew they threw their votes in favor of an obscure social democrat and made him the representative of Warsaw in the Fourth Duma, 1912. The election of a Socialist fanned the fury of the chauvinists in spite of the fact that it was in deference to popular feeling that the Jews refrained from electing a Jew and compromised on the Socialist of Roman Catholic faith. The boycott was carried out in a most rigorous manner and was extended not only to the merchants and artisans but also to the Jews of all other occupations.

The "economic patriotism," as the boycott was styled, had its beginning in the adverse attitude of the Jews toward the co-operative consumers' associations. Until 1905 the Russian Government had forbidden the formation of such organizations. In that year, however, the associations were legalized and soon an immense chain of co-operative stores was opened all over the country. The growth and success of the enterprise were phenomenal. A central purchasing agency was created and a co-operative bank was established with a capital of many millions of roubles. Naturally, the small shopkeepers were hard hit and combated the movement vigorously. As the vast majority of the merchants were Jews, they attributed the foundation of the associations to anti-Semitism. The National Democrats had nothing whatever to do with this wholesome economic activity, but decided to turn the Jewish interpretation of it into political capital, and in the furtherance of their scheme brought about a gen-



eral boycott of the Jews. Sober minded publicists repeatedly pointed out this erroneous basis of the philosophy of the "economic patriots" who spoke of the Jews as a separate nation. It is a wrong political doctrine which regards the Jews of any country as a distinct nationality, with interests of its own, foreign or antagonistic to the country in which they live, and any deductions based on such premises must needs lead to destructive conclusions. There is but little doubt that the anti-Semitic feeling aroused by the National Democratic Party and precipitated by the policy of the Russian Government will largely, if not entirely, disappear when the Polish people become free and unconstrained, and when the cultural and educational standards of both the Polish and the Jewish masses have been raised to a higher level. An indication as to what the Polish policy in that respect will be is contained in an address made a while ago by Professor Wladyslaw Leopold Jaworski, then President of the Supreme National Committee which was the most important and representative political organization that existed in Poland during the war before the organization of the Provisional Government. In the course of this address, in which he deprecated anti-Semitism, he said:

"After Poland is freed from Russian rule and joins again the family of West European nations, it must follow the example of the civilized countries of the world in solving the Jewish question; it must grant to them equal rights of citizenship and gain their sympathy and confidence. In return, it must be emphatically demanded of the Jews that they become devoted citizens of their country; that they work for its best interests and development. We must give the Jews full access to the sources of well-being and culture and then we will have the right to demand of them that they be good and loyal citizens of Poland, as they are good citizens of France, England, Italy or Germany."

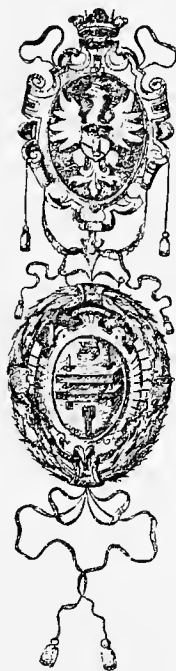
The misdirected efforts of certain Jews in fostering Jewish nationalistic feelings and in agitating for the creation of a sort of Jewish state in Poland must meet with the most severe condemnation on the part of the Poles, as they would on the part of any other nation. The Jewish nationalists have done as much to impede the proper solution of the Jewish problem in Poland as have the Polish National Democrats. The latter are politically bankrupt and will probably not rally if after the close of the war Poland should be an independent state. The Jewish nationalists will similarly have to abandon their propaganda if a proper understanding is to be reached. The spread of false information in Europe and America about the alleged Polish atrocities committed upon the Jews in the opening months of the war has done great harm to Poland, and has helped only to embitter the Polish nation, in the hour when it is undergoing hard trials and is making a supreme effort to regain its independent national existence. It has not served the cause of the Polish Jews. Many prominent men among the Jews, like Dr. Joseph Sare, the Vice-President of the City of Cracow, Mr. Bernard Lauer,\* a manufacturer of Warsaw, Mr. Herman Feldstein,\*\* a banker of Lemberg, and others have raised their protest not only against the dissemination of fabricated slanderous tales but also against the presumption of certain misguided foreign Jews to speak in the name of the Polish Jewry and to advise with reference to Polish-Jewish affairs. They are fain to trust the matter of adjustment to the Polish people and express

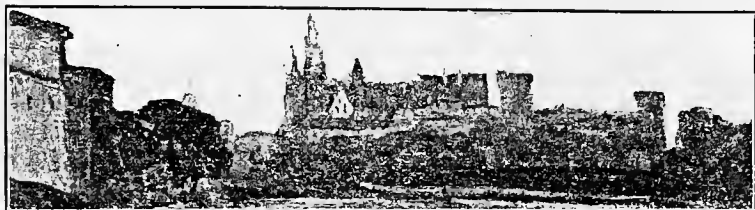
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\* Bernard Lauer, "Zum Polnisch-Jüdischen Problem, (vom Standpunkt eines polnischen Juden)." Preussische Jahrbücher, Band 162, Heft 2, Berlin, 1915.

\*\* Herman Feldstein, "Polen und Juden, Ein Appell." Wien, Verlag des Obersten Polnischen Nationalkomitees, May, 1915.

the conviction that should Poland emerge from the present cataclysm a free and independent state, the Polish spirit may be relied upon to seek no vengeance for the harm done and that the difficult Jewish problem will be settled in equity and justice. A pledge of loyalty to the recently organized State Council of Warsaw, tendered by the Polish Jewry and expressing fine sentiments of patriotism and devotion, is another proof of the faith they entertain in the spirit of the Polish nation and its state policies.





(Painting by J. Stanislawski)

FIG. 256—THE ROYAL CASTLE OF CRACOW

## CHAPTER XXI.

### The Polish Question and the Great War

“The Polish question,” said Napoleon, “is the key to the European vault,” and on its proper solution the future peace of Central Europe will largely depend. The ideal solution lies in the restoration to complete independence of the ancient Polish Republic and in the establishment of a thoroughly democratic government which would be a true representation of the needs of the various classes and elements of the people. As the war continues the possibility of such a solution grows greater and greater. While only three years ago, with the exception of Galicia, Poland did not possess as much as a limited city home-rule, she now enjoys a considerable measure of state freedom in the larger part of her domains and has her own government, diet and army. While only three years ago the word “independence” could not be mentioned in Poland with impunity, to-day both the Central Powers and the Provisional Russian Government have declared themselves unequivocally in favor of independence. What has been the course of this rapid evolution wrought by the war?

The Re-open-  
ing of the Po-  
lish Question

Although Poland had no part in precipitating the gigantic world conflict which opened on the first day of August, 1914, yet, by reason of her geographic position, she became one of the greatest theatres of the war where whole nations met in a terrible death grapple. The country was devastated and plunged into a sea of blood. Scores of cities and towns, thou-



FIG. 258—"CONFLAGRATION." FROM THE SERIES OF "WAR"  
BY A. GROTTGER

sands of villages were ruined. Peaceful men and women, happy homes, property and wealth were destroyed. Hunger and disease wrought fearful ravage. Starvation took its toll as tens of thousands fell by the wayside. Millions fled their burning homes and in hordes were driven eastward. The roads were strewn with the whitening bones of the

fugitives. The younger children, their lives like the flickering flame of a candle, easily extinguished by the lightest wind, died by thousands daily, deprived of proper food and care.

About two million Poles of military age were drafted into the three foreign armies and lined up on opposite sides of the battlefield—brother against brother. Once more the luckless country was laid waste. This stupendous calamity was bound, however, to raise the Polish question which seemed buried forever. The political thinkers and writers of the past century foresaw that only a cataclysm like the present one, in which the three powers that tore Poland asunder were arrayed on opposite sides, could liberate the nation from its political bondage, and the great seer Mickiewicz prayed for this to come to pass. During the Balkan wars several years ago it looked as if the world were on the brink of the mighty conflict. It was postponed for a short time, but its inevitableness had been fully realized in Poland since the last imbroglio, and had been thoroughly discussed in the Polish press and in the political literature of Galicia, the only part of Poland in which such a discussion could openly be pursued.

What should be the attitude of the Polish people if the anticipated war should occur, was the question which the Poles sought to answer for themselves. And immediately all the tragic difficulties of the Polish situation became apparent, complicated as they were by the differences in the political status of the three sections and by the multiplicity of economic and social interests and aspirations among the various classes of the people. Those of the Prussian part of Poland, exasperated by the inhuman treatment to which they have been

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Policy and  
Military Pre-  
paredness**

subjected, had but one desire: to be rid as soon as possible and forever of the Prussian curse. In Russian Poland, likewise, it was the ardent desire of the people to free themselves from Russian shackles, and the vast majority hoped for a complete severance of all the bonds uniting Poland with Russia.

There were some elements, however, who for reasons of immediate political expediency did not go so far in their open declarations. Some of the reactionary landowners and industrialists favored autocratic Russia, for only under such a government could they safely enjoy their advantages and withstand successfully the claims of democracy. Under the protection of the Russian soldiery they could freely exploit the masses and quash all disturbing strikes. Others saw in the union with Russia the only possibility for a great development of Polish industrial life and prosperity, since Russia afforded an immense market for the products of Poland. They argued that some day conditions in Russia would change, political life would become liberalized and Poland would be granted autonomy.

These arguments of the so-called "Progressives" were not sufficiently convincing to the great majority who did not propose to sell their birthright to a free and independent national life for a mess of pottage. Unhampered national existence, affording to the people an opportunity to work out their own salvation meant more to them than a greater number of smokestacks in the cities or the piling up of immense fortunes. They tolerated no compromise on this point and argued that the fears of economic ruin in case of a separation from Russia were unfounded. In 1912 the representatives of all the independence parties of the Kingdom of Poland and of Galicia met and formed a Temporary Committee of

the Confederated Independence Parties, known by their Polish initials as K. S. S. N., charged with the definite task of mapping out a detailed plan of procedure in case of a world war, and of making military preparations for such a contingency.

It was the common agreement that in the event of war between Russia and Austria, Poland was to take an active part against Russia, even if hated Germany should join Austria. It was argued that it is impossible for Poland to remain inert or to endeavor to fight two of her adversaries at the same time. Because Russian oppression extended over eighty per cent. of the ancient Polish Republic, and because in case of a set-to between the Central Powers and Russia the latter would be hopelessly beaten, action against Russia was the only course indicated by the dictates of sound reasoning and by all the past experiences and traditions of the Polish nation. Russia's defeat, it was argued, would not only make possible the placing of the Polish Question on an international footing, but would also place the Russian autocracy and its henchmen in a precarious, if not untenable, position and lead to internal reforms in Russia. Poland and humanity generally would then profit doubly.

In reaching this decision as to the course to pursue in case of a clash between the rival powers, the Poles were not actuated by any motives of hate or love toward one or the other. Without exception the Poles entertain nothing but the most bitter feeling toward the Prussians because of the brutal and unjust treatment accorded by them to the Polish people throughout history and because of the repulsive national characteristics of the Prussians, which have alienated them from the friendship of every other nation as well. It was, then, not sympathy with



Prussia or even Austria that led to the adoption of the policy of a war with Russia, but a clearly visualized opportunity to deal successfully with one of the formidable despoilers of their national heritage and a chance, such as might never occur again, of redeeming the lost sovereignty over a major part of the ancient Polish domains. It was a policy dictated by the Polish *raison d'état* and founded on an intimate knowledge of political and military conditions. That it was evidently based on sound premises, the events during the course of the war have demonstrated. Were it not for Poland's active and bold political moves and the heroic deeds of the Legions, the act of November 5, 1916, whereby the Central Powers recognized the independence of the Kingdom of Poland, would not have been proclaimed; and were it not for that Act and the rapid organization of the Polish State in the midst of the war, the Revolutionary Provisional Government of Russia would presumably not have declared itself for complete Polish independence. The new Russia has not declared the independence of any of the other component nationalities of the Russian Empire.

By siding with Austria, which did not hamper Polish national life, Poland gained a natural ally not only against Russia but against Germany as well. As one publicist expressed it "the alliance was a sword against Russia and a shield against Germany." The alliance was also of undoubted practical value to both Austria and Hungary. A Polish state, composed of Galicia and the territories wrested from Russia during the war, and becoming a third member of a federation on an equal footing with Austria and Hungary, would be very desirable to them from every point of view. It would be gratifying to the reigning

dynasty as long as that institution lasted, and it would add prestige and strength to the federated states by additional territory, men and wealth, and would rectify the difficult, from a military point of view, frontier conditions which existed between the Central Empires and Russia prior to the war. It would have been welcomed by the German Austrians as it would have relieved them of the large Polish representation from Galicia in the Viennese Parliament and it would have been gladly received by the Hungarians; since the separation of Galicia would have reduced Austria's relative strength with regard to Hungary. Above all, it would have rendered futile all German endeavors to draw into the Reichsbund the autochthonously Germanic provinces of Austria and by affording in the Polish State a buttress for the Poles in Prussia it would inevitably have led to a ferment in Prussia and to a change in her relation to the Poles. The German government well understood the situation and did its level best to block the efforts of the Polish statesmen. It regarded with disfavor the Austrian consent to the formation of Polish Legions and until the manifesto of November 5, 1916, prohibited recruiting into the Legions in that part of Poland which was under German occupancy.

Knowing well that in the grim realities of life only the strong survive and that a nation which is unprepared to meet serious contingencies receives little consideration no matter how rightful its course and lofty its principles, thoughtful Poles did their utmost to arouse the people that they might not be caught unawares, and to devise opportunities for making preparations. Here Galicia proved to be the Polish Piedmont. It was in Galicia that military preparedness began to be organized, at first secretly and then openly. Numerous books and pamphlets

were published bearing on war questions and technique. Schools were started for training Polish officers to command the Polish army in event of war with Russia, and the organizers were in close touch with the revolutionary societies of Russian Poland and Lithuania.



FIG. 258—PROF. WLADYSLAW L. JAWORSKI,  
Statesman and Scholar

The bulk of the army was to be composed of Russian Poles who, it was reckoned, would be available at the outbreak of a war on account of the anticipated hasty withdrawal of the Russian armies from Poland for well known strategic reasons. This actually occurred. Because, however, of Germany's decision

**The Supreme  
National Com-  
mittee**

to throw the weight of her armies first to the west to crush republican France, Russia was able to come back too early to make possible a considerable conscription of the Russian Poles into the Legions which came into official existence on August 16, 1914, when the Supreme National Committee, the civic counterpart of the Legions, was organized in Cracow with Professor Wladyslaw Leopold Jaworski as President and a membership of forty Galician deputies to the Parliament at Vienna and the Provincial Diet at Lemberg, representing all political parties.

Polish detachments took to the field before the Legions were organized. Six days after the declaration of war Joseph Pilsudski, a Lithuanian Pole, following the command of the Revolutionary National Government which was set up in Warsaw on August 3rd, led his boys across the frontier and established headquarters at Kielce in Russian Poland, where his small army was swelled to considerable proportions in a few days. There he issued a manifesto which marks the beginning of the new era for Poland. It was this deed and his army's baptism of fire which forced the issue and caused the organization of the Supreme National Committee and the Legions, of which the Committee became the administrative body.

In their manifesto the Supreme National Committee said:

"In this hour of bloody transformation of Europe, we may regain a great deal. But we must also sacrifice much. For he will not win who but passively waits the end of the game.

"In this hour the nation must prove that it lives and wants to live; that it desires and knows how to retain the place assigned to it by God and to defend it before the enemy.

"In order to transform the national Polish forces into armed legions, the Polish Parliamentary Club and all political

parties without exception have unanimously resolved to form one organization.

“Under Polish command and in close connection with the chief direction of the Austro-Hungarian army, the Polish Legions will enter the struggle in order that they may also throw upon the scales of the greatest war a deed worthy of the Polish nation, as a condition and beginning of a brighter future.”\*

The representatives of the secret military organizations of Russian Poland, of the People’s Party and of the Polish Socialist Party were present at the



(Painting by Julian Falat)

FIG. 259—A VIEW OF CRACOW

session and pledged their support and subordination to the newly formed Supreme National Committee. The Revolutionary National Government which was organized at Warsaw three days after the declaration of war and which issued a call to arms, similarly submitted to the newly established authority and disbanded.

\* Recueil de documents concernant la question polonaise, Août, 1915, Switzerland, 1915, pp. 46-47.

Meanwhile, on August 14th, Grand Duke Nicholas, Commander-in-Chief of the Russian armies, realizing the importance of political dis-orientation in Poland, issued his manifesto, beautiful in style and fetching by its sentiment, in which he promised the unification of Poland in territory, language and religion.

**The Manifesto  
of Grand Duke  
Nicholas**

“Poles!

“The hour has struck when the dream of your fathers and forefathers may be realized.

“A century and a half ago the living body of Poland was rent asunder, but her soul has not perished. She has lived in the hope that the time will come for the resurrection of the Polish nation and its fraternal conciliation with great Russia.

“The Russian army brings you glad tidings of this union. May the frontiers which have divided the Polish people be broken down! May the Polish nation be united under the sceptre of the Russian Emperor! Under this sceptre Poland will be born anew, free in faith, in language and in self-government.

“One thing Russia expects of you: an equal consideration for the rights of those nations with which history has linked you.

“With open heart, with hand fraternally outstretched, great Russia comes to you. She believes that the sword has not rusted which overthrew the foe at Grünwald.

“From the shores of the Pacific Ocean to the Polar Sea the Russian war-hosts are in motion. The morning star of a new life is rising for you.

“May there shine resplendent in the dawn the sign of the Cross, the symbol of the Passion and Resurrection of nations.”

The appeal served its purpose. The masses in Russian Poland, deprived for decades of the possibilities of free and thorough discussion of their national problems and bullied by the National Democrats, were led astray and received the manifesto with almost puerile enthusiasm. It was

not, however, love of Russia or faith in Russian promises, but hatred of Prussia which caused this outburst. And then, it was reasoned, by turning against Russia, the Poles would have been indirectly turning against France and England, countries for which they have always entertained but admiration and respect! It was confidently expected that France and England would soon issue guarantees of the Russian pledges. The shock over the fate of brave Belgium and the blunt official declaration of Germany that treaties are "scraps of paper" helped to swing the pendulum.

Aside from emotional reasons, the friendly attitude of a great number of Poles toward Russia after the manifesto was caused also by the belief that the Allies would soon overpower the Teutonic Empires, and it would have been suicidal policy to league with the vanquished, particularly when only hostile feelings were entertained toward at least one of them. This reasoning seemed to be particularly well grounded after the Austrian defeats in the first months of the war, when they had to retire almost to the doors of Cracow. Hence the temporary misunderstanding between the Poles of the two sections of Poland. Many of the weaker characters among the Galician Poles began to question the wisdom of their original attachments. Several members of the Supreme National Committee, large landowners of East Galicia, whose estates began to fall into Russian hands, experienced under the circumstances a complete change of heart and caused the disbandment of the Eastern Polish Legion whose headquarters were originally at Lemberg. This, of course, led to their withdrawal from the Committee. The National Democrats of Galicia whose representatives at first joined the Committee, similarly turned tippet when the first untoward events came on and welcomed the

advent of the Russian troops. They had subsequently to retire with the Russian armies in fear of trials for high treason.

The Supreme National Committee bravely weathered many fierce political tempests and although severely criticized in some quarters it performed its principal duties with unflinching devotion and singleness of purpose. It rendered great service



FIG. 260—LEON BILINSKI,

President of the Polish Parliamentary Club, ex-finance minister of Austria-Hungary, statesman and scholar

to the cause of Poland. In order to unify the efforts of the Committee with those of the Polish Parliamentary Club, former minister Bilinski, as President of the Parliamentary Club, became ex-officio Chairman of the Committee and remained in that post until the dissolution of the Committee in 1917 when the entire direction of the Polish policy was taken over by the Provisional Council of State.



In spite of hard adversities the Polish Legions have remained true to their ideals and have fought with proverbial gallantry. By their deeds they have gained the complete confidence of the Austrian government which at first was somewhat dilatory and suspicious, placing many difficulties in the way of their provisioning and equipment. The enthusiasm and readiness for infinite sacrifices on the part of Galicia for the support of the Polish army composed chiefly of Russian Poles, has been truly remarkable and fully convincing as to the earnestness of the country and the intensity of hopes placed in the Legions. Old men and young boys, peasants and university students, workmen and artists, flocked by tens of thousands to the banners to fight for the liberation of their country and to uphold the glorious martial traditions of the nation. Foremost writers, like Sieroszewski, Strug, Rydel, Danilowski and Zulawski, painters like Aydukiewicz, a man of over sixty, actors, sculptors, university professors, priests, men in all walks of life and of all ages joined the Legions.

Describing the devotion and enthusiasm of the people in fitting out the Legions, Count Louis Morstin says:

"The offerings made were truly touching; they demonstrated to what degree of patriotism a people for a century vainly aspiring to liberty, is able to rise. Domestic servants and laborers gave all their savings, boys in the primary schools and old people living in almshouses offered the few cents they managed to spare with great difficulty; a blind man who earned his living by playing a violin in the streets came to donate his single treasure—the instrument by which he earned his daily bread. Gold rings poured into the treasury in such numbers that one could soon find no married couple wearing this emblem of wedlock; it was considered a shame not to have offered them to the military treasury. The ladies of the



FIG. 261—WACŁAW SIEROSZEWSKI,  
famous novelist, as officer of the Polish Legions

higher classes spent whole nights sewing underwear for the soldiers and worked like common factory girls. The peasants of the vicinity of Cracow alone raised four hundred thousand crowns. The whole nation became an immense workshop, a source of inexhaustible generosity; one thought and one desire animated all minds: the Polish army.

"When one realizes the immense difficulties connected with the creation of an army, even among nations possessing unlimited resources, he can easily comprehend the enthusiasm and pride of a nation which could, amidst conditions so difficult and within a span of time so short, equip and send to the firing line detachments of troops which were capable of withstanding all the rigors of modern warfare." \*

Among the most active workers on behalf of the Legions was the venerable Bishop Wladyslav Bandurski of Lemberg, an ardent patriot, whose unbounded devotion, eloquence and enthusiasm have been a source of constant inspiration. Within a few months, despite the two million Poles drafted into the armies of Austria, Germany and Russia, a Polish army tens of thousands strong, equipped by the nation and commanded in the Polish language by Polish officers, sprang into existence.

In response to a threat issued by the Generalissimo of the Russian army on August 30, 1914, that the Polish volunteers when captured would not be treated like ordinary war prisoners, and after several were hanged by the Russians, the Austro-Hungarian government on October 2, 1914, addressed a note to the neutral countries of the world in which it officially recognized the Polish Legions as a regular army and as a combatant to whom the ordinary rules of warfare apply in accordance with established practices and conventions. This note gave international status to the Legions. It must be stated in this con-

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\* "La Légion Polonaise" Berne: Ferd. Wyss, 1916, pp. 15-16.

nection that according to the understanding reached between the Supreme National Committee and the Austro-Hungarian government the Polish Legions



FIG. 262—BISHOP WLADYSLAV BANDURSKI,  
ardent patriot and spiritual leader of Poland

could not be and never were employed against any of the belligerents except Russia. In this way the Poles strove to emphasize that they were not at war with any other country except that of the Tsar, just as the

army of Prince Joseph Poniatowski, fighting beside the Grande Armée of Napoleon was formed against Russia and not against England, Russia's ally of a century ago.

From the point of view of their organizers, the Polish Legions were a guarantee that the Polish Question would come up for solution at the Peace Congress which will follow the closing of the present hostilities, and that it will not be left to the internal settlement of any of the three partitioning states. This was the chief motive in creating the Polish army. By its existence the Poles wanted to emphasize that they are a distinct national entity with a will to live and to shape freely its own destinies. They well realized that the small national Polish army could not influence the destinies of the Great War one way or another, but they reckoned that the fact of its existence would neutralize the efforts of their enemies for an internal post-bellum settlement of the Polish Question. From the very outset official and non-official Russia has made it clear that it proposes to deal with the problem as one of purely internal concern, a position precisely contrary to the uniform wishes of the Polish nation. Discussing editorially this desire of the Poles, the Russian journal "Utro Rossey" said on January 1, 1915:

"It was the commander-in-chief of the Russian armies who issued the manifesto to the Poles. It was neither General Joffre nor General French. Neither France nor England has a decisive voice in the purely Slavonic family question. The future councils of the victorious allies will affirm the act of unification of Poland. But no "congresses" have a right to concern themselves with the organization of Poland united under the sceptre of the Russian tsar."

**The International Status of the Polish Question**

Similar in substance have been all the other Russian utterances. In an interview at Rome Professor Milyukoff, the leader of the Constitutional Democrats, said:

“To-day my party is drafting a plan for Poland similar to that adopted by Britain for Ireland before the war. The Poles will be forced to serve in the army and will send deputies to the Duma but they will be granted a large measure of local self-government.” \*

The hopes of the Poles who counted on the active and forceful intervention of France and England have been shattered by the various discouraging pronouncements of eminent Frenchmen and Englishmen. The greatest blow, however, came on January 12, 1917, when, in their joint reply to President Wilson's note of December 18, 1916, referring to Poland the Allies said: “The intentions of His Majesty the Emperor of Russia regarding Poland have been clearly indicated in the proclamation which he has just addressed to his armies.”

That the Russian government did not seriously regard the manifesto of Grand Duke Nicholas became evident early in the war. For a long time the manifesto received no imperial sanction and no plans for the promised Polish autonomy had been thought of until several days after the capture of Warsaw by the Germans in August, 1915. Only then, when the Russian armies were in full and hasty retreat, in the course of which they turned the country into a veritable desert and drove millions of people from their homes, a joint committee of Russians and Poles was appointed in Petrograd to devise a draft

**Russian Rule  
During the  
War**

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\* Reported in the daily press of June 9, 1916.

of a post-bellum organization of Poland. The Poles felt keenly the mockery of this procedure. The terrible devastation wrought by the Russians in their retreat and the atrocities committed, which probably will some day be told to the world in full, as well as their revolting behavior in Galicia during the invasion, could hardly inspire the people with confidence in the Tsar's beneficent designs for the future of Poland. Count Bobrinsky's administration of Galicia will long be remembered by the people as a haunting nightmare.

After the high sounding declarations of the manifesto, the Poles had a right to expect consideration for their national feelings during the war at least. Instead, they were abused and outraged at every turn. Pillage, assault and rape by the soldiery went on unrestricted. Respectable citizens were often abused without cause, residences were searched and even apparel and furniture appropriated by the officers. Many libraries and art collections were seized and moved to Russia. The schools and the University of Lemberg were closed and a campaign of Russification was inaugurated. Trainloads of Russian primers had been brought from Russia to educate the youth of Galicia, portraits of the Tsar were placed everywhere, and under the guidance of the metropolitan Eulogius religious proselytism was carried on intensely among the Ruthenians. When the Russians were forced to evacuate Galicia they took with them many prominent Poles as hostages, among others Dr. Tadeusz Rutowski, the highly respected mayor of the City of Lemberg, and Count Szeptycki, the Greek Catholic metropolitan. In Russia both of these gentlemen were imprisoned and subjected to ill-treatment. In January, 1917, arrangements were finally completed for the exchange of Dr. Rutowski for a prominent

Russian prisoner of war, and he returned home where he was received with genuine enthusiasm. Count Szeptycki, however, was less lucky. Unless the new Russian government has released him, he is still in an Orthodox monastery at Suzdal where, contrary to all laws and conventions, he has been imprisoned de-

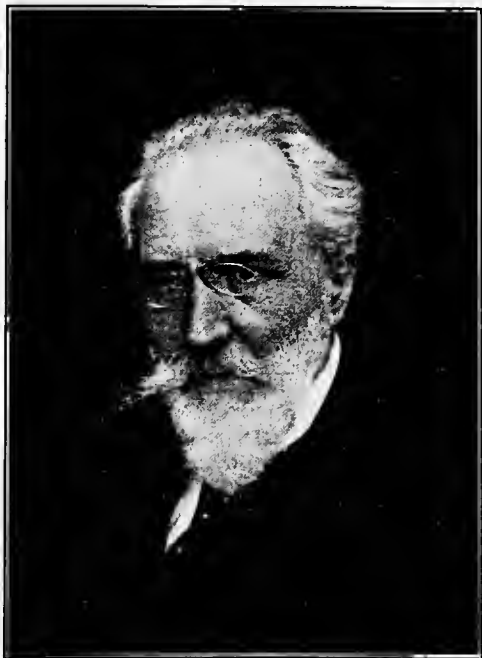


FIG. 263—TADEUSZ RUTOWSKI,  
Mayor of the City of Lemberg

spite the fact that as a civil prisoner and a Greek Catholic he should not have been placed under the jurisdiction of the Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church.

The misrule of Galicia during the occupation served to cool the original enthusiasm for Russia,



which had been exhibited by certain elements in Poland after the publication of the Grand Duke's manifesto. When the Russian government, desirous of offsetting the international status of the Polish Legions, resolved to organize counter legions with the aid of a Polish Committee composed chiefly of National Democratic leaders, it found no response on the part of the country in spite of all the efforts of the Committee. To save appearances, a man of unenviable reputation was hired to undertake the task. He whipped a large number of thieves and other criminals, released for the purpose, into a regiment. It was however, too disgraceful a venture and the regiment was soon disbanded. Then another man was engaged, also of a questionable character, and the formation of Polish counter legions was entrusted to him. He rallied several hundred men, many from the aristocracy, but the whole enterprise fell flat and came to a speedy end.

Meanwhile, the Teutonic Eastern sweep was coming on and early in August, 1915, Warsaw fell.

**The Fall of  
Warsaw and  
the Dubious  
Policy of the  
Central Em-  
pires**

The proverbially gay capital had a grave and stern look when it changed hands. Under the cover of calm, deep concern was in everybody's soul. The people were glad to part with Russia, but it was not the Polish Legions who took possession of the City. Another ruthless and seemingly invincible foe became the master of the heart of Poland. While Warsaw was self-possessed and reserved, Galicia and other sections of Poland were jubilant and great happenings were anticipated. On the 6th of August the "Polish Gazette" published in Dombrowa Gornicza, a town in the coal and iron district of Russian Poland, had the following leader:

“Warsaw taken!” This news, as if an electric current, sent a thrill through us albeit for several days it was already known that the Muscovites would at last be compelled to leave the city. For the first time in eighty-five years has the Northern raider withdrawn. For over three quarters of a century the Muscovite vampire has throttled Warsaw. Every house, every stone in the street reeks with blood and with the awful agony of the victims of the Tsar. Not by thousands, but by hundreds of thousands do we count Polish martyrs who perished in the streets, homes, dungeons, the citadel and on the gallows. The gendarme who arrests; the Cossack who beats Polish women until they bleed; the secret police agent who surcharges the atmosphere with the miasms of fear, hiding and suspicion; and the thieving official—those are the necessary accessories to a picture of Warsaw as it has been. And in spite of all this, Warsaw never became demoralized. Each departing generation always handed down to its successor the traditions of revolt, revolution and resistance. Oceans of blood did the Russian tribe draw from Warsaw, the heart of Poland. The number of victims never diminished. The prisons were always full, the secret police agents never too many. Now the Northern bandit has fled. It is hard for us to think of Warsaw without the cynical face and eyes of the spy, without the rouble-hungry hands of the bureaucrat-thief.

“There are no Muscovites in Warsaw! This joyful fact brings to our minds, however, thoughts fraught with serious reflections. We all feel that a thing of immense historical importance has been accomplished. The whole world knows it. The eyes of the world are now fixed on our capital. We wait thence for light; we wait thence for brightness and sincerity; we wait the dispersion of doubts which must now be dispelled. At this historic moment we must observe solemn quietness and complete readiness. The destinies of our country are now being determined. We are awaiting the tocsin of the capital, we are waiting at the same time for an unequivocal call from the Austro-Hungarian monarchy and from the German Empire. At the moment when this takes place the whole nation will go with the Legions, helping them toward the final defeat of Russia.”

Bitter, however, was the disappointment of those who expected that Germany and Austria would soon

make the anticipated proffer! In quick succession cities and fortresses fell, and by the end of the year the whole of Poland and large areas of Lithuania, Volhynia and Podolia came under the joint occupancy of the Teutonic allies, but no announcement concerning the status of Poland was forthcoming. For months not a word could be had from Vienna in response to the insistent inquiries and protests of the Supreme National Committee. Meanwhile, the whole civil administration of the conquered territory was taken over by the officials of the Central Powers, and severe requisitions were made.

The Germans were particularly inconsiderate in depriving the people of their foodstuffs down to the bare bone. The Prussian Colonization Commission which suspended its nefarious work during the war, was entrusted with the task of squeezing the maximum amount of food, metals and coal out of Poland and of organizing the economic conditions of the occupied territory. The result of their labors was disastrous for the country. They impoverished the people to the point of starvation and forced thousands of workmen to go to Germany to work in the fields and factories. At the same time the Germans granted a number of concessions to the Poles, such as the right to establish Polish schools and other educational institutions, to open the University and the Polytechnic Institute, to take over the administration of justice in the lower courts and to organize home rule for cities. They turned the administration of the Warsaw postal service over to the city authorities and left a considerable amount of leeway to the Warsaw City Council in organizing the police and public health work as well as other administrative policies.

They imposed, however, a severe censorship over the press, directed by a well-known Prussian Pole-

hater, George von Cleinow. No political gatherings were allowed and many men were imprisoned or sent to Germany. All communication between the Poles under the two occupations was made impossible and the people were restricted in their travel from town to town. The inhabitants of one county were not allowed to visit people in another county without urgent business and special permission. In spite of the asseverations made by Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg that "the Polish question must and will be solved by Germany and Austria-Hungary," negotiations were going on between the Central Powers and the Russian government. And Poland was to constitute one of the prizes to Russia for a separate peace.

While these negotiations were being carried on, the Polish press was completely muzzled. Adverse criticism of the Tsar was not permitted and even the mere mention of the Legions was prohibited, much less advertisement for recruits. The German authorities stated that recruiting was forbidden because the men were needed for the economic reconstruction of the country. These acts by Germany led to the formation of a secret military organization, in close touch with the Legions and with the avowed aim of an uprising in the event of a separate peace between the Central Empires and Russia.

The conditions in the Austrian area of occupation were considerably better. The administration of the territory was entrusted to Poles and the rights of the people were recognized and respected. The requisitions were not as heavy. In Galicia, however, after the retreat of the Russians many of the old home-rule liberties were temporarily suspended and an Austrian was appointed Governor General of the Province. Since 1866 this was the first appointment of anyone but a Pole to the position.

It was a gloomy and disheartening year which followed the fall of Warsaw, and as is usual in such trying times, internal dissension arose. The Supreme National Committee, however, was untiring in its persistence and endeavors. Through conferences with representatives of the Central Empires, by memorials and the press, it did its utmost to bring about a settlement of the issue. It was pointed out to the Central Empires that they would have been acting fully within the bounds of international law if they allowed the Poles to set up a government of their own before the end of the war, because Russian rule in Poland since 1831 has been based exclusively on the fact that the Russian armies occupied the country.

Russian rule had no other foundation in law, as on February 25, 1831, the Polish Diet formally and lawfully declared the Russian Tsar deprived of the crown of Poland because of his manifold and flagrant violations and abuses of the constitution which was guaranteed by the Treaty of Vienna of 1815 and sworn to by both Alexander I and Nicholas I. Tsar Nicholas fully recognized the legality of this action by the Diet, for in his negotiations with the Polish Government in 1831 on several occasions he demanded that the Diet rescind its resolution and restore his royal title. His demands, however, were never complied with. When the Russian armies retired from Poland in 1915 the nation, it was argued, was again free to establish its government in accordance with the provisions of the constitution which had been suspended since 1831, provided Germany and Austria were willing to relinquish the rights which accrued to them from the fact that their armies were occupying the country.

While efforts were being made to secure for Poland the desired political status, the immediate economic, social and educational needs of the country were not neglected. Citizens' committees sprang up all over the land to organize self-help and relief measures, and with the scanty means at their disposal they accomplished marvelous results. Although Poland has a population over three times as large as Belgium and has suffered infinitely greater losses than the little kingdom to the West, yet probably not a hundredth of the relief funds raised for the sufferers in the present war has been directed to Poland. The burden of relieving the victims of the war fell upon the country itself and the people bore it stoically and with self-abnegation. Those who had, shared their possessions with their less fortunate brethren—men and women gave their services cheerfully and without reservation. Poland will have to thank only the energy and spirit of her own people for what has been accomplished through excellent organization and for what has been saved in life and wealth.

The women played an important part in this work of self-help. Organized into leagues, they cared for the needs of the men in the field as well as for their families at home. They maintained shelters, public kitchens, homes for orphans, milk stations, public laundries and employment agencies. They worked as nurses in the hospitals and cared for the indigent sick in their homes. They organized playgrounds and summer colonies for children, courses for illiterates, libraries and vacation schools for teachers. They helped in spreading the gospel of independence among the people by spoken word and written. They edited newspapers and published pamphlets and books. They assisted the quartermasters of the army and the

**Polish Self-  
Help During  
the War**

civil commissioners of the National Supreme Committee in studying the economic conditions of the country and applying assistance where it was most needed. They trained teachers for the Polish elementary schools which were organized throughout the country as soon as the Russians retired. About twenty such pedagogical colleges were opened in 1915, and the number of students who applied surpassed all the expectations of the organizers. Where forty were expected, two hundred enrolled. The education of the youth was made a matter of particular concern. The University and Polytechnic School of Warsaw were re-opened in the autumn of 1915 with excellent faculties composed of prominent Polish scientists and scholars. Numerous colleges were established in the principal cities in addition to those which had existed before the war, and in order to promote high standards of instruction and to discuss the numerous pedagogical and administrative school problems facing the educators, a national convention of teachers was held at Warsaw in January, 1917.

As the nation by its political maturity and strength of organization and self-help exhibited its remarkable fortitude and virility, so the Legions by their heroism and devotion to the cause of independence revealed once more Poland's readiness and determination to reach her cherished goal. Though equipped and provided less adequately than the soldiers of other armies, they were fighting under the banner of the White Eagle, in Polish uniforms and under Polish command, and they bore cheerfully all the hardships of the Eastern campaigns. Their deeds have brought back all the martial glory of old Poland --the conqueror of Moscow, the challenger of mighty Sweden and the savior of Vienna when the hosts of

**The Heroism  
of the Polish  
Legions**

the Crescent threatened Christendom. Whether in the snow-capped peaks of the Carpathians or on the sun-scorched plains of Bessarabia, the Legions have fought with such bravery as only men dedicated to a



FIG. 264—TYPE OF A POLISH LEGIONARY

great ideal can fight. Snubbed at first by the Germans because of the improvised character of their army, they soon won respect and earned the admiration of the highest military commanders. Because of their bravery, the Poles were often ordered to the most dangerous positions and though exposed to murderous fire they never faltered. The evident resolve on the part of the general staffs of the Teutonic armies never to mention the accomplishments of the Legions in the daily war bulletins had at times to be abandoned in view of the stupendous feats performed,



and on several occasions "Polish days" were proclaimed by the Austrian supreme command.

One such day was June 13, 1915. In the recently published diary of Berthold Merwin, an officer of the Polish Legions, one can read the description of a Polish cavalry charge which caused this special mention:

"Not only we who lived through it but all Poland will remember this day of glory and sorrow. A century ago Samo-Sierra came to be written in letters of gold on the pages of the history of Polish arms, and now our children will learn the history of this day and our bards will sing of the charge upon the heights of Rokitna led by Captain Zbigniew Dunin-Wonsowicz.

"At dawn our infantry carried an assault upon the heights. They reached the outskirts of the village and stopped. As long as the Russian infantry with a large number of machine guns and cannons, well hidden in their trenches, occupied the crest of the hill, all attacks were doomed to be drowned in blood.

"Then the cavalry was ordered to charge the hill. The squadron fell into line. The horses whinnied, on them our daring boys. . . and they rode through the fields, four platoons of them. Within three kilometers of the enemy they formed a line, and the trot gave way to a gallop, faster and faster, wilder and wilder. . . Like a hurricane they swept up the hill—behind them a cloud, before them the glitter of drawn swords. The enemy line gained, the first empty trenches taken at a leap, and the second line was reached.

"Suddenly the thunder of the Muscovite guns shook the air—the horrible noise of machine gun and the burst of shrapnel. But Wonsowicz with his uhlans never faltered. Here one has fallen, here a horse is running wild without a rider—here another is rearing in fright and somebody has slid into a rampart—and here are some trampled in the wild onrush of cavalry. And still like a scythe the machine guns mowed down the ranks and the shrapnel burst overhead. But now the second trench is taken and on they sweep. More riderless horses. The glittering, charging wave of glory is over the works and then gone. The volleys quiet down, the rattling of the machine guns stops, and the grey clouds of shrapnel smoke drift lightly in the air. A terrible moment of dead

silence, our hearts beating as if trying to tear through our breasts—something grips us by the throat, strangling and choking. I looked at my fellow officers through a mist and did not recognize their eyes.

“Is it an apparition or a reality...?”

“Down the village road ride they who went through this Gehenna, bringing with them their dead and wounded.

“And the road lay open for the infantry!”

Two days later at the funeral exercises of those who perished in the charge of Rokitna a surviving member of the squadron, swathed in bandages, made the following speech:

“Here are our comrades... Sent to death, they rode with a full realization of their fate, yet none of them turned back his horse. They renewed the traditions of the Polish uhlan of a century ago. They met with a heroic death. Seeing this, let all, all our enemies know and remember what the Pole is able to do. Let us hope that this blood is not shed in vain, that it will turn the scale, already overbalanced with so many victims, and that thanks to them our national ideals will be realized.”

Reading of the infinite number of such and similar sacrifices made in the name of Poland's liberty and independence, it is impossible to conceive that such a nation can be longer hampered in the realization of its most sacred ideals.

The inspiration of the idea of a Polish military force and the most active and indefatigable worker in this direction was Joseph Pilsudski, the present Secretary of War in the Provisional Polish government. He first incarnated his idea in the Fighting Squad of the Polish Socialist Party which was very active in the fight on Russian autocracy during the revolution of 1905-1907.

Joseph Pilsudski and the Forcing of the Polish Issue

Joseph Pilsudski was born in Lithuania in 1867 and is a scion of an ancient princely family, distin-



FIG. 265—JOSEPH PILSUDSKI,  
organizer of the Polish Legions

guished for its patriotism. For its active participation in uprisings the family was deprived of many of its estates. When Joseph was a small boy his father was

impoverished by the fire which destroyed his home and the adjoining properties. His mother gave him his early education at home, instilling in him exalted feelings of patriotism. Later, when he entered a Russian school, his sensitive nature revolted against the abuse and insult heaped upon Poland, her history and her people. In 1885 he entered the University of Kharkov and joined the student revolutionary society. Two years later he was arrested and exiled to Siberia. In a dying condition from consumption, he was released in 1892.

During the years spent in exile he acquired a great deal of knowledge and worked out the daring plan for redeeming his nation from bondage. He preached his gospel in season and out of season and enthused a great many men and women in all walks of life. Believing that only by an armed uprising could Poland throw off her shackles, he devoted many years of study to military art, of which he became a master. In Russian Poland and Galicia he organized secret military schools where officers for the future Polish army received instruction.

Pilsudski is a born leader of men, admired by all who come in contact with him. He is worshipped by his soldiers who will do anything at his command. Everywhere he is esteemed for his high principles, exalted conception of duty, generous heart, bravery and modesty. During the course of the present war he won great distinction as a general and strategist, and acquired wide popularity among the people as the country's redeemer. His name has already become almost mythical in Poland. When he came to Warsaw in the fall of 1916, great throngs were awaiting him at the railroad station. He was deluged with flowers. The horses of his carriage were unhitched

and he was drawn through the streets by the populace. "Elected by nobody, appointed by no one," says one writer, "he came as the lightning out of the darkness of the night and the nation acclaimed him as their Chief." Only a few years ago denounced by some as a dangerous agitator and impractical idealist, Pilsudski is to-day the generally recognized leader of Poland.

It was his popularity and the masterful stroke of resigning his position as Brigadier-General of the Legions in the autumn of 1916, which, probably more than anything else, was responsible for the recognition of Poland's independence on the part of the Central Powers. Seeing that all the negotiations of the Supreme National Committee and other political organizations were powerless to secure this recognition, he determined to force the issue. Many months prior to this step he discouraged recruiting for the Legions and a secret organization was formed at his behest. It enlisted tens of thousands of well trained military men, to be used in an uprising against Germany should she bargain with Russia for a separate peace.

As a counterpart of Pilsudski's resignation from active service in the army came the resignation of the powerful Socialist deputy, Ignace Daszynski, from the Polish Parliamentary Club at Vienna. It was a dramatic way of serving notice on the governments of the Central Powers that the Polish people had ceased to believe in the sincerity of the indefinite promises made on various occasions and that they did not propose to be duped any longer and to be used as a stake in a possible separate peace-bargaining with Russia. It served its purpose. The two governments became more willing to negotiate. "These negotiations lasted a month and involved journeys of the Polish depu-

tation both to Berlin and to Vienna. There was no question of German "Kultur" deluding or deceiving the Polish envoys. They were too wide awake for that. They understood too well just what they wanted. In the speech made by Dr. Brudziński, the very able Rector of the Warsaw University, in the name of the deputation, he laid down the following condi-



FIG. 266—IGNACE DASZYŃSKI,  
the highly gifted leader of the Polish Socialists

tions: first, a Regent must be nominated; second, the frontier between the two zones of military occupation must be abolished; third, a Polish State Council must be formed at once to elaborate a constitution and to regulate the administration of the State; and fourth, a military department must be brought into being to organize a Polish army. As to the exact frontiers of the new State, the deputation were willing

to leave the delineation open until the end of the war. But on every other side they stood inflexibly firm.”\*

As a result of the negotiations came the manifesto of November 5th, read in the name of the two emperors by the military representatives at Warsaw and Lublin. The manifesto declared that:

**The Proclamation of Poland's Independence, November 5, 1916**

“Inspired by firm confidence in a final victory of their arms and prompted by a desire to lead the Polish territories, wrested by their armies under heavy sacrifices from Russian domination, toward a happy future, His Majesty the German Emperor and His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of Austria and Apostolic King of Hungary have resolved to form of these territories an independent State with a hereditary monarchy and a constitutional government. The exact frontiers of the Kingdom of Poland will be outlined later. The new Kingdom will receive the guarantees needed for the free development of its own forces by a union with the two allied Powers. The glorious traditions of the Polish armies of the past and the memory of the brave Polish comrades in arms in the great war of our days shall continue to live in your own national army. The organization, instruction and command of this army will be arranged by common agreement.

“The allied monarchs express the confident hope that Polish wishes for the evolution of a Polish State and for the national development of a Polish kingdom will now be fulfilled, taking due consideration of the general political conditions prevailing in Europe, and of the welfare and the safety of their own countries and nations.

“The great realm which the western neighbors of the Kingdom of Poland will have on their eastern frontier will be a free and happy State, enjoying its own national life, and they will welcome with joy the birth and prosperous development of this State.”

The proclamation was received with great enthusiasm in Poland but it failed to include certain of

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\* J. H. Harley “The Polish Review,” Geo. Allen & Unwin, Ltd., London, Vol. 1, No. 1, January, 1917, p. 12.

the points insisted upon by the Poles. This probably explains the reserve of Poland's official reply to it. When Governor General von Beseler completed the reading of the manifesto to the large assembly which met in the old Royal Palace at Warsaw, Dr. Joseph Brudzinski, then President of the City Council of Warsaw and Rector of the University, said on behalf of Poland:



FIG. 267—THE ROYAL PALACE AT WARSAW

“We receive this great act of the two monarchs, which recognizes our imprescriptible rights to an independent state existence, with the faith that it will soon be realized in a friendly and purposeful spirit. As one of the fundamental guarantees we consider the appointment of a Regent who shall be the symbol of the Polish state, and the organization of a Council of State which shall act as a provisional government until the Polish King shall become the head of a finally organized Polish State with well defined boundaries. We believe that the community of interests of the Central Powers with those of the Polish State will create harmonious neigh-



borly relations and will ensure favorable conditions for all the nations concerned. Will Your Excellency convey to the two magnanimous monarchs expressions of our faith in the most successful realization of their will and of our gratitude that is due to them. Long live free independent Poland!" \*

Strikingly apparent in this dignified speech by Dr. Brudzinski is the lack of an overabundance of expressions of gratefulness and the insistence upon a speedy and effective realization of the grant. The officially admitted German "scrap of paper" view of treaties is too well known in Poland for anyone to be carried away with promises until they receive actual substantiation.

The first few weeks following the proclamation justified the existing apprehensions. There was considerable open opposition to it in many quarters in Germany. Nothing was done about the appointment of a Regent and no immediate plans were laid for the formation of a State Council and the drafting of a constitution. Subsequently, when a plan was presented on the part of the German government for the organization of the State Council and for raising an army, many of its features were promptly disapproved by the Poles.

At one time there was a rumor current about the Hapsburg Archduke, Karl Stefan being proposed for the regency. The Archduke had long been regarded in certain Polish circles as the candidate for the royal office in Poland should the independence of the country be re-established. He was reported as possessing strong Polish attachments. Two of his daughters were married to Poles and the Archduke himself had acquired an estate in Galicia, entertained friendly

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\* "Głos Warszawy" ("Warsaw's Voice," a daily), November 5, 1916.

relations with his Polish neighbors and spoke the Polish language. The mention of Karl Stefan's name came to have peculiar significance in connection with the announcement made by the Austrian Emperor simultaneously with the proclamation of Poland's independence, that it was his wish to grant complete autonomy to Galicia "at the moment when the new Polish state came into existence." This was interpreted as a preliminary step toward the cession of Galicia to the new State. The governments of the Central Empires well realize that the existence of an independent Poland without Galicia and also without an outlet to the sea, which can be afforded only by the cession of the Prussian holdings of Polish territory, would be an anomaly, and that disregard of this intense and natural aspiration of the Poles for complete consolidation would only defer the equitable and rational settlement of the Polish Question.

The rumor proved to be a rumor only. Evidently no agreement could be reached between Berlin and Vienna and, as a result, no Regent was appointed. The proposal that the Council of State be presided over during the course of the war by the German Governor General was evidently made to test out the temper of the country, for it was withdrawn in the face of the unanimous opposition which arose. Another serious clash came over the question of the organization of the army. The Central Powers proposed that recruiting stations be set up immediately all over Poland to raise an army. Pilsudski and the majority of the political leaders of the country objected to such a procedure, pointing out that Poland alone and only through a properly and legally chosen Diet can decide this question.

The Polish demands in this as well as in other matters were finally granted by the Central Powers.

A Polish Provisional Regent, known as the Marshal of the Crown, was appointed in the person of Waclaw Niemoyowski, a grandson of Bonawentura Niemoyowski, the last president of the Polish government of 1831. This choice was made to emphasize the illegality of the annexation of the Congressional Kingdom by Russia in 1831 and to recognize the status of Poland as it existed from 1815 to 1831 by virtue of the Treaty of Vienna. Pending the convocation of the Diet, a Council of State was organized, composed of twenty-five representatives from all parts of the country. Fifteen representatives were chosen from the part of Poland occupied by Germany and ten from the part occupied by Austria. All political parties, religious creeds and social classes are represented. The State Council is presided over by the Marshal of the Crown, and constitutes the provisional government of the country. Germany and Austria each have ex-officio representatives in the Council.

On January 15, 1917, the Council met for the first time and adopted rules and by-laws. It appointed a number of committees and created eight executive departments. The heads were selected from the membership of the Council. The following are the departments: War, Treasury, Political Affairs, Interior, Social Economy, Labor, Justice, and Public Education and Creeds. Pilsudski became the head of the War Department, Michael Lempicki, the gifted ex-deputy to the Russian Duma, was put in charge of the Department of the Interior, Count Rostworowski heads the Department of Political Affairs and a Socialist veteran, Mr. Kunowski, became the chief of the Department of Labor. Other departments have equally able and experienced administrators. Each department has an advisory committee

composed in part of members of the State Council and in part of outside experts. The advisory body on religious matters consists of two Roman Catholics, two Protestants and one Jew.

The Council issued an appeal to the nation, in which it promised to arrange for a convocation of a legislative assembly in the near future, to prepare a draft of a constitution "based on the principle of civic equality of all citizens and adapted to modern needs," to establish a strong government and to organize the finances of the State. The Council considers it its duty to stimulate the economic upbuilding of the country and to reconstruct the ruined towns and villages. In the opinion of the Council "the existence of an army is the first condition of independence," and it hopes to create a large, well-trained and rigidly disciplined military force.

Pending the convocation of the Diet, however, it will not introduce universal service but will rely on voluntary enlistment. By a decree of November 26, 1916, the Central Powers placed credits at the service of the State Council and gave full authority to the Council to raise funds by either taxation or loans.\*

The Polish Legions, which were released by the Austrian Emperor from their former oath of allegiance, swore fealty to the Provisional Polish Government and became the nucleus of the Polish army. They have been stationed in the various cities to replace the troops of the Central Empires, which had hitherto garrisoned the country. Similarly, all political, civic and religious bodies in Poland pledged themselves to support the Provisional Government. Overcoming one by one the numerous difficulties put in

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\* "Le Moniteur Polonais," Lausanne, February 15, 1917, p. 50.

the way by the Central Empires and by the exigencies of the war, through a determined and united effort. Poland is emerging from this chaos and holocaust an apparently independent political State. Its permanence depends, however, on the defeat of German autocracy and imperialism.

For the last hundred and fifty years it has been Poland's ill luck to have her brightest opportunities ruined by an adverse turn of events. Almost invariably the causes were a lack of real interest on the part of the western nations or their preoccupation with internal problems or wars, and the unshaken solidarity of the autocracies of Russia and Prussia.

Fortunately, the present conditions are entirely different. The great war that is being waged now, involving almost the whole world, has the redemption of oppressed nationalities for one of its aims. The fullest, noblest and most sincere expression of this ideal was voiced before the forum of the world by the President of the United States in his historic address to the Senate on January 22, 1917, which happened to be delivered on the day of the anniversary of the last Polish uprising and in the centennial year of Kosciuszko's death. While expounding the high humanitarian ideals of the Republic, the President said he takes it for granted "that statesmen everywhere are agreed that there should be a united, independent and autonomous Poland." The moral effect of this pronouncement by the Chief of this great nation cannot be overestimated. President Wilson has rendered to Poland such service that his name will ever be gratefully remembered in the annals of Polish history. The Poles, proverbially loyal and appreciative, will never forget that in the hour of their supreme trial they had the

**The Solution  
of the Polish  
Question**

powerful moral support of the head of this glorious Republic. The provisional State Council of Poland as well as other bodies sent to President Wilson expressions of their deepest gratitude and respect for "this wise and noble understanding of the rights of the Polish people." The students' fraternities and other associations organized joyful demonstrations before the American consulate at Warsaw. The participation of the United States in the war, which assures the triumph of justice and democracy over lawlessness and autocracy and which gives to this country a voice in the councils of the nations at the close of hostilities, assures to Poland a powerful, righteous and high-minded ally.

There is now one more propitious circumstance tending toward a satisfactory solution of the Polish Question, which never existed before. The bloodthirsty, rapacious and imperialistic Russian autocracy is no more, and the Russian nation through its honorable provisional government has declared itself in favor of Poland's independence. In an official proclamation, the provisional government announced that it wishes Poland to decide for herself the form of government she desires and takes it for granted that the decision will be for "a new independent Poland formed of all the three now separate parts."\* The fact that the foundation of an independent Polish State has already been laid, coupled with the weight of the pronouncement of the President of the United States, has no doubt greatly impressed the Russian statesmen and prompted this auspicious declaration of New Russia, for it was only several months ago that Mr. Milyukov, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Provisional Russian Government, said: "It can be definitely

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\* Reported in the daily press of March 30th, 1917.



FIG. 268—WOODROW WILSON,  
President of the United States

stated that Russia cannot tolerate the idea of an independent Poland, even as a buffer state between Russia and Germany." \*

Following the recent official Russian declaration in favor of Polish independence, the Polish deputies in the Duma resigned, recognizing that they ceased to represent districts forming a part of the Russian Empire.

The Polish Question has never before been so near its full and satisfactory solution. The Poles never doubted that it must be solved satisfactorily, even in the darkest moments of their history. They knew that "Poland, with a land heritage of three-fourths of a million square kilometers, with a historic past one thousand years old, with a rich civilization, with a beautiful language and literature, with an annual economic production amounting to several billions, with a robust and virile population of twenty-five million Poles, of whom almost two millions have been called to arms in this war—is not a fragment, that it is a great nation, one of the few great nations of Europe and of the world."\*\* They knew that their right to their heritage is imprescriptible and that they are entitled to a sincere consideration of their case on the part of the great democracies of the world.

They knew that a nation which in its ethnographic boundaries alone is the seventh nation of Europe cannot be wiped out forever. Only Russia, Germany, France, Austria, England and Italy have populations in excess of ethnographic Poland. The Poles were convinced that only an independent Poland was a condition for the permanent peace of Europe and for the restoration of a proper balance of

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\* "The Independent," New York, September 25, 1916.

\*\* "Uwagi," I, Geneva, 1916, p. 11.



power, upset by the partitions, of which Talleyrand said, "le partage de la Pologne était pire qu'un crime, c'était une bêtise." They were convinced that only an independent Polish state could check the unhealthy imperialistic rivalries of Pan-Slavism which spelled Russian domination, and of Pan-Germanism which was equivalent to the Prussian mailed fist.

Likewise, they knew that an independent Polish state will be the only satisfactory solution of the existing military frontier anomalies of the three partitioning states. Before the war, Poland formed a promontory thrust, as it were, into Germany and Austria-Hungary, and only the middle course of the Vistula was in Russian hands. In case of war no offensive could be started by Russia under the circumstances, as both her flanks immediately became exposed. This danger had long been recognized by the Russian military authorities. Only the interposition of an independent Polish state between Russia and the other two countries can allay all unhealthy rivalry and bring permanent peace to all the countries concerned. Free and republican Russia working out her own great future behind the most advantageous strategic line liberates Lithuania, White Russia and other sections of Ruthenia. These countries, all or some of them, may at their own free will again enter into a political confederacy with Poland, for the common cultural and economic advantages of the peoples concerned.

Despite all the persecutions of the Russian government, the Polish language and Polish civilization are still predominant in Lithuania and in White Russia and a strong bond of kinship persists. Kosciuszko and Mickiewicz were Lithuanian Poles. So is Joseph Pilsudski. Thousands of the most patriotic and active Poles were born and raised in the border

lands of the old Republic. A large number of the Polish legionaries hail from there. Because of greater oppression the Poles from the outlying territories are possessed, perhaps, of greater moral force, grit and determination than the Poles of ethnographic Poland. Indeed, no finer flower can bloom out of the carnage of the present war than a reconstructed and united, free and independent Poland, once more confederated with Lithuania and Ruthenia "as the equal with the equal and the free with the free."

" Gli uomini liberi sono fratelli."



## Key to the Pronunciation of Polish Names.

- A is always pronounced as a in *father*.  
 C is always pronounced as ts, hence Slowacki is Slo-vat-ski, Potocki is Po-tot-ski, Waclaw is Vat-slav.  
 E is always pronounced as e in *bet* or *met*.  
 G is always pronounced as g in *go*, hence Gerson is Guerson.  
 H is never silent.  
 I is always pronounced as ee in *bce*, hence Izbica is Eez-bee-tsa.  
 J is always pronounced as y in *yes*, hence Jagiello is Ya-guel-lo, Jadwiga is Yad-vee-ga, Jaworski is Ya-vor-ski.  
 O is always pronounced as o in *order* or *orchard*.  
 U is always pronounced as oo in *root*, hence Ujejski is Oo-yeay-ski, Uchanski is Oo-lan-ski.  
 W is always pronounced as v, hence Warna is Varna, Wilno is Vilno.  
 Y is always pronounced as i as in *din*.

Certain combinations of consonants have definite sound values, like the combination of sh and ch in English.

Cz in Polish is equivalent to the English ch in *church*, *much*, *such*, etc., hence Czeslaw is Che-slav, Mickiewicz is Meets-kie-veech.

Ch is practically h, hence Chelm is pronounced like Helm, Chodkiewicz is Hod-kie-veech.

Sz is equivalent to the English sh in *mush* or *rush*, hence Szawle reads as Shav-le, Warszawa (Warsaw) is pronounced Var-shah-vah.

Rz is equivalent to z in *azure*, hence Przemysl is Pzhe-misl.

An apostrophe over a consonant softens the sound, hence *ń* is pronounced as n in *cañon*, *ś* is pronounced almost like sh, and *ć* is almost equivalent to ch. An apostrophe over an *ó* turns the pronunciation of the letter into double o in English.

In Polish words the accent always falls on the penult, i. e., on the syllable preceding the last, hence Lokic'-tek, Kosciusz'-ko, Pilsud'-ski.



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