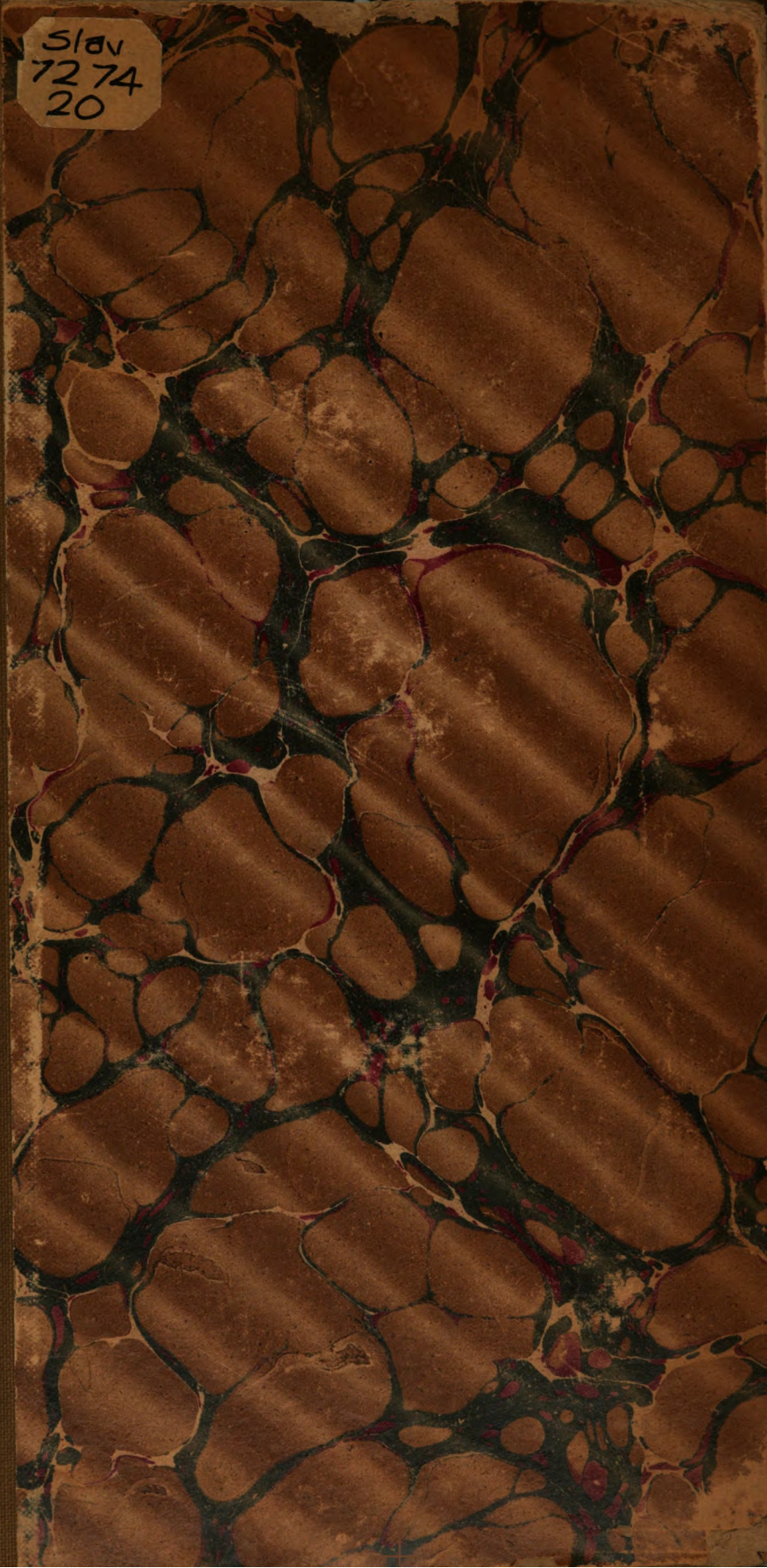


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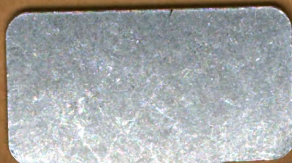
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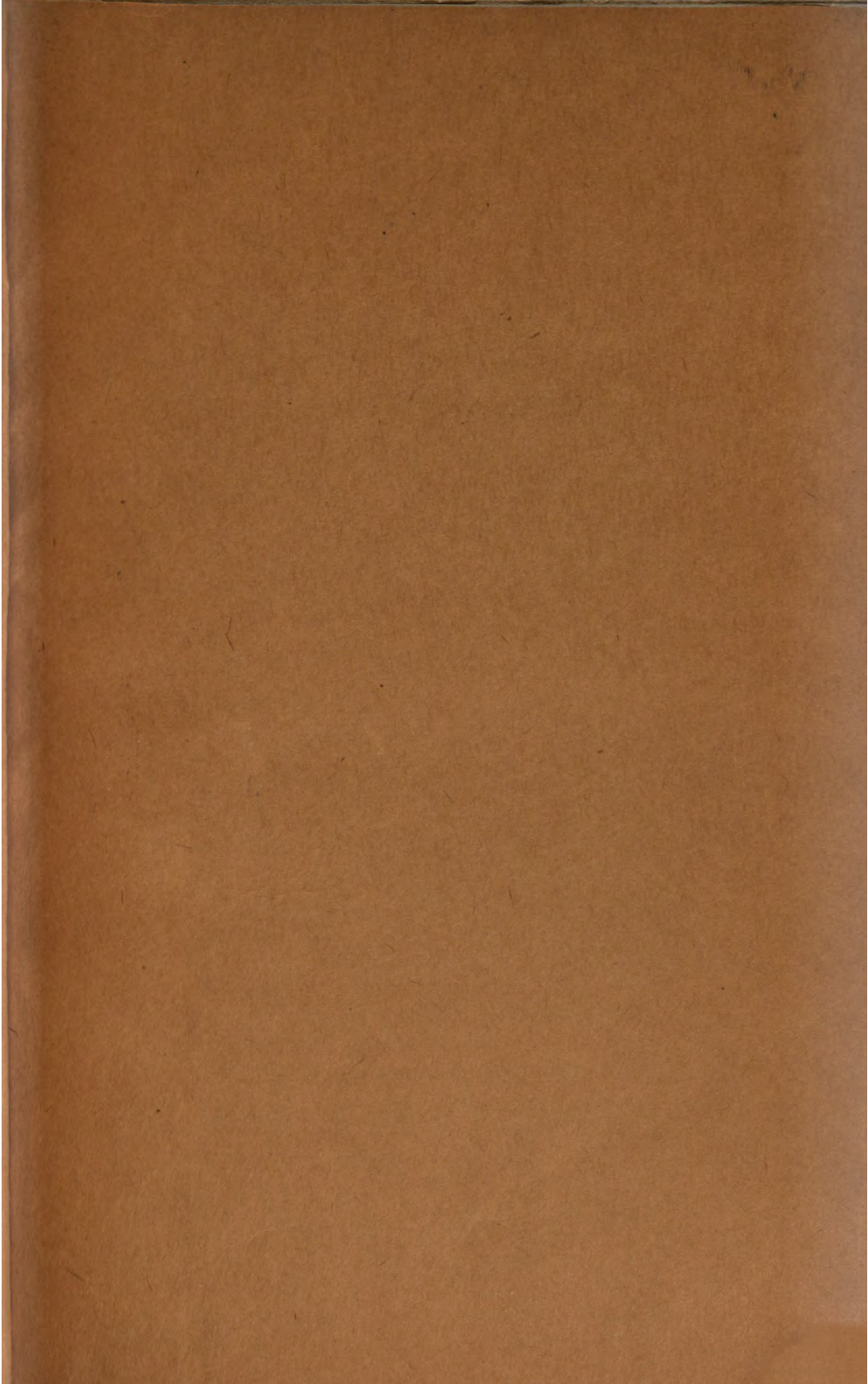


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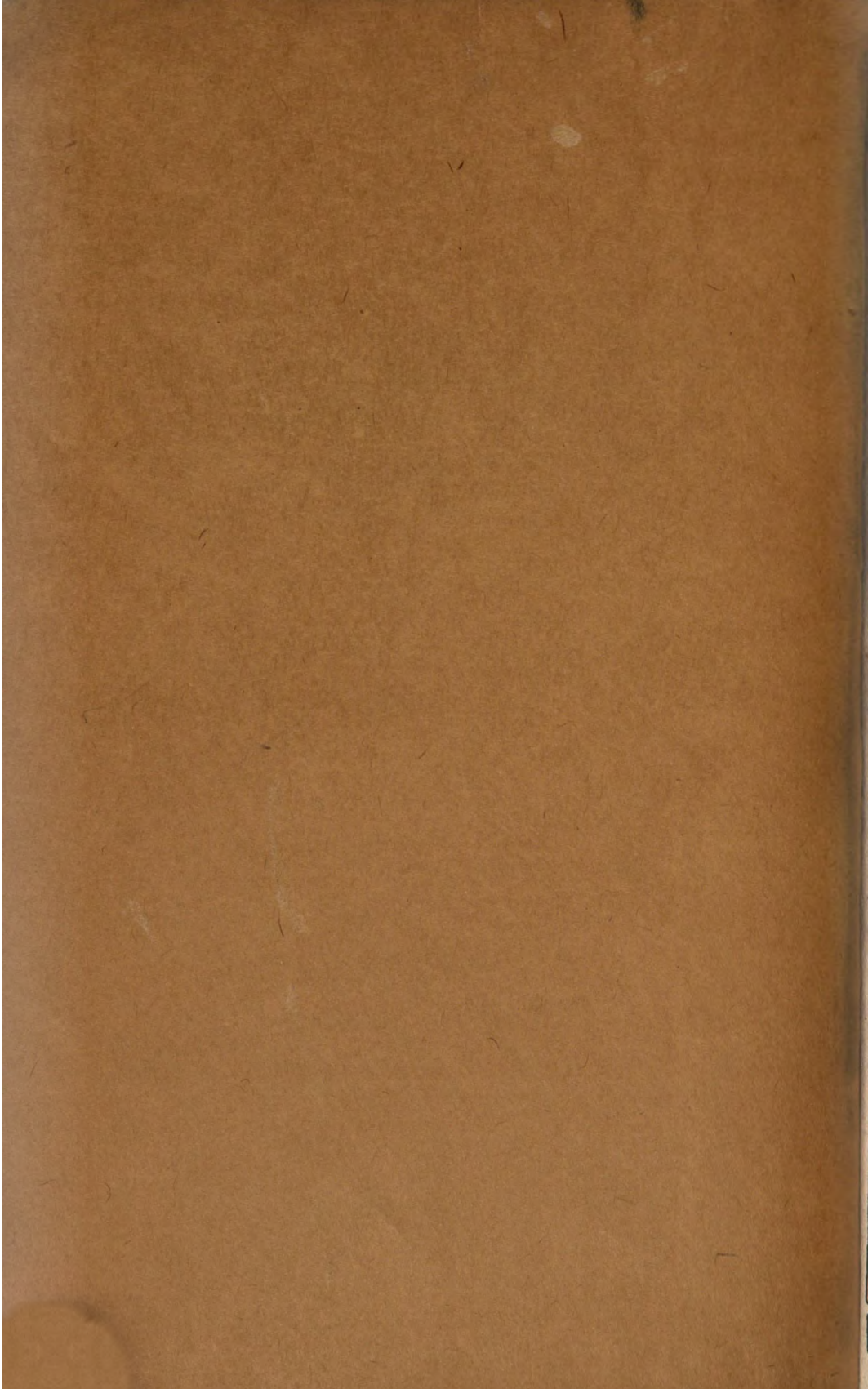
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*Prof. George H. Edgell*









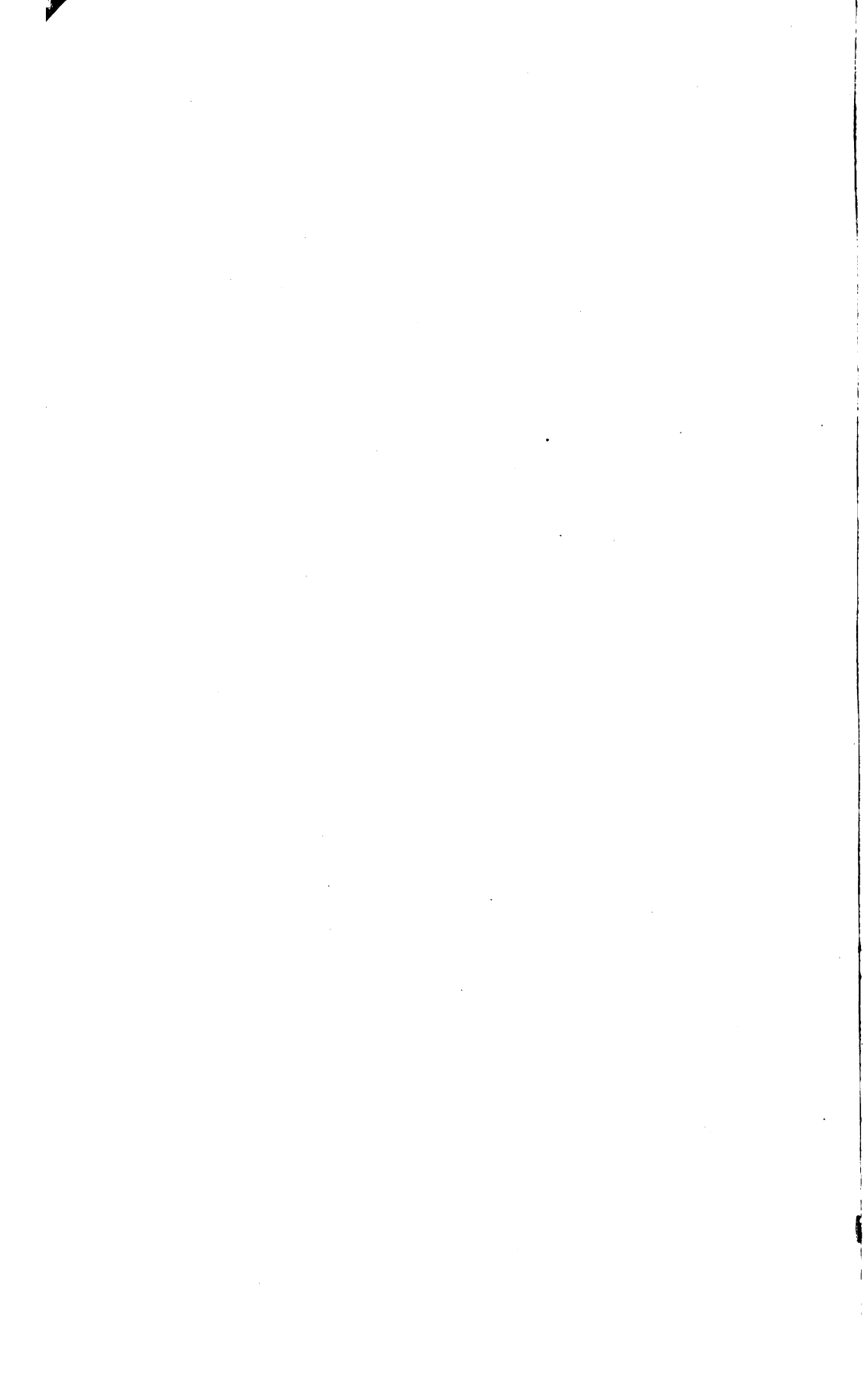




# BOHEMIA









# BOHEMIA



A BRIEF EVALUATION OF BOHEMIA'S CONTRIBUTION  
TO CIVILIZATION

Edited by  
J. J. ZMRHAL AND VOJTA BENEŠ

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# Bohemia — A Foreword

*By Harry Pratt Judson, LL. D.,  
President of the University of Chicago.*



IT has long been the settled policy of the United States not to interfere with European international affairs. Indeed, President Monroe's famous message of 1823, which laid the foundation of the Monroe Doctrine, specifically included this principle: "In the wars of the European powers, in matters relating to themselves we have never taken any part, nor does it comport with our policy so to do. It is only when our rights are invaded or seriously menaced that we resent injuries or make preparations for our defense." Mr. Jefferson, in his letter to Monroe at that time, said: "Our first and fundamental maxim should be, never to entangle ourselves in the broils of Europe." So Washington, in his farewell address, in like manner had made clear his view: "Europe has a set of primary interests, which to us have none, or a very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concern. Hence therefore it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics. Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course."

Here we have the traditional American doctrine as regards European questions. It plainly may be enunciated in three propositions:

1. Differences among the European powers will almost never have any bearing on American interests.
2. With such differences therefore we will scrupulously avoid meddling.
3. Only in the remote contingency that our rights are seriously menaced should we prepare for defense.

Our experience of more than a century of national life has convinced us of the soundness of these principles, and further of the extreme unlikelihood of our having any direct concern in the questions that divide Europe. We have cared nothing for the balance of power, for the contro. of Constantinople, or even for the partition of Africa. We have complacently looked on at the rivalries



and collisions which these and other questions have involved, quite as if Europe were on another planet. The Atlantic is three thousand miles wide.

But now, suddenly we find that ancient wrongs in Europe are vitally involved with the very safety of our republic. We find that this vast war is not by any means a merely European concern. And these truths have come to us, as Jefferson said of the Missouri question, "like a fire-bell in the night." In short, we find, to use Monroe's words, that our rights have been invaded and are seriously menaced.

It is strange that serious international wrongs very seldom end in oblivion. Poland was torn to pieces by her piratical neighbors more than a century ago — and the question of Polish independence is a very real perplexity to the chancelleries of belligerent nations today. There can be no safe settlement after this war unless there shall be a free Poland, dominated by no other power. In the early days of the last century Venice was shorn of Independence and with her Dalmatian provinces was turned over by Napoleon to Austria; the heel of the Hapsburg despot was on many of the fair Italian provinces; as Metternich said, Italy was a mere geographical expression. But Italy has become a nation and there can be no stable equilibrium until the remaining wrongs are righted. Alsace-Lorraine, again, was the German booty of 1871, and the Berlin Treaty of 1878 crippled the Balkan states just emerging from the long nightmare of Turkish oppression. Justice then would have saved the tranquillity of the world today.

So with Bohemia. An independent and vigorous state in the middle ages, early in the sixteenth century the Kingdom of the Czechs unhappily chose the Hapsburg Duke of Austria as king. From that error came three great wrongs to Bohemia.

The elective king made his rule that of a hereditary despotism.

The overthrow of the Bohemian insurgents in the Thirty Years' War was followed by bloody reprisals. Many were put to death, others fled or were banished, lands were confiscated, and place and soil were given to Germans,

who thus became numerous and powerful in Bohemia. Their successors today are determined to keep the native Bohemians from governing their own country.

Finally, in 1867 the dual monarchy, Austria-Hungary, was constituted; but Bohemia was studiously prevented from a just share in freedom. By a long series of unjust measures and policies the Czechs were divided between Austria and Hungary; were cheated of their equitable representation in the diet of Bohemia and in that of the Empire; were kept a subject race.

And these injustices, dating centuries back in their origin, have made possible the Pan-German scheme of a Prussian Middle Europe, the ruthless attack on Serbia, the brutal war of German aggression on the civilization of the world. Bohemia, free and autonomous in the Austrian monarchy, would have made these calamities impossible.

Remember that the Bohemians had no voice in bringing on this war. The war was made by the autocratic monarch; there was no meeting of the Austrian parliament from the spring of 1914 until the spring of 1917. Even then the fantastic injustice of the composition of the elective Austrian lower house is seen in the choice of a rabid Pan-German presiding officer by a vote of 215 to 195. Austria has a population of 10,000,000 Germans and 18,000,000 non-Germans.

So these old European wrongs in the end have endangered the freedom of the world, and have dragged America into the war maelstrom. The world will not be safe until the ancient wrongs are redressed. The Czecho-Slovaks, in Bohemia and Silesia and Moravia, must be free, within Austria or out of it. Then there will be a dike against the Pan-German flood against which its waves will dash in vain. Freedom and justice in central Europe will mean freedom and safety in the remotest parts of the earth.

*Harry Pratt Judson.*





L. Šaloun: Head of Jan Hus.

# Bohemia's Contribution to Literature

By Jaroslav J. Zmrhal, Ph. B.



LITERATURE is perhaps the most important of the indexes to a nation's spiritual life. It contains records of the people's struggles, aspirations and achievements; it discloses the nation's soul; it displays potentialities of the language, by which the mental capacity of races is measured. Language in which lofty ideas are expressed is a language of a superior race. Literature rich in spiritual achievements is a literature of a nation of the future. This applies to Bohemia with particular significance since its literature had its great inspiration, its roots, so to speak, in that miracle of modern history — the Bohemian Reformation.

However, its beginnings date back to the Dark Ages. Church songs, legends, and epics were composed by unknown authors. Of the church songs, the best known are the "*Gospodine pomiluj ny*" ("Lord Have Mercy") and *Song of St. Václav*; the best known epic is the "*Alexandrine*" named after its hero, Alexander the Macedonian. Besides, there were many legends about the Virgin Mary and the Saints. To this period also belongs *Dalimil's Chronicles*, written as a protest against the German invasion of settlers who abused the hospitality of the natives (Czechs) and outraged their feelings by untold arrogance.

In the days of Charles IV (14th Century) the literature produced was largely didactic, represented by *Smil Flaška* of Pardubice, (*Rada otce synovi*---Counsel of the Father to His Son; *Nová rada*---New Counsel.) Flaška of Pardubice was also a collector of the Bohemian proverbs.

One of the most important writers of this era was *Thomas of Štítné*, the forerunner of *Jan Hus*. Thomas of Štítné was a philosopher and a patriot as well as a reformer. His works *Řeči besední* (The Table Talks) and *Knížky šesteré* (The Six Books) have for their subjects life's wisdom and morality.

But, as said before, Bohemian Literature had its Great Beginning with the Bohemian Reformation, whose soul and moving force was *Jan Hus*.

He was a reformer, an author, leader of the nation, seeker after the Truth; Truth's fearless champion, an ardent patriot—and a martyr, not for any particular doctrine but for the freedom of the soul and pure Christian life. Jan Hus was after the essentials—not the superficialities of Christianity. It is impossible to treat more fully the career of this man of whom countless treatises have been written as he indeed deserved, being, as he was, the Titan bringing about the new era in the spiritual, intellectual and *moral* life of the World. Of his numerous works following are the best known, being miraculously preserved even through the two centuries of systematic search for and destruction of all Bohemian, particularly Hussite books: *Dcerka* (The Daughter), *O svatokupectví*, (On Simony), *Postilla* (A Collection of Jan Hus' Sermons), and his *Letters*.

The struggle for the purification of life and religion was heroically continued by a *zeman* (title of the smaller nobility) of Southern Bohemia, *Petr Chelčický*. His greatest work, *Sít Víry* (The Net of Faith) is concerned with the problems of the relation of Church and State. It enunciates the bold doctrine, that the Church must not meddle with the affairs of the State, and tries to demonstrate that the only law a Christian should recognize is the Law of Love, as Christ and his apostles exemplified it by their lives. *Chelčický* had a profound influence on Count Leo N. Tolstoi who was of a kindred spirit with him.

The fruit of *Chelčický's* labors was the church of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren who, as is generally and enthusiastically conceded, *lived* the Gospel, becoming thus at once objects of the admiration and envy of their enemies.

In this period the Bohemian tongue reached its greatest power and purity. Its monumental achievement was the translation of the Bible with commentaries, in six volumes. Those who are competent to judge, agree that the Bohemian translation surpasses all others. This was due to the great flexibility of the Bohemian language, and its classical properties, as well as to the deep erudition of the translators.

Besides, there were hymnals, historical and geographical works, treatises on travel, etc. Classical educa-



tion was quite common in this period, and the least peasant knew the Bible better than many a priest and scholar. It was on this account that the Bohemian Brethren were called "*Písmáci*" ("The Scripturists") by all who knew them. However, this *Golden Age* which, besides being itself great, held such wonderful promise for the future, was doomed to sudden ruthless termination.

On November 8, 1620, the Bohemian Revolt, which aimed at complete independence from the tyranny of the Hapsburgs, who were inveterate and sworn enemies of the protestant majority of the nation, was crushed, and the fury of Ferdinand's hatred and revenge was unloosed upon the luckless land. What was left by the brutal persecutors who stopped at nothing, was destroyed by hordes of soldiery passing and re-passing over the gory battlefield Bohemia had become.

These were the times in which that Great Apostle of Universal Peace, Jan Amos Komenský (Comenius) lived. His chief aim was to bring about lasting peace and happiness by bringing up a generation of enlightened Christians. That was the motive that led him to write his Great Didactic (*Didactica Magna*). His other works the *Janua Linguarum*, *Orbis Pictus*, and the *Labyrinth of the World and Paradise of the Heart* are sufficiently known to all. The last named work surpasses in imagery, force and beauty even the justly famous *Pilgrim's Progress* of Bunyan.

There is one interesting particular about Comenius that I must mention even at the risk of wandering from the subject of Literature, namely, his activity in behalf of Bohemian Freedom at the courts of Europe. We know that he was disappointed and died a broken-hearted exile. His successor in the present world war is Thomas G. Massaryk who made the hopes of Comenius his own. May God grant that he shall be successful! For two hundred years the Bohemian Nation lay devastated—wounded, dying. The tortures suffered are equalled only by those of Belgium and Serbia today. The world thought it was indeed dead.

But as soon as the first faint ray of religious freedom appeared on the blackened sky, the dead arose from the

grave, the books that were thought all destroyed were taken out of their *caches*, Bibles appeared that had passed through fire, water, dough, and earth, the *Labyrinth*, the *Praxis* of Comenius came to light from places which even the fox-like ingenuity of the magistrates could never discover, and thousands returned to the faith and tongue of their fathers—there was a Great Resurrection. No wonder that Goethe marveled. It was indeed a miracle only God could have performed. Vain were the efforts of Joseph II, otherwise an enlightened and tolerant monarch, to Germanize the Bohemian people. Whipping of the children for speaking the Bohemian language only strengthened the repugnance to German. Literary activity seems to be stimulated by the persecution of the native tongue. *Joseph Dobrovský*, the greatest philologist of his time, wrote grammars and other treatises on the Bohemian language. *Kramerius* published Bohemian newspapers and popular stories. *Joseph Jungman* completed his life's work *The Dictionary of the Bohemian Language*, and published translations of masterpieces of Milton (*Paradise Lost*) and Goethe. *Jan Kollar*, the greatest Slovak, wrote his pan-Slavic epos *Slávy Dcera* (*The Daughter of Glory* — or the Slav; note the play of words.) Kollar's pan-Slavism was, however, nothing but a beautiful, poetic dream.

✓ No one, however, did so much to arouse the patriotic feeling of the nation, no one filled the hearts of the patriots with so much enthusiasm, so much energy as *František Palacký*, the greatest historian of Bohemia, justly called "The Father of His Country." The nation's glorious past brought back to light by him, gave confidence to all in a still more glorious future. ↓ His *Dějiny Národu Českého* — *The History of the Bohemian Nation*, is a monumental work, the only reliable source of information on the history of Bohemia. The style is so masterful that it satisfies the scholar and is accessible and pleasing to the average man.

At this time poetry also began to flower. *F. L. Čelakovský*, and *Karel Jaromír Erben* drew upon the treasures of Bohemian folklore and gave us several collections of great literary value.

The new departure from the beaten path—which at first naturally had led through tendentially patriotic poetry—was made by *Hynek Mácha*, who led directly into *romanticism*, a movement which at this period was not much appreciated. Mácha died young, his literary bequest is small—the most important work being *Máj*, a romantic poem of considerable beauty and interest—but his influence was great.

His direct descendants were *Vítězslav Hálek* and *Jan Neruda* whose poetry, though inspired by patriotism occasionally, finds its chief element in the eternal and the universal. *Hálek's* most popular work, *The Evening Songs*, is a gem of erotic poetry and its charm seems to be enhanced by time. *Neruda* particularly would be a pride of any literature. His deep insight, his originality of expression, his virile emotion, are the chief characteristics of both his prose and poetry. *Cosmic Songs, Friday Songs, Churchyard Flowers*, are among his best collection of poems. He wrote many interesting prose studies in *gêne* and *feuilletons*, of which *Trhani* (The Rabble) would hardly find its equal in the literature of the world. The list of Hálek's and Neruda's epigons is long and varied, and includes the names of some illustrious women of which *Karolina Světlá* is the greatest. *Jacub Arbes, Gustav Pfleger Moravský* and *Adolf Heyduk* belong to the foremost men of this school.

There are, however, two names that deserve a special mention at this time, one of a man, and one of a woman. The man was the foremost journalist, statesman, and satirist, *Karel Havlíček Borovský*, a genius, a hero, a martyr for freedom. If the eternal craving for political freedom that is found in the heart of every Czech (Bohemian) is traceable to any one man; if the ideals of noble citizenship, self sacrifice, rugged honesty in public life were awakened by any one person, that person is Karel Havlíček Borovský. In England he would have been a Gladstone; in America a Lincoln—in the unfortunate tyrannized Bohemia, he remained a struggling journalist—but yet so powerful, so indomitable, so inflexible, that the Austrian Government trembled before him in spite of its gendarmes and its regiments of soldiery. That government



did not dare to take this man in broad daylight, but spirited him away at night, treacherously and illegally to its eternal shame. The woman was *Božena Němcová*, the author of *Babička* (The Grandmother) which is translated into the English language, and which has so much subtle beauty, so much freshness and charm, that it shall always remain a classic of its kind of writing. *Němcová* is one of the noblest characters the annals of history record. All her writings reflect her gentle, suffering soul, which finds its happiness in reminiscences of childhood and youth, depicted so wonderfully in her masterpiece, *Babička*.

The next era, if it be allowable to apply the term, is the present one. The modern Bohemian Literature has finally gained its honorable place among the literatures of the world. Merely to enumerate the authors worth mentioning would take pages, not to mention their works. I shall have to limit myself only to the greatest: *Svatopluk Čech*, the most popular and beloved great poet of the Bohemians; next *Jaroslav Vrchlický*, the greatest master of Bohemian verse, exquisite, rich, dazzling; the most facile translator of world's masterpieces; the most prolific poet of the Bohemian literature; *Machar* is the iconoclast, the fearless realist, much admired abroad, the avenging knight of progress; the pet of the masses who adore him.

*Machar* poured new blood into the Bohemian Literature. He brought into it a deeper social consciousness, gave it a backbone, an aim. And this aim was: bare, severe truth. His greatness as a poet does not lie so much in exquisiteness and beauty of form, in which *Vrchlický* surpasses him, but in the magnificence of his conceptions, strong individuality of his convictions and colossal courage combined with simple directness with which he expresses them. While in many ways different from him, he strongly reminds one of *Walt Whitman*. His blank verse epic *Magdalen* holds a unique place in the literature of the world as it is a new departure both in the substance and in the form, which is severely simple and sharp. The poem has its roots in the turbid stream of everyday life but still never completely loses the touch of the divine in the sordid struggle, which it makes the reader yearn for in spite of its

mournful, pessimistic ending. Magdalen was translated into eight different languages, among them *English*. Some of his greatest works are : "Zde by měly kvésti růže" (Here the Roses Ought to Bloom), "The Apostles", a cycle of poems glorifying the leading figures of the Bohemian Reformation, "Golgotha", and others.

The climax of the sentimental, dreamy poetry is reached in the poems of *Antonín Sova*. His verse is extremely elastic and emotional, full of music and rythm. He fully evaluates the beauty of the Bohemian word, particularly in the cycle "The Lyrics of Love and Life". His is the poetry of the national pride, and of the dreams of the future.

Of the other living poets, the following are worthy of special note: *Victor Dyk*; *Petr Bezruč*, the fiery, divine bard of his suffering cōuntrymen in Silesia, poet of strong individuality; *Jaroslav Kvapil*, and *Šlejhar*.

*Julius Zeyer* and *Otokar Březina* find their inspiration in the transcendental, in mysticism. The thoughts of *Otokar Březina* are so deep, so lofty and clothed in such wonderfully expressive verse that he is considered the most unique, the most promising of the poets of Europe. He boldly turns away from the beaten path into the sepulchral quiet of his lonely meditation and there has his visions, his prophecies which he then gives to the world. As to *J. Zeyer* his imagination can hardly be surpassed. His descriptive power is that of a great master, his appeal is universal.

Among the novelists, *Alois Jirásek* holds the first place. His style is simple, direct, but of a peculiar flavor which gives it distinction and character. He is largely a historical novelist but one of great power. He has been compared to Walter Scott but that comparison does not do him justice as his technique is superior to Scott's as well as his style and power to portray character. *Zikmund Winter*, another historical novelist, surpasses him only in atmosphere, otherwise is quite closely related to him. One very meritorious, popular writer of historical romance is *Václav Beneš Třebízský*.

There is however, a group of writers of great interest who are particularly concerned with the soul of

the Bohemian people. They are not heavy psychologists but the most skillful portrayers of the character and life of the common, suffering *gêns*. Neither do they stop at the surface, but dive deep into the national soul and bring up real gems, unsuspected in the rough shell in which they are hidden. Of these *Josef Holeček* is the first, often called the Bohemian *Tolstoi*, and indeed very much like him in his deep analysis of the soul of the common people. His greatest work is "Naši" (Our Folk). *K. V. Rašs* may be linked with him, though he is not of the same depth, is not as analytic and profound, but charms us with the same love for the native clod and the people living upon it. His best known works are "*Výměnkáři*"\* "*Západ*", (The Sunset,) and others. Inexpressibly charming, full of local atmosphere, full of color and spirit of the people are the writings of *Jan Herben*. His "Hostišov" (name of a Bohemian village), "Do třetího až čtvrtého pokolení" (To the Third and Fourth Generation) are real gems of their kind of writing.

To this group rightly belongs *Teresa Nováková* (viz. below) with her studies of the mystics of Eastern Bohemia. She approaches closely *Holeček's* standard of writing.

To complete the list of types of writers, one must not leave out *Vilém Mrštík*, and his wonderful "Pohádka Máje", in which he gives a superb description of nature and youth, and his talented brother.

Of the dramatists, the foremost are *Stroupežnický*, *Šubert*; *Dr. Dvořák*; (Král Václav IV.—King Václav IV.) *Viktor Dyk*, *Jan Hilbert* and *Jirásek* whose *Jan Hus* and *Jan Žižka z Trocnova*, are truly great works, not to mention his poetic "*Lucerna*" and numerous other works. The dramatic art promises a magnificent future. ✓ The nation—persecuted, with its path to progress blocked by the Austrian Government, built at a great sacrifice, from individual *gifts*, a magnificent temple of drama and music, *The Bohemian National Theatre* which is not merely a place of amusement, but a fireside of culture, a source of the nation's aspirations, a real life giver in the

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\*Untranslatable. *Výměnkář* is the old father of a peasant to whom he has given the farm after making some reservations for his needs.



darkest hours of death and persecution. There it stands on the bank of silver-foamed Vltava, with its golden dome glittering in the sun, waiting to be kissed by the first rays of the New Era of Freedom that is to be born, by which the Bohemian Nation is then to be the first to be blest. ]

At this juncture, it is proper to remark that some of the most important writers, historians and philosophers were Slovaks, who wrote in the literary Bohemian language. (The difference between the Slovak and literary Bohemian is insignificant) Such was Jan Kollár (see above), *Šafářík*, and others. There were some, however, who preferred to write in Slovak and some of these are worthy of mention. Such were *Ludevít Štúr*, writer of heroic epics, a political leader, a hero and a martyr; *Jan Hollý*, *Svetozar Hurban* (*Román za Slovenska*—A Romance from Slovakland in which the suffering of the Slovak people is pictured very effectively,) *Hviezdoslav*, the true poet of Slovakland; *M. M. Hodža*, the exile, a poet of considerable power, *Kuzmány*, the writer of the famous "Kdo za pravdu hoří" (He Who for Truth is Burning), *Samo Chalúpka*, and many others. The Slovak poems, songs and romances are never translated into Bohemian, but are treasured and loved as they are, in the original Slovak, which makes them even dearer to the Bohemian heart.

The greatest woman writer is *Teresa Nováková* who portrays in a masterly way the soul of the people of eastern Bohemia, who are great mystics and profound thinkers. Beside her there is a long list of strong woman authors, e. g., *Růžena Jesenská*, *Růžena Svobodová*, *Eliška Krásnohorská*, *B. Viková-Kunětická*, and others.

One noteworthy phase of Bohemian literature is the care with which the juvenile books are edited. Nothing seems to be good enough for the child. No wonder the new generations of Bohemians are such worshippers of the beautiful. We may say without hesitation, and without exaggeration that the Bohemian juvenile books have not their equal anywhere in the world, particularly in appearance. *Karafiát's Broučci* (The Fireflies) is one of the greatest juvenile books ever written. *It was published in London in the English language.*

Generally speaking the love of books extends from the scholar to the street laborer — it is universal; to have books, to cherish and treasure them is part of the religion of the Bohemians.

Having touched on poetry and fiction, it remains for me to at least mention some of the more noted scientific writers, the list of whom is well nigh inexhaustible. Suffice it here to mention a few representing each line of endeavor.

After Palacký, the most noted historians, most of them still living, are *Goll*, *Novotný*, *Rezek*, *Dvořák*, *Pekař*, and *Niederle*. Their work is marked by tireless labor, exceptional conscientiousness and most praiseworthy thoroughness. The literary critics are represented by *Hostinský*, *Krejčí*, and *Šalda*. The world-famous authorities on political science are *Dr. Alvin*, *Bráf*, *Dr. Kaizl*, and *Dr. Karel Kramář*, the last made famous during the war by the designs of the Austrian terror upon his life. *Kramář* suffered a most cruel martyrdom in the Austrian prisons, though he was during his whole life a most loyal Austrian who foresaw the calamity into which the Austrian government plunged following the leadership of Prussia whose victim she had become.

Pedagogy and philosophy are represented by *Dr. Krejčí*, *Dr. J. Dřtina*, *Lindner*, and others.

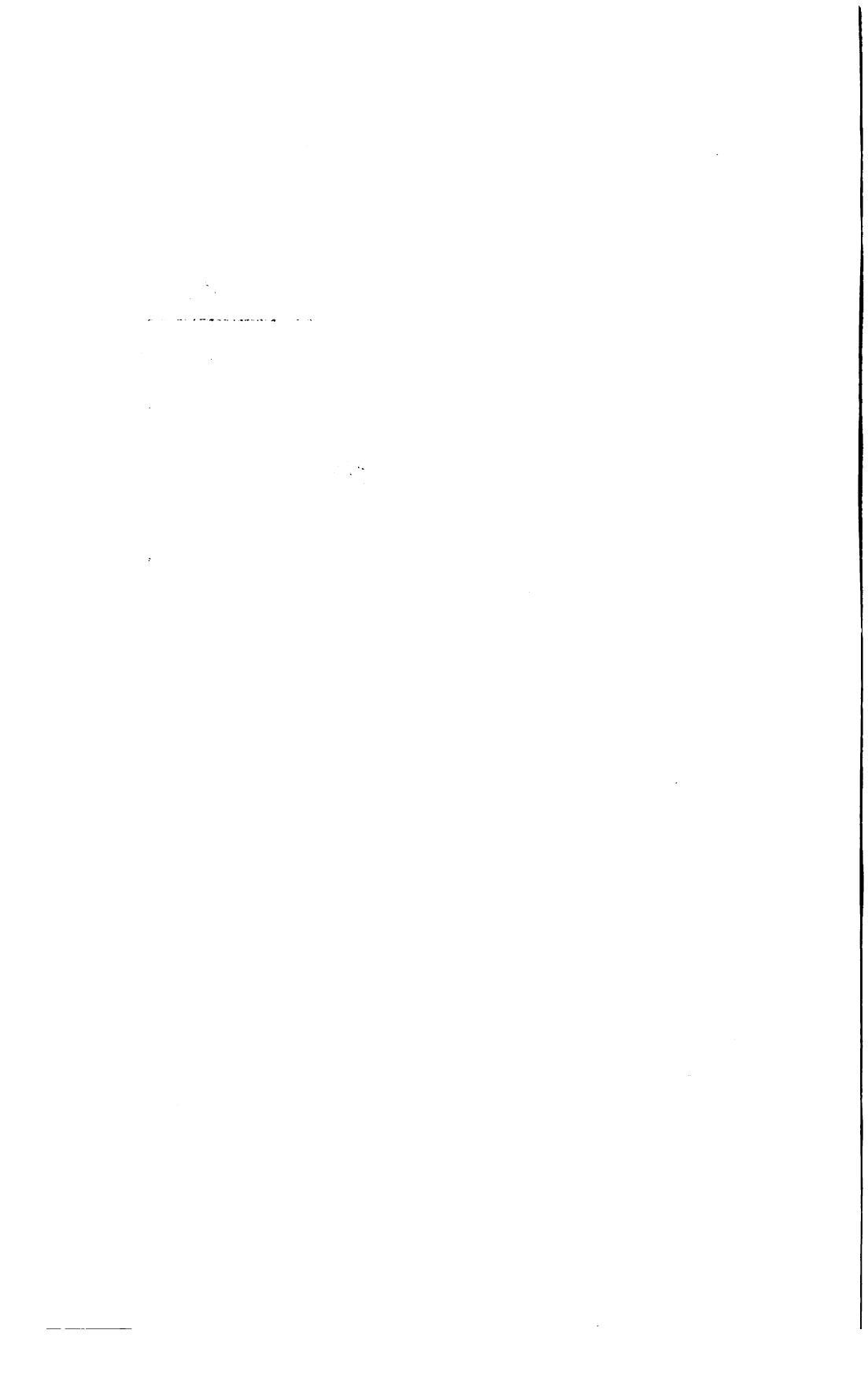
Of the explorers, the best known is *E. St. Vráz*; others of importance are *Jos. Kořenský* and *Emil Holub*, particularly well known in England.

By far the most powerful figure in both the scientific and political group of writers is *Tomáš G. Masaryk*, a Moravian Slovak, a philosopher, a statesman, the foremost leader of the Bohemian nation today, the martyr for the cause he believes in. He is without a doubt the greatest Bohemian living, and surely the most respected at home and abroad. Spiritually, he is the lineal descendant of *Jan Hus* and *Comenius*, and the illustrious martyrs of truth who followed. He was the conscience of the Bohemian nation before the war, he is its soul now.



Victor Stretti: Tyn Church in Prague.





Stanitz  
Smetana  
Dvorak

# The Bohemian Music

By Jar. E. S. Vojan, LL. D.



IN Smetana's opera "Dalibor" the old jail-keeper, when sending a violin to the imprisoned knight, says: "What Bohemian would not love music?" And that was always a full truth from the sixth century, when the Slavic tribes came from the northeast and settled in the country known as Bohemia to the present day.

Of the great number of old religious songs we mention only two—"Hospodine pomiluj ny" ("Lord, Have Mercy,"—from the end of the tenth century) and "Svatý Václav" (St. Václav,"—a beautiful Phrygian melody from about 1300). Well known is the majestic war-song of the Hussites "Kdo jste boží bojovníci", (All ye warriors of God,—a doric song of an extraordinary energetic character). The notations of the folk songs reach also very far, the first ones being from the fifteenth century.

The first book on musical theory in the Bohemian language was published in 1558. "Musica" by Jan Blahoslav, one of the most prominent of the Bohemian Brethren and an excellent musician, is a very valuable work.

After the battle of White Mountain in 1620 Bohemia lost her independence, the capital Prague, which under Charles IV (1346–1378) had become the heart of central Europe, was pushed into the background, and the population of the rebel country came to poverty. Many Bohemian musicians enjoying the best renown went to foreign countries, and some of them became famous in the history of music, e. g., Jan Stanitz (1717–1761), founder of the classic form of symphony at Mannheim, Jiří Benda (1722–1795), creator of the modern melodrama, and Josef Mysliveček (1737–1781), called in Italy "il divino Boemo" (known also under the Italian name Venatorini).

In the eighteenth century the style of Bohemian music begins to show a strongly marked national character, both in the melodies and their harmonic treatment.

The composers who may be especially mentioned are as follows: Jan Dismas Zelenka, the greatest Bohemian composer of the first half of the eighteenth century, born

at Louňovice in 1679, who studied in Vienna and Venice, became court composer to the Prince Elector of Saxony and died in Dresden, December 23, 1745; Bohuslav Černohorský, a contrapuntist of the first rank, born at Nymburk in 1684, who became choirmaster in Padua, Italy, later in Prague, and died there July 1, 1742; Jan Zach, born at Čelakovice in 1699, archiepiscopal conductor in Mainz, Germany, where he died in a lunatic asylum in 1773; František Tůma, born at Kostelec upon Orlice, October 2, 1704, who also lost his reason, like many eminent composers, and died in Vienna in 1774; František Habermann, born at Kynžvart in 1706, who was choirmaster in Italy, France and Spain, died in Cheb, Bohemia, April 7, 1783 (some of his themes were adopted by Handel).

To the end of the eighteenth century and the early part of the nineteenth, the leadership in all that pertained to the art was acknowledged by the musical world to be in the masterly hands of Mozart and Beethoven. After the first performance of Mozart's opera "Le Nozze di Figaro" (The Marriage of Figaro) in Vienna on the first of May, 1786, everything that could be done by jealous plotters of Vienna to mar the composer's success was done, and that so effectively that Mozart declared he would never bring out another opera in the city which treated him so meanly. Then "Figaro" had a brilliant success in Prague. The enthusiasm was immense, especially for the air "Non piú andrai" which was sung in streets and inns and played by aristocratic orchestras as well as by strolling harpers. Mozart became at once the idol of all musicians of Prague. Here he conducted his opera personally, and that day of January 20, 1787, was one of the greatest triumphs of his life. He received a commission to write an opera for the next season, with a fee of 100 ducats. On the 29th of October, 1787, the new opera, the immortal "Don Giovanni" (Don Juan) was produced in Prague with extraordinary effect, and from this moment Prague belonged to Mozart for half a century. Numbered in the ranks of his enthusiastic followers were the leading national composers, such as the refined and poetic pianist Jan Lad. Dusík and the greatest master of music in Bohemia in the first half of the nineteenth century, Václav Jan Tomášek.

Jan Ladislav Dusík (in English encyclopaedias incorrectly Johann Ludwig Dussek) was the greatest Bohemian genius of piano-forte in the eighteenth century. Born at Čáslav on the 9th of February 1761, where his father, a musician of high reputation, was organist and choir-master in the collegiate church, he appeared (just like Smetana seventy years later) in public as a pianist at the age of six. In 1783 he visited Hamburg, and placed himself under the instruction of Philip Emmanuel Bach. After spending two years in Lithuania in the service of Prince Radziwill, he went in 1786 to Paris, where he remained, with the exception of a short period spent in Milan, Italy, until the outbreak of the revolution, enjoying the special patronage of Marie Antoinette and great popularity with the public. He returned to Paris in 1809 to become musician in the household of Prince Talleyrand, which place he held until his death, March 20, 1812. Dusík had an important influence on the development of piano-forte music. As a performer he was distinguished by the purity of his tone, the combined power and delicacy of his touch, and the facility of his execution. As a composer he wrote some sonatas which contain movements that have scarcely been surpassed for solemnity and beauty of ideas. His works "The Invocation", "The Farewell" and "The Harmonic Elegy", belong to the really immortal compositions. Václav Jan Tomášek, born at Skuteč, April 17, 1774, came to Prague in 1790, and from 1806, when he became musician in the household of Count George Bouquoi, his word was decisive in music matters in Prague till his death, April 3, 1850.

Of other composers we will mention only the name of František Škroup (1801-1862) who wrote the first opera in Bohemian language, "Dráteník" (The Tinker, first performance February 2, 1826), and composed for a play by Josef Kajetán Tyl a touching song of "Kde domov můj" ("Where is my home", words by Tyl) which soon became the anthem of the Bohemian nation.

The eminent composer of the transition period, preceding the birth of the modern Bohemian music, is Pavel Křížkovský (1820-1885) whom the earnest study of the beauties of folk songs led to produce some splendid

works, chorals "Utonulá" (The Drowned Girl), "Dar za lásku" (The Love Token), etc.

Bedřich Smetana, the founder of the modern Bohemian music, was born at Litomyšl in eastern Bohemia on the 2nd of March, 1824. He made such rapid progress in his piano studies that at the age of six he appeared in public as a pianist. But for a long time thereafter he was unable to overcome his father's opposition to a musician's career. Finally he succeeded and came to Prague in October, 1843, rich in ideals, but poor in money. He went to Proksch, the famous piano teacher and pedagogue, and became one of the greatest Bohemian piano virtuosos of all time. For a short time, he studied also with Liszt at Weimar. Liszt was a sincere friend of Smetana till his death. In 1856 Smetana accepted Alexander Dreyschock's suggestion to go as conductor of the Philharmonic Society to Gothenburg in Sweden, where he remained till 1861. Here he wrote his first symphonic poems, "Hakon Jarl", "Richard III." and "Wallenstein's Camp".

The opening of the Interim Theater in Prague induced Smetana's return to the capital of Bohemia. This theater being a preparation for the present great Bohemian National Theater, he felt in his inmost heart that he was the only man who could become a founder of the modern Bohemian music. He obeyed the voice of the genius of his nation and came to fulfill his great mission.

Smetana was a wizard and a hero in one person.

A wizard, because he created the modern Bohemian music without any predecessors and put it at once on the level of the most modern music of his time. In the days he studied with Liszt at Weimar, Prague was still under the spell of Mozart whose epigon Tomášek was an absolute ruler in the musical life of Prague; later Verdi and Meyerbeer became idols of Prague musicians. Smetana found the way to connect Beethoven and Wagner with the character of the music of his nation, and so arouse his absolutely original style which is a confluence of modernism and the spirit of the Bohemian folk music. He did not use any folk songs in his works, but he wrote his own original music so perfectly in the spirit of the folk music that his operas, symphonic poems, etc., are immensely dear to



every Bohemian heart. His works are the Bohemian music par excellence. He gained his victory only after a long and tragic struggle: Smetana's opponents asserted that the progressive ideas of the world's music were incompatible with the national idea, — but Smetana proved the contrary. And so he wrote eight operas and many other works which after half a century are as fresh and brilliant as if they had been written yesterday. They reached, as the works of all epoch-makers, far into the future, and until today they are unsurpassed and of unrivaled popularity — for instance, *The Bartered Bride*, Smetana's second opera, (first performance in Prague May 30, 1866) celebrated on January 1, 1915, in the first year of the present war, its 600th performance at the National Theater in Prague.

A hero, — because many of his most beautiful works, full of grace and brilliancy, were written in complete deafness, in a state much worse than that in which Beethoven had written. For years a mysterious affection of his ears brought this ever-increasing malady in its train. No doctor could explain the pathological basis of this affliction, which was aggravated by the nervous strain of the long fight with his malignant enemies. All remedies applied were in vain, and on October 20, 1874, Smetana entirely lost the sense of hearing. He was stone-deaf, nor did he ever hear again. Yet he wrote without interruption. It was his desire that Bohemia should be glorified in his art, that he should shed lustre upon the music of his land and hold up before the entire world the glories of its history and the strength and power of its race. Smetana describes his own tragedy in a letter of December 11, 1881, in the following pathetic words: "The loud buzzing and roaring in my head, as though I were standing under a great waterfall, remains today and continues day and night without interruption, louder when my mind is employed actively, weaker when I am in a calmer condition of mind. When I compose, the buzzing is noisier. I hear absolutely nothing, not even my own voice. Shrill tones, as the cry of a child or the barking of a dog, I hear very well, just as I do loud whistling, and yet I cannot determine what the noise is, or whence it



Max Švabinský: Bedřich Smetana.

comes. Conversation with me is impossible. I hear my own piano-forte playing only in fancy, not in reality. I cannot hear the playing of anybody else, not even the performance of a full orchestra in opera or in concert. I have no pain in the ear, and the physicians agree that my disease is perhaps a paralysis of the ear nerves and the labyrinth. And so I am wholly determined to endure my sad fate in a calm and manly way as long as I live." Yet Smetana was destined to endure a trial worse than that which he had made up his mind to bear with patient courage. In 1882 the great master showed symptoms of mental instability. He was attacked by hideous delusions. His memory failed him. On April 22, 1884, his friend J. Srb brought him into the asylum for the insane in Prague, and there Smetana died in utter eclipse of mind, on May 12, 1884. His funeral was a royal one, the entire nation grieved for the dead genius.

Smetana composed eight operas: "Braniboři v Čechách" (The Brandenburgers in Bohemia, first performance January 5, 1866), "Prodaná nevěsta" (The Bartered Bride, mentioned above), "Dalibor" (name of a knight from the end of the 15th century, hero of a folk legend, first performance May 16, 1868), "Dvě vdovy" (Two widows, March 27, 1874), "Hubička" (The Kiss, August 31, 1876), "Tajemství" (The Secret, September 18, 1878), "Libuše" (the daughter of the legendary prince Krok, who reigned after the death of her father over the Bohemians — a festival opera, the climax of Smetana's dramatic music, first performance at the opening of the National Theater, June 11, 1881) and "Čertova stěna" (The Devil's Wall, a folk legend from the 13th century, October 29, 1882). The comic operas "Hubička" and "Tajemství", just as charming as "The Bartered Bride", and the romantic opera "Čertova stěna" were written in total deafness.

From all these immortal works only one has been given in America, "The Bartered Bride". And it is a most deplorable fact that it is, alas! the only Bohemian opera which ever entered the American stage. The first performance of "The Bartered Bride" at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York on February 19, 1909, was a

great triumph. "New York Herald" wrote next morning: "Smetana has been called "the Bohemian Mozart", which is very apt, for this music is classic in its gayety and its light-hearted charm. It is simply melody from beginning to end. One pretty tune succeeds another — it is a treasure of purling tunefulness that will occupy a prominent place in the repertoire of the opera house." The same success was repeated in Chicago on April 17, 1909. One might think that the reasonable consequence would be the performance of other operas of Smetana. But nothing of this kind occurred. New York and Chicago Grand Opera are playing today works of Italian and French authors of the second and third rank, but Smetana and Dvořák are entirely forgotten. Is it not curious?

The greatest gift of Smetana to his nation was the cycle of six symphonic poems "Má Vlast" (My Country). Here in America again only two poems of this complex are given every season by the symphonic orchestras: the first "Vyšehrad" and the second "Vltava" (In German "Moldau"). "My Country" is a grandiose conception. The first symphonic poem "Vyšehrad" celebrates the proud rock of Vyšehrad, the seat of the first Bohemian rulers. The harp of a national bard opens the poem, the glory of the Bohemian nation is sung here, the loss of independence and the firm belief in the new rising of the nation. The second poem "Vltava" depicts the river Vltava from its sources in the Šumava mountains, through dense woods and beautiful lowlands, around the picturesque ruins of castles, through the St. John's Rapids, to the majestic Vyšehrad. The third poem "Šárka" leads us in the national myths. The Bohemian amazons are at war with the Prince of Vyšehrad. Their leader, the beautiful "Šárka", deceives the brave warrior Ctirad, and all his soldiers are killed. The fourth poem, "From Bohemia's Meadows and Forests", is a delightful idyl, congenial in mood to Beethoven's Pastoral symphony. The fifth poem, "Tábor", celebrates the most magnificent section of the Bohemian history, the Hussite wars. The Hussites, who had in the town of Tábor their main stronghold, were invincible warriors, you hear their above-mentioned song in an iron-clad instrumentation. The

last poem, "Blaník", is the credo of the composer. Blaník is a hill in southern Bohemia, in which, according to a folk myth, an army of knights is sleeping to come to help when Bohemia will be in the greatest danger. And all these splendid poems were written by a deaf master! In Smetana's string quartet in E minor "Z mého života" (From my life), a gem of modern chamber music, Smetana marked in the finale by a high persistent note a similarly persistent accord whistling in his ear, which was the signal of his deafness. — Among Smetana's other works, piano compositions "The Bohemian dances" and "Polkas", male choruses "Rolnická" (Farmer's song), "Píseň na moři" (Song on the sea), the cantata "Česká píseň" (Bohemian Song), five songs "Večerní písně" (Evening songs) and the pompous Shakespeare March (written for the Shakespeare Festival in Prague in April, 1864) are the most important.

Smetana is the greatest Bohemian composer. He deliberately took his stand as an exponent of the art of his native country, and every note of his immortal bequest shows how passionately he loved his nation. His dreams were identical with our great hope of today: the resurrection of the independence of Bohemia!

Antonín Dvořák is the only composer from the three stars of the beginnings of the modern Bohemian music who knew the joy of world's fame in his lifetime. Smetana's works began to conquer the foreign countries only eight years after his death. Fibich's compositions are still little known abroad. The luck was only in Dvořák's favor. Although the privations he suffered till his thirty-fifth year had been great, his later successes were very remarkable.

Dvořák was born at Nelahozeves, a small village not far from Prague, on September 8, 1841. His father was the village butcher and innkeeper, and his ambition touching his son ran no higher than to make him his successor. "The fate which gave the world a composer of music robbed Bohemia of a butcher," says H. E. Krehbiel.

In 1858 Dvořák entered the organ-school in Prague. From 1862 he began to compose, but he did not venture before the public until 1873, when he made his first bid



for popularity by a patriotic cantata "Dědicové Bílé Hory" (The Heirs of the White Mountain). In 1877 his "Slovanské tance" (Slavonic Dances) took the public by storm. These piano-forte compositions, full of glittering melody and rhythm, ravished even Germany and England. On March 10, 1883, the London Musical Society performed Dvořák's "Stabat Mater." The work created a veritable sensation, which was intensified by a repetition under the direction of the composer himself three days later, and a performance at the Worcester festival in 1884. Dvořák now became the hero of the English choral festivals. In 1885 he composed "Svatební košile" (The Spectre's Bride) for Birmingham, in 1886 "St. Ludmila" for Leeds, and in 1891 the "Requiem" for Birmingham. The same year on his fiftieth birthday the University of Cambridge in England gave him the title of a doctor of music and the Bohemian University in Prague the honorary title of doctor of philosophy.

In 1892 Dvořák came to America for three years as head of the National Conservatory in New York. Of ten works written in America, the first was the immortal Fifth Symphony in E minor, "Z Nového Světa" (From the New World) op. 95 (sketched from January 10 to May 25 in New York, first performance at New York Music Hall, December 16, 1893). There was a long controversy here in America, whether Dvořák used in the themes of the symphony some real Negro or Indian music. He settled it himself in his letter to the Bohemian composer and conductor Oskar Nedbal in February 1900: "I am sending you Kretschmar's analysis of my symphony, but omit that nonsense that I have used Indian and American motives, because that is a lie. I tried only to write the themes in the spirit of those American melodies." So all in the symphony is Dvořák's original music. The work is of rare beauty, Dvořák's intention being to give America the best specimen of his talent. The other American compositions were written partly at Spillville, Ia., where Dvořák spent his summer vacations with his family among the Bohemian population of that village (Quartet in F major, op. 96, and Quintet in E flat major, op. 97, the climax of Dvořák's chamber music works), partly in New

York (the Sonatina in G major, op. 100, whose second movement is known under the name given by Fritz Kreisler, "Indian Lament"—"Humoresques", opus 101, from which the seventh is highly popular all over the world, "The American Flag", a cantata, written in January and February 1893, etc.)

In 1895 Dvořák returned to Prague, where he was shortly afterward appointed head of the Conservatory of Music, but not for a long time. He died May, 1, 1904.

His bequest contains more than 120 works. Among them are seven symphonies, several symphonic poems, symphonic overtures, 30 chamber music works, concertos for violin, violincello, piano-forte works (many of them were later arranged for the orchestra by the author himself, like "Slavonic dances", "Legends", "From the Bohemian Forest", songs, choruses, cantatas, oratorios, several operas the best of which are "Rusalka" (The Water Nymph) "Jakobín" (The Jacobin), "Dimitrij" (the story taken from Russian history), "Čert a Káča" (The Devil and Kate, a Bohemian fairy tale), "Šelma sedlák" (The Sly Peasant), "Tvrde palice" (The Pig-headed Peasants), "Armida", etc. Characteristic rhythms and harmonic effects of the folk music as well as bright and glittering instrumentation are significant of the works of Dvořák who was one of the most original composers of the world in the realm of absolute music.

The third grand master of the Bohemian music of the nineteenth century, Zdeněk Fibich (ch pronounced like Spanish j), was born in 1850 at Šebořice of an old forester family. He grew up in the woods, absorbing their meditative poesy. He is little known in America, although his symphonies, symphonic poems, melodramas and operas rank with the best musical works written in Europe during the last three decades of the nineteenth century. He died in Prague, October 15, 1900. From his operas the best are "Šárka", "Blaník" (these two names were explained in connection with Smetana's symphonic poems), "Pád Arkuna" (The Fall of Arcona), "Bouře" (The Tempest, after Shakespeare), "Nevěsta Messinská" (The Bride of Messina) and "Hedy" (Haidee, after Byron). He not only wrote melodramas for the concert podium—from these

especially "Vodník" (The Water Sprite), "Štědrý den" (The Christmas-Eve) and "Hakon" with texts of Karel Jaromír Erben and Jaroslav Vrchlický are splendid works, but even tried to create in the melodrama a further continuation of Wagner ideas about the musical drama: his "Hippodamia" is a scenic melodramatical trilogy consisting of three all evening dramas "Námluvy Pelopovy" (Pelops' Wooing), "Smír Tantalův" (Tantalus' Reconciliation), and "Smrt Hippodamie" (Hippodamia's Death), where the dramas by Jaroslav Vrchlický, played on the scene, are continuously accompanied in the orchestra by symphonic music.

Among the contemporaries of the three coryphaei of the first period of the modern Bohemian music the most conspicuous were Vilém Blodek whose opera "V studni" (In the Well) is still very popular, Richard Rozkošný who wrote several good operas, "Svatojanské proudy" (St. John's Rapids), "Popelka" (Cinderella), etc., Karel Šebor and Karel Bendl, composer of operas, but especially of choruses and songs which are in great favor with singing societies.

The leading composers of the living generation are Vítězslav Novák and Josef Suk. Novák wrote many excellent orchestral, chamber music and piano-forte works and in the last three years also operas ("Zvíkovský rarášek" The little imp of Zvíkov, and "Noc na Karlštejně", A Night at Karlstein, the first after an historical comedy by Stroupežnický, the other by Vrchlický). Suk wrote also many orchestral chamber music and piano-forte works (among the best is the melodramatic music to Zeyer's drama "Radúz a Mahulena" from which Suk made an orchestral suite known here under the title "The Fairy Tale", and symphonic poems "Praga" and "Asrael"). In these later years both Novák and Suk are trying new paths broken by Richard Strauss, Debussy and other most radical modernists. Very prominent composers also are Karel Kovařovic, director of the opera at the Bohemia National Theater in Prague who wrote several operas, "Psohlavci" (The Dog-heads, which name was given to the Chods, hereditary borderers at the southwestern frontier of Bohemia, because of the dog head, symbol of watchfulness

and loyalty, on their banners,—this effectual opera would be a great success in America, if the opera conductors in New York and Chicago ceased to ignore the Bohemian composers) and “Na starém bělidle” (At the Old Bleachery, with the story taken from the most popular Bohemian novel, “Babička”, The Grandmother, by Božena Němcová) Jos. Boh. Foerster, author of delicate songs, symphonical works and operas “Debora”, “Eva” and “Jessica”, Otokar Ostrčil, composer of operas “Vlasty skon” (The Death of Vlasta, the leader of above named amazons of the Bohemian folk legend), “Kunálovy oči” (Kunal’s Eyes, an Indian story) and “Poupě” (The Bud); Karel Weis and others.

The theoretical literature is splendidly represented by Dr. Otokar Hostinský, late professor at the Bohemian University of Prague, a fervent champion of Smetana, Karel Stecker, professor at the Conservatory of Music in Prague, Dr. Zdeněk Nejedlý, professor at the Bohemian University, etc.

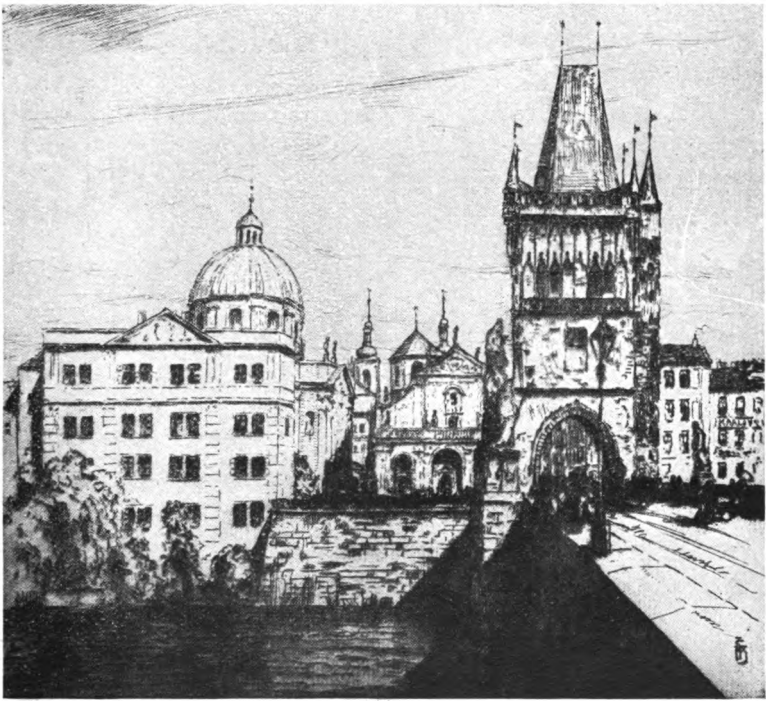
#### V

The reproductive art reached always the highest level. Many Bohemian virtuosos and singers became world-famed. We will cite only from violin virtuosos Josef Slavík, rival of Paganini (1806–1833), Ferd. Laub and from living, František Ondříček, Jan Kubelík and Jaroslav Kocián, these both being pupils of Prof. Ševčík, the Bohemian Quartet (Hoffmann, Suk, Nedbal and Wihan), the dramatic soprano Emma Destinová, for eight years member of the Metropolitan Opera in New York, the first Mařenka in Smetana’s “Prodaná nevěsta” in the New York performance, today living at her castle Stráž in Bohemia, because the Austrian government refused to give her a passport for going anew to America, the tenor Karel Burián, also for some seasons a star of the Metropolitan Opera in New York, etc.

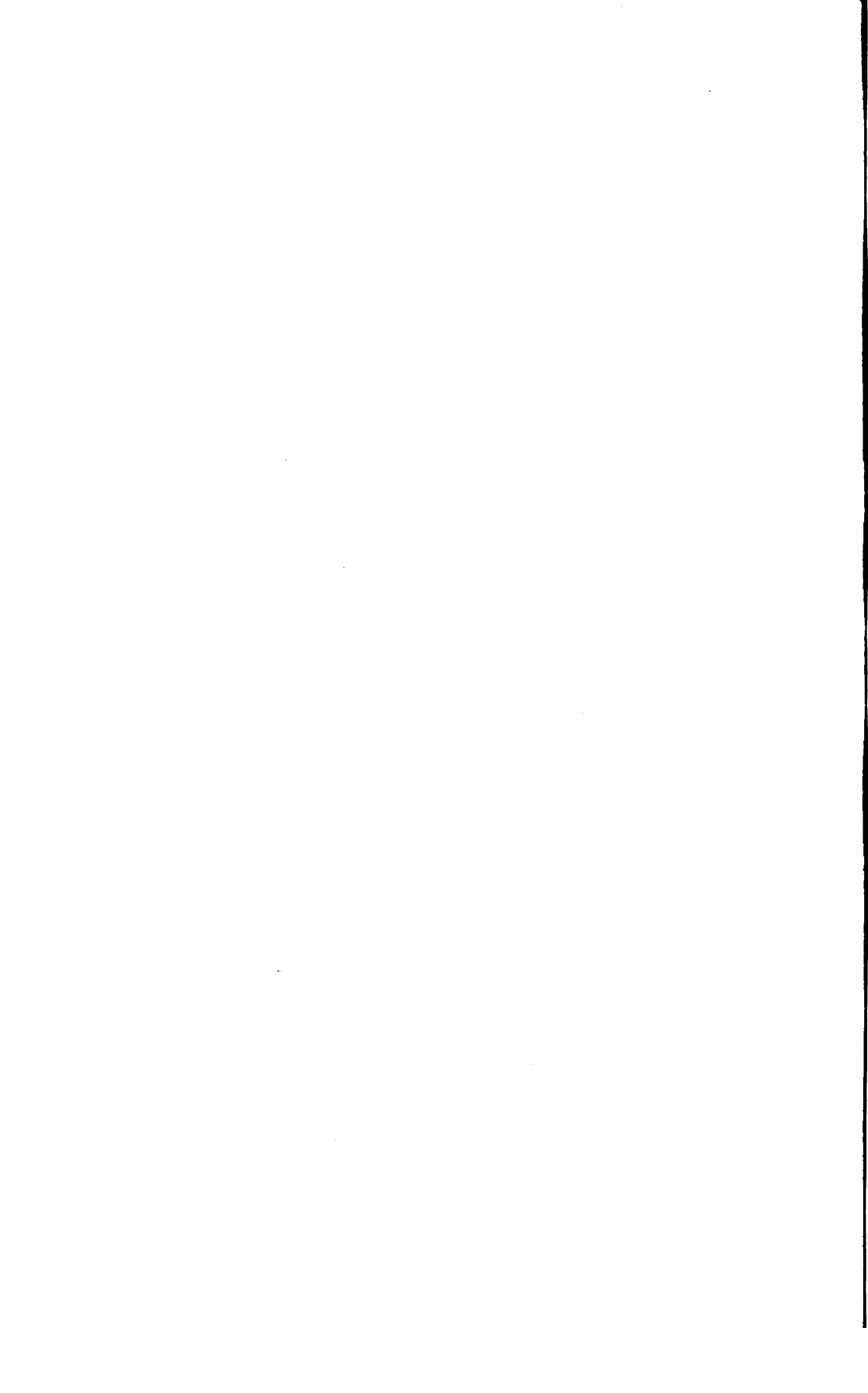
All that has been said in this brief essay concerns the art music. But the Bohemian folk songs and dances have also an unusual fascination. The main characteristics of these songs are the preponderance of the major mode (the farther to the east, e. i. in Moravia and Slovakland, the more this preponderance is waning), with a diatonic melody and a favorite close upon the third, rich rhythmic and a correct declamation of the text. The folk dances

are closely related to the folk songs, and their rhythms are very original. What Chopin did for the mazurka and the waltz, Smetana did for the polka, a Bohemian dance dating from 1830. His "Polkas" for piano-forte are congenial to Chopin's sublime compositions. He wrote also ten other Bohemian dances for piano and inserted a "polka", a "furiant," and a "skočná" in his opera "Prodaná nevěsta", and Dvořák used the furiant even as scherzo in his symphonies.





Franta Šimon: Bridge Tower in Prague.



# The Bohemian Art

By Vojta Beneš



MODERN Bohemian Art is rather young. It came into being with the Bohemian Revival at the beginning of the Nineteenth Century. And just as this revival in its other phases, political, commercial and industrial, and at last cultural in the full sense of the word, were weak and groping at first, so also our art grew from insignificant beginnings; and as all the activities of the regenerated nation clung to foreign influences at first, e. g. to the French Revolution, and the humanitarian philosophy of Herder, even so the beginnings of our art grew out of the cosmopolitan, characterless art, which came into Bohemia in its colorless international form from abroad.

And yet, there lay in the soul of the Bohemian people ✓ immense treasures of the national artistic spirit — treasures of folk art. When in the era of religious expansion of Bohemian Brethren, these modest but rare creators of better Christian life were preserving for the future days their songs and hymnals, they decorated them with drawings, paintings, miniatures and illuminations so perfect in their delicacy, so thoroughly artistic, that to-day we turn back to them with great respect and admiration. This beautiful and in fact brilliant Bohemian Art succumbed to counter-reformation, as indeed did all the Bohemian Culture. Luckily, however, the counter-reformation could not completely destroy the character of the national spirit. In the simple peasant folk there was kept alive the national song with which grew up the national art of the people.

While in the upper strata of the Germanized Society the sense for the old Bohemian Culture was being lost, the Bohemian and Slovak *people* lived in their reminiscences, dressed in characteristic national dress, decorated their homes with exquisite embroidery, surrounded themselves with furniture of the original, national style, painted Easter Eggs, made original toys for their children, doves, dolls and roosters, steeped their whole lives in *poesy*, which had its source in their pure souls.

This national ornamental art, this *folklore* of Bohemia, Moravia and Slavakland, remained forever our pride as well as the mainspring of pure Bohemian Art for all times to come.

✓ When after the fall of the Bohemian Kingdom during the XVII Century the Bohemian *intellectuals* scattered into all corners of the earth it was the good fortune for the people to live in the heart of the Bohemian Lands as if forgotten and unheeded as to their culture.) Deprived of their faith, they were not deprived of their national spirit.

In the art of the common people, in the folk song, and in cherished tradition lived the national spirit gagged and bound, waiting for the moment when the savior would free it from the mediaeval dungeon in which it ✓ was chained so cruelly and long.

Then came the French Revolution and humanitarian philosophy which freed the man and nations. [Our nation began to live spiritually.] Then was the Bohemian Art born. Its beginning was necessarily simple, nor was there anything characteristically Bohemian in it. ✓ The Arts Academy of Prague was directed by the Germans in a soulless formalism, without devotion, without enthusiasm. It was more a trade than an art they taught. Religious painting was ossified in commercial religious pictures; landscapes which came from the brushes of the painters of those days were not the fruit of the study of nature, but of lifeless phantasy and mechanical theory of combination of colors; historical pictures were hardly more than products of indifferent imagination without regard to the era, costume and local historical color.

At this time, after the first artistic attempts of Jaroslav Čermák and some other painters of Bohemian blood, who began to feel for the real, throbbing Bohemian Art, a man appeared in Bohemia, whose name meant a total revolution in Bohemian Art. This man was Josef Manes, a great student of life and an artist of wonderful qualifications. Like the majority of great men, he, too, was misunderstood in his time, when he preached, with his brush, a return to the people, to life, to nature, and to the human heart. He was a great lyric artist, loving the strong, manly peasant types of his race, sketching and

painting them in rythmic lines in their peasant life, in their songs and their sorrows. Especially did he love the child, and his most valuable works are his studies of children. And this it was that made Manes great, his pictures spoke Bohemian language and breathed Bohemian spirit. He found the soul of his nation and sang all its beauty with his brush. His children were truly Slavic children, his peasants were true Bohemian men and his maidens were true Bohemian maidens. They were not Bohemian because Manes clothed them in a Bohemian costume, or in a picturesque Slovak garb, but because they expressed the inner Bohemian or Slovak life and soul, as Manes only knew how to paint them with his brush. Manes studied his people. He lived with them and among them and learned to love them, their customs, their habits, songs, desires, joys and sorrows. And this real and life-loving folk he painted, not any imaginary type. His youths were real Bohemian boys from a certain village or district, its noblest types. Manes' little children breathed with the music and the joy of childlife—each line spoke as the very youth itself.

The most distinguished work of Manes is a cyclus of paintings, "The Life on a Lord's Estate". Perhaps the most important and the greatest work of his life is his world famous "Horologe", which consists of twelve brilliant illustrations, the inspiration for which he found in the joyous and honest life of our Bohemian peasant folk and with which he helped to adorn so beautifully the historical court house of Prague. In the year of 1871, with Josef Manes was buried in the ancient cemetery at Prague in Vysehrad, the father of modern Bohemian art.

What Manes accomplished in "genre" pictures and figural drawings, Antonín Chittusi, another eminent artist, attained in landscape painting. He was a pupil of the Parisian school, where he learned to paint from nature itself. Up to that time Bohemia had been the home of landscape and romanticism, where the artists had painted and drawn landscape according to their wild fancy, without regard to truth. They were impossible scenes under impossible conditions, untrue and lifeless, wherein nature was misrepresented in fantastic colors. At this time

appears young Chittusi and begins to study, understand and love nature as it manifests itself in Bohemian landscapes. His paintings are not made to please but they are true to nature, as one sees Her in Bohemia. Our great vales, fading autumn meadows, our woods bathed in blue mists, villages nestling snugly against the woods and hills, yellow pastures dotted with shepherd fires, all characterize the quiet and simple beauty of a Bohemian landscape.

Julius Mařák, born in east Bohemia, is called the poet of the woods. His realistic landscapes worked in crayons, charcoal, pencil and oil are wonderful; his pen sketches have been sold throughout the whole world. In Bohemia we find but few works of this artist, who painted the Bohemian landscapes with such exhaustive understanding and who found so much beauty in Nature. His woods in crayon are alive with a riot of vibrations of light, they murmur, rustle and echo with songs of the birds. He painted our mountains, the Krkonoše, then he painted the Alps and from his hands there emerged that splendid work called "Sylvan Aspects." It contains thirty-three paintings which are really songs of the brooks, the woods, its torrents and waterfalls. His pupil is *Ferdinand Engelmüller*, the poet of the quiet, sunny Elbe, and broad plains through which it winds. For years he was seen roaming through the woods, along the river, wandering through the meadows, drinking in their moods and colors into his soul, which he afterward transferred with pastel, charcoal, and oil to paper and canvas; far stretching vistas of the plain of the river Elbe, secluded spots with quiet chapels, groups of giant trees with river plains, sunshine and shadows on the green lowlands—these were always no other than Bohemian landscapes.

Václav Brožík became famous through his numerous historical canvases. His celebrated picture "Hus before the Council of Constance" is the property of the Bohemian nation and adorns the walls of the ancient court house of Prague; another large picture "Columbus Before the Spanish Queen Isabella", is kept in the Metropolitan Art Museum of New York.

The paintings of *Felix Jenevain* are famous for their deep religious spirit and the magnificence with which he



paints his figures. His work is characterized by the superb lines in the bodies of his figures, simplicity in color, style and conception, and the depth of feeling. The religious Middle Ages, with their deep religious fervor are powerfully treated in his work of which the most noted is the emotionally powerful cyclus "The Plague".

Vojtěch Hynajs, the painter of the curtain at the National Theatre at Prague, is a depicor of joyous childhood scenes. He was as excellent a painter as he was a teacher.

The Bohemian National Theatre also possesses the works of J. Žentšek, one of Manes' greatest pupils. His pictures are lyric in expression, full of rhythmic lines and a delicate sense for the figural beauty of the healthy human body. His many allegorical works are as easily understood as our simple melodious national song. *F. X. Hartas*, the Bohemian art critic, correctly says of him: "A beautiful human body means to him what it meant to Manes: the glory of the human race."

Mikuláš Aleš, the most characteristically Bohemian and most beloved of the Bohemian artists, was born in 1852, in the poor Southeastern part of Bohemia. Although Manes' art, in spite of its Bohemianism and Slavism, might be classed as international, Aleš' art itself can only be classed as typically Bohemian. He simply cannot be understood by the foreign world; other nations cannot realize what a gift from above this blessed genius was to his nation. It is he who warms the Bohemian heart.

Aleš improved upon Manes in his portrayal of the Bohemian-Slovak type. His type of the peasant, his Hussite warrior, "the defender of the word of God", and his type of the Bohemian child, with which he illustrates the Bohemian song, is not merely an illustration, it is a song in itself, breathing the spirit of the Bohemian mothers, the Bohemian meadows and the Bohemian history, voicing the joys of the harvest and Christmas as the yearning Bohemian soul feels them. He worked with pen and pencil, illustrating thousands of our songs, proverbs, sayings, folk tales and hundreds of our Bohemian books which are typical of the national spirit. Of the people he was born, of the people and for the people he

sang. Probably no nation possesses an artist as fortunate as Aleš was, in the fact that he became the real property, pride and joy of the people in the broadest sense. Aleš is a national Bohemian artist.



Mikuláš Aleš: Kuneš from Bělovic, Captain of Taborites.

He loved Slovaks warmly. In his work is mirrored the dreamy and melancholy soul of the Slovak, with all the joys and sorrows of the life of that good but unhappy

race. The gentle Slovak song played upon the most beautiful strings of his big heart and charmed from his pen most precious art.

The history of Bohemia, its bright and dark sides, the great Hussite period, Aleš portrays through his illustrations as masterfully as Palacký did in his great history and Jirásek in his historical novels. And yet Aleš is not an historical artist in the full sense of the word. He never painted big and ostentatious historical canvases that would dazzle the eye. He illustrated great literary works, fictional and historical, and in his illustrations depicted the past of the Bohemian people in a direct and simple way, that gripped the heart.

There is not a child in the land of the Bohemians and the Slovaks that does not know Aleš. His sketches of children, soldiers, horses and cows, and the joys and other phases of child-life are the Bohemian child's constant companions. No one in the whole world but Aleš could draw for the Bohemian child horses and soldiers and the joy of life and youth.

Another wonderful Bohemian artist is *Hanuš Schwaiger*. He is of Dutch descent on his mother's side and his works show a harmonious blending of both the Bohemian and Dutch blood.

Southern Bohemia is a land of dreamy ponds and swampy meadows. Folk-lore has woven about them magnificent tales and legends about the water-kings and other mysterious beings of the woods, mountains and waters. This fairy world Schwaiger depicted. He depicted it with such brilliant imagination, with so great an understanding of the soul of the common folk, that one cannot help being transported into the charmed atmosphere which rises before his eyes like an enchanted, distant, strange and yet as if a real world.

Schwaiger studied nature even in the land of his Dutch ancestors, bringing into Bohemia a bountiful, artistic harvest: old fish markets, the life at Dutch ports, landscapes in which the clouds hang low, in short, that atmosphere which gave birth to the old Dutch masters. The influence of his sojourn in Holland was shown in his work immediately on his return to Bohemia. Schwaiger

learned to love the Bohemian people through his own study of their soul and mode of life. He goes to Moravia among the rough and simple Slovaks and depicts them in the midst of their hard, rough toil and pictures the happy side of their life of work and thrift. The figures in his pictures have about them a certain quaint, rugged but healthful humor. Schwaiger's art is likewise rugged, energetic, full of strength.

*Jaroslav Panuška* created works of incomparable humor and wonderful imagination. His decayed willows, glittering with ghostly lights, his spectres, his haunted mills, his witches, his national strong men, his robber and peasant huts in the woods, his ruined fairy castles, adorn the pages of many famous literary works for Bohemian children.

But one of the greatest of the Bohemian artists, who found his inspiration in the soul of his people, is the Moravian Slovak, *Jóža Úprka*. Disgust with the artificiality of city life brought him back to the good Slovak peasantry. In a quiet retreat in southern Moravia, he lived simply with his beloved country-folk, depicting their soul and their daily life. His paintings are passionate songs of color, light, youth and strength and joy of life; they are passionate paeans of the hot southern Moravian sun and the healthy vigorous people of that wonderful land. His typical peasant figures; his gray-haired pious country patriarchs; his country maidens in their Slovak costumes with their riot of magnificent colors; his dreamy autumnal meadows with their fires and *šohaji*\*); his huts with painted entrances; his national pilgrimages to cathedrals; sacred spots; his mowers wet with the morning dew; his laborers wet with the sweat of toil; his *šohaji* on horseback on holidays; the peasantry in song, dance, work, prayer without want, tears or sorrow in their happy moods, manifesting their happy life: these were the things clothed in his exulting colors which conquered the European world of Art, when in its lists appeared this young strong barbarian—*Úprka*.

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\*) Slovak youths.

The inspiration of Úprka is the strength and energy in the life of his Slovaks, with their beautiful, unpolluted lives, their healthful and joyous souls, with which they really created their great master, whose art but recently dazzled all Europe.

Úprka paints his beloved Slovaks just as he finds them; at work in the fields, at rest, on their way home in the light of the setting sun, in church in religious reverie, in landscape full of the scent of blossoming meadows and ripening crops, picturing them always in gentle but happy colors, mirroring their mild Slovak soul. That, however, which really conquered the art world for Úprka, is his revelry in colors, with which he makes the Slovak landscapes of Southern Moravia actually sing and rejoice.

Adolf Kašpar followed in the footsteps of Manes and Aleš. His German education did not succeed in making him forget his Bohemian origin, or crushing the Bohemian-Slovak spirit. His paintings and sketches show his Bohemianism so strongly that he is indeed a true successor to the national fame that Manes and Aleš attained. In him, too, the Bohemian song and Bohemian books found a splendid illustrator, though he won his fame as the creator of fine etchings. His illustrations for the exquisite edition of the famous novel "Babička", written by Božena Němcová, in which one of the greatest among Bohemian women pictures charmingly the life of the Bohemian village folk, are worthy of their place in the great book.

The more noted of the young Bohemian artists are *Jan Preisler* whose paintings portray various moods of Nature and are characterized by rich colors and a certain dreamy, mysterious, indescribable charm. With him ranks *Hugo Boetinger*, a refined portrait painter, *František Šimon*, a creator of wonderful etchings, nurtured in Paris and known also in American art circles, *Jakub Obrovský*, a Moravian artist of deep penetration.

In the European world of art, the portrait painter, Max Švabinský, won great fame. He is a professor at the Academy of arts in Prague. His pen and brush produced a whole line of portraits of great men of our nation, each portrait being in itself a work of a perfect artist.

Švabinský is acknowledged by the European art world a master in his line; England especially valued his wonderful works in art. His portraits mirror the soul and character of the great men they represent; they mirror their endeavor and work which made them great. His masterly portrait of our great composer Bedřich Smetana, his portraits of Rieger, Masaryk, Aleš, Manes, Neruda, and a great line of others are the most perfect of all that have ever been produced by the brush of Bohemian portrait painters. Švabinský excelled also as a master of color. One of his *genre* canvases, a great work of art, was bought for America. It was the painting named "At the Loom", but most unfortunately, it was destroyed by fire at the recent earthquake in San Francisco, an irreparable loss to the art world.

A unique place among Bohemian artists is held by *František Kupka* and *Emil Holárek*. Their life, like all of their art, is consecrated to the struggle for truth and democracy. Kupka's brush flays European art of the present day while Holárek's work assails the lust for gold, brutal militarism and mercenary ecclesiasticism. Today two unconquerable social forces, capital and the state and its church under military organization are waging a great struggle against the people who physically, mentally and materially bear the world on their shoulders. Kupka and Holárek stand unquestionably on the side of democracy. Kupka, in all his activity in art circles, in all his daring sketches, a master of penetrating satire, attacks social immorality, hypocrisy, the selfishness and greed of capital, and religious phariseism. His cartoons aroused great interest in art circles of Paris, and Elisé Reklus requested Kupka to illustrate his famous work "The Man and the Earth." When the present war broke out he lived in Paris. Though a Bohemian and a stranger, he went to France to fight with his sword in the struggle for democracy. His most noted works in art are his cycli: "Money" "Religion" "Peace" and "Defiance."

Beside Kupka stands the humanitarian philosopher, Emil Holárek. His art work is not as daring as Kupka's, It is more Slavic in that it is gentler, softer. He draws his inspiration from history and from the humanitarian

spirit of the Bohemian Brethren. The title page on his work "Thoughts on the Catechism" beautifully expresses the idea which was the foundation for this excellent contribution to art: a man hides behind the mask of Christ. He thus characterizes the pseudo-Christian Society of today against which he directed his art.

The limited space of this study precludes even mentioning a whole list of celebrated names. *Rudolf Bém*, the delicate *Victor Stretti*, the poet of the sea *Beneš Knűpfer*; the genius in decorative art, who awakened the sincere interest of France and the United States, *Alfons Mucha*, and a whole list of other young artists, whose lines are being thinned by death on the battlefields where Austria is driving them with other great men of the Bohemian nation — all these constituted the hopeful army, which promised its nation a brilliant future in art.

One of the artists, now deceased, whose name blazed its way through France into the world was *Luděk Marold*. The wonderful facility with which he created his exquisite interpretation of modern Paris with all the elegance of its beautiful women, opened for him the way to the world of art. He wrote his name indelibly on the hearts of his own countrymen by his pictorial panorama of the great national tragedy "The Battle of Lipany" where national Hussite democracy was crushed by the combined reactionary forces, foreign and native.

The Bohemian landscape, its refined beauty, is the contribution of the brush of *Antonín Hudeček*. Sweet, subdued shadows and lights of lonely brooks in the woods, the flocks slowly returning home from their pastures, the open country in the sun and in the storm: those are the subjects he glories in.

The greatest landscape painter without a doubt was *Antonín Slavíček*. However, just at the time when he was about to blossom into an artist such as Bohemia perhaps never had before, he was torn from our midst by sudden death. There was nothing in Nature on which he would not try his talents. The entrancing beauty of Prague was never depicted with such deep appreciation as when he painted it. The majestic Gothic of the Cathedral of St. Vitus he comprehended not only by his eyes but by



his big artistic soul. He painted with passionate devotion the home of the Hussites, the poor county of Tabor, which is so unyielding to the plowman, but which was the only corner of the earth in which the heroic Hussite hetmans could have been born. He was the painter of the soul of his native land.

Many tried to follow his footsteps; one of the best is the gentle, sentimental *Alois Kalvoda*, who loves equally the Bohemian and Slovak landscape: the groups of white birches, brooks winding among alders, long vistas of the picturesque Bohemian and Slovak country.

At the Wentworth Institute engaged as one of the professors is *Vojtěch Pressig*. He is known for his beautiful colored etchings, which breathe indescribable poesy and vibrate with beautiful color chords. He did some of his best work in his illustration of the juvenile classic "*Broučci*" (The Fire-Flies). Under his leadership was published the excellent album of the Bohemian Artists in the United States which was their contribution to the fight for freedom of their people.

As Josef Manes was the first real Bohemian painter, so *Václav Levý* was the first real Bohemian sculptor. His works were mainly religious and many of them are to be found in the art collection in the Vatican at Rome. His sculpture in the sandstone rocks of Kokořín near Prague, are wonderful. Here in the open he hewed these shapeless rock masses into exquisite forms, on themes from the Greek mythology and Bohemian history. Unfortunately, he lived in an era when his great talent could not assert itself in such a way as could that of *Jos. Vác. Myslbek*, who appeared later. Myslbek was the first Bohemian professor of sculpture at the art academy of Prague. With his art he decorated Palacký Bridge and the exterior of the Bohemian National Theatre in Prague. His hands fashioned the statue of the great Hussite leader Jan Žižka of Trocnov, the monument of St. Václav, the national hero of the Bohemian people, the statue of the poet Mácha and many other works. His art was strong, full of life, magnificent in form and spirit.

*Ladislav Šaloun* is the creator of the great historical monument of Jan Hus, our national saint and martyr for

liberty, democracy and pure Christianity. The monument of Hus is cast in bronze, and stands in the old town square of Prague, that historic spot which was the witness to the glory and the downfall of our nation. Here stands the great reformer in all his majesty, like a rugged peasant, severe to himself and others, yearning after a true Christian life, simple and deeply in earnest as the people and the country that gave him birth. The statue is the work of a great artist and a true Bohemian. In it the artist embodied for his nation the ideal of true Bohemianism and erected a monument not only of great beauty but of everlasting glory.

During the present war another beloved Bohemian artist died at Prague, *Stanislav Sucharda*, a son of northeastern Bohemia. His most beautiful work is the magnificent monument of the "Father of the Nation" the Bohemian historian, František Palacký. It is hewn out of granite to symbolize the granite character of the man and the enduring work of the historian. The historical groups cast in bronze, represent in a figurative way, certain events of Bohemian history. Nearly the whole life of the artist was spent in study for this work. The result is most assuredly worth the labor and the thought of a lifetime.

From Myslbek's school there came a line of younger artists. These invariably went to Paris to complete their artistic development in the school of the great master Rodin; Constantin Meunier, the celebrated sculptor also exerted an influence on the younger Bohemian sculptors. Of these, those who grew up to be really strong artists were Jan Štursa, the deep, realistic *Bohumil Kafka*, the excellent pupil of Rodin, *Josef Mařatka*, the creator of fine plaques, Otokar Španiel, *Ladislav Kofránek* and *Jos. Šejnost*. *Franta Úprka*, brother of the painter, *Jóža Úprka*, presents to us his dear Slovaks in bronze, gypsum and other media.

*Frant. Bílek* is an artist of unusual individuality, a type entirely by himself. He also is a son of southern Bohemia, the cradle of Hussite enthusiasm and of the faith of Bohemian Brethren. The spirit of these deep, re-

religious thinkers of the Bohemian nation comes to life again in Bílek's art. His artistic soul is gentle, dreamy, his nature poetical. His deep and philosophically expressive works in wood, metal, marble, clay and gypsum are the embodiment of the purest Christianity and harmony of faith and love. His great works in religious representation brought Bílek many enthusiastic admirers. His most famous works are Golgotha, Agriculture, Christ, Moses, The Bitter Taste of Earth, The Allegory of the Fall of Bohemia, Hus, The Blind.

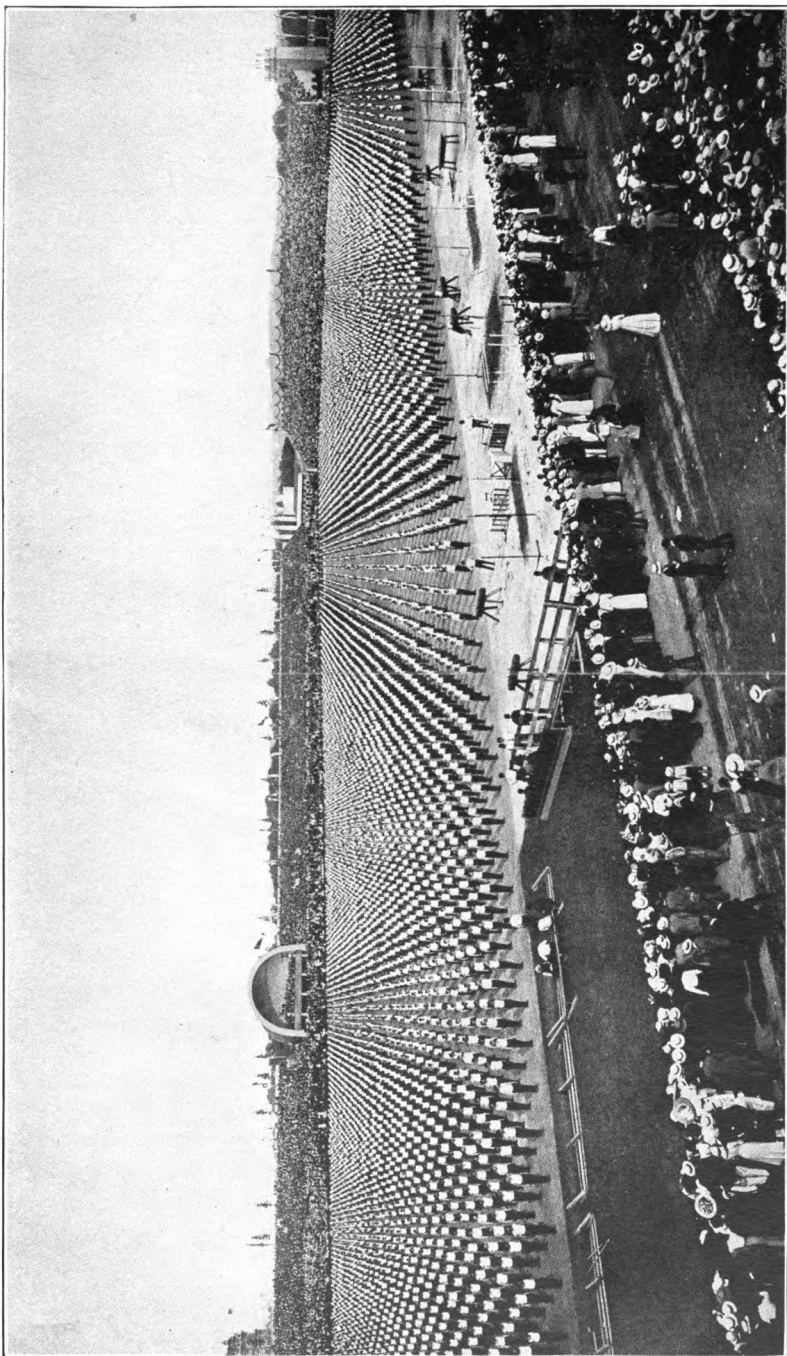
Although the ancient Bohemian architecture reveals itself throughout Bohemia in such exquisite forms as to constitute a veritable architectural art museum, our modern architecture did not have favorable conditions for its growth. In spite of this it can point to many beautiful accomplishments. Our architects, Schulz and Zitek, erected in Prague and elsewhere many buildings in the style of the modern Renaissance, such as the Bohemian National Theatre, the Museum at Prague, etc.

Among our modern artists the name of *Jan Kotěra* has become famous. He is a professor of architecture at the Polytechnical Institute of Prague, the designer of the plans for the new Bohemian University which, however, the Austrian Government, unfriendly to the Bohemian people, did not build.

The Moravian architect, *Dušan Jurkovič*, gets the inspiration for his work from the architectural spirit of the common folk, and the style of the Bohemian and Slovak peasantry. His architectural works express the national style and preserve the exquisite types and products of the people's architectural art.

Of great significance for the modern growth of Bohemian Art are the recently organized "Modern Arts Gallery for Bohemia" and the society of Bohemian artists called "Manes", through the efforts of which our Bohemian art has made most satisfactory progress during the last few years.

We can say with pride today that our Bohemian art, though young, is worthy of any cultured nation.



Sokol's Gymnaestic Exhibition in Prague 1912.



# The Bohemian Sokols

*By Dr. L. J. Fisher*



ONE may safely assert that systematic physical training is an infallible sign of the high cultural level of a people. History abounds with examples proving that wherever national consciousness grew up, there also developed a fondness for serious and purposeful cultivation of the human body, so as to reach a harmony of physical and intellectual qualities which would serve as a foundation for mental equipoise and moral worth. Serious physical training implies necessarily a higher degree of intelligence and altruistic feeling in that it subordinates the pleasure of the individual to the interest of posterity, of the nation, of all humanity.

The aim of serious physical training was well brought out long ago by the Grecian philosopher Lucian in the dialogue of Anacharses and Solon: "In our public contests more is at stake than the prizes that are to be won; we aim at greater things both for the athletes and the country. Another contest, common to us all, awaits all brave citizens, and the crown is not made of pine branches, of laurel, or olive. It is a crown containing in itself all that a man values highest — the freedom of every individual and of the country, its well-being and glory, the preservation of families, in short, all the best things within the gift of the gods."

So high a value did the Greeks put upon bodily training, in the days when the ancient Hellene started his hardy education in the gymnasium, when in the arena he exercised his muscles to acquire manly beauty and grace, when in the contests he practiced physical fitness and power which was united with a high degree of intellectual and moral cultivation. As long as that was true, ancient Hellas did not fear for its freedom, because her sons possessed matchless bravery and perseverance; and Greek art produced its most wonderful gems, while the learning of Greece enriched forever the entire human race.

Then the sun of Hellas set, and with it the noble striving for the cultivation of the body, until in the dark centuries of the Middle Ages asceticism was magnified

into the highest virtue and the human body was treated as an evil thing. But as soon as nations began to lead a conscious life, as soon as the rights of man received some recognition, the cultivation of physical and mental forces received again proper attention. Athletics as a means to physical well-being came once more into its own. It was so in Germany, where Jahn's Turners were an important factor in the work of German unity; it was so in Italy, which saw the rise of gymnastic societies at the time of its fight of liberation; and France, too, created innumerable unions of gymnasts, as she gathered her forces together after the defeat and humiliation of 1871. Switzerland, Belgium, and not to go too far, America, all prove clearly that physical training is given an important place in the national scheme of education in every country where the people enjoy liberty and unhampered development.

It was from considerations such as these that Dr. Miroslav Tyrš called into life the Sokols (Falcons) of Bohemia.

At this point it is necessary to speak briefly of Bohemia as it was before Sokols came into being, for otherwise we would not grasp fully the significance and the mission of this National Czech Organization called into the service of the nation that it might increase its strength and safeguard its future.

The year 1620 is a great milestone in Bohemian history. In November of that fateful year the rebellion of the Bohemian estates was crushed in the battle of the White Mountain and the people experienced the full vengeance of the victorious Hapsburgs. The leading men were executed or exiled, the greater part of the soil was confiscated, and the nation that had taken such a noble part in the history of Europe was beggared and decimated until its name almost disappeared from the roll of living nations. The peace of a churchyard prevailed in the Bohemian lands deprived of its leaders, and lying helpless under the most oppressive and reactionary regime of a foreign dynasty.

This frightful agony of an entire nation lasted more than two hundred years.



When the beneficent period of enlightenment preceding the French Revolution covered all Europe, even the autocratic Austria came under its influence. Two benefits principally it conferred upon the many races of Austria, which had a far-reaching influence upon the Czech nation: The edict of toleration permitting a certain amount of religious freedom, and the liberation of the peasants from the most galling wrongs of serfdom.

These two concessions created the initial impulse which set into play the great forces by which the nation awakened to a new life. When conscience was no longer violated, as it had been for the past two hundred years, when men could exercise their intelligence upon religious and philosophical questions, it was to be expected that the new generation would not have the souls of slaves or of hypocrites created invariably by fanatic persecutions. At the same time the peasant released from slavery to his feudal lord, breathed more freely after centuries of severe oppression and became conscious that he was a man; the indifference and ignorance of serfdom gave place to a recognition of duties to the nation. All over the lands of the Bohemian crown, as persecution and oppression were lifted, powers that had been lying dormant came to life and sap began after a long winter to circulate in the body of the nation.

On top of that came a sudden blow. The same Emperor who had loosened the spiritual and material bonds of his subjects, the enlightened Joseph II., planned like the benevolent despot he was, to forcibly make over the various races of his monarchy into Germans. He wanted to take from the Czechs the most essential part of their Slav Nationality—their tongue. And then the abiding vitality of the Bohemian people, persisting in spite of long lasting oppression came to the surface. Men came forward in great numbers animated by the conviction that they must work hard to preserve the people's language. The awakening of the nation began with the defense of the Czech language. Joseph Dobrovský, the gifted linguist, defined first the laws governing the correct use of the Bohemian language and gave the initial impulse for its further cultivation. So the old speech was saved,

but there still existed a violent break between the present and the more glorious days of old Bohemia. It was necessary that the people of Bohemia should realize their heritage, should know again the great deeds of their ancestors, should join the nineteenth century with the fifteenth and sixteenth across two centuries of unconsciousness. František Palacký re-discovered Bohemian history and through his truly monumental work made the people proud of being members of the Czech race. The bright past gave the people confidence that the future also must be full of promise. Palacký's history, besides recalling the days of Bohemian independence, introduced also into our "awakening" the political idea, so that the forties of the nineteenth century saw the birth of a new political life, identified most closely with the name of Karel Havlíček, the martyr dear to every Czech heart.

At the close of this period of regeneration the founder of Sokols, Miroslav Tyrš, commenced his labors on behalf of his people. And while Palacký proudly said to Vienna politicians who were transforming Austria into the Dual Monarchy: "We were before Austria and we will survive it," Tyrš, the sober philosopher, examined the substance of national organism, discussed its right to live and determined its purpose.

"All history and all nature is an eternal struggle in which everything succumbs that does not establish its right to live." From this starting point Tyrš takes up the solution of the problem of his nation. All that lives is subject to this inexorable law of nature: Either increase and flourish, or disappear and make room for other forms of life. This hard law makes itself felt in the history of humanity and mercilessly destroys individuals and nations, whenever they fall from their high standards and cannot keep step with others in the world arena. Tyrš remembered Rome, once the mistress of many nations, later an easy prey in its decadence for the Teuton barbarians, the physical giants of the north. Why did Rome fall from its high estate? Because the rapid growth of wealth and its concentration in the hands of a few brought about luxury, immorality, corruption and stagnation, which in their turn undermined the foundation of

the state. Rome stood still, became enervated, set herself against the spirit of eternal change and progress, and thus perished the nation that had done so much for humanity.

When Tyrš applied this law to his own nation, he saw a small people, recently awakened from death-like sleep, a nation that had demanded from its rulers the right to govern itself, but had been suppressed, a race that could point to a splendid past, but little else, a weak people standing alone and helpless against numberless dangers that might destroy it before it could gather its strength. Tyrš was persuaded that a nation manifesting so much vitality after centuries of oppression had a right to live, but the right must be defended and enforced. For that more was needed than pride of the past. It was necessary to work hard and well, to labor with diligence in the field of progress and enlightenment. "Not the most glorious past," says Tyrš, "but an active and energetic present is a guarantee of the nation's future." True words, especially today, when the future of the Bohemian nation is at stake.

As a lonely rock in the sea against which stormy waves dash from all sides, so lies Bohemia in the heart of Europe, a little land of beauty surrounded by a German ocean. Tyrš realized fully, how difficult was made the very existence of the Czech nation by its geographical position, since evil neighbors ceaselessly pressed from all sides to put an end to Bohemia's life.

A great discrepancy in strength. This was Tyrš's solution of Bohemia's problem: "The smaller the nation, the greater activity it must develop in order to remain, in spite of small numbers, an active and influential element of humanity; the small nation must pay the greatest attention to its healthy growth." That is the purpose of every small nation and so of the Czech nation. Not an ounce of strength must be wasted; every individual must do his part, every Czech must see to it that his life and his work count — in short, what is lacking in quantity must be made up in quality.

Thus we come to the point which practically is the most important contribution of the whole program of Tyrš. He realizes that a weak people must become gradually accustomed to the heavy tasks awaiting them,

that the energy of the individual must be raised and his character strengthened, that the practical efficiency of the Bohemian people must be increased so that the entire race may better withstand external attacks. All that, however, presupposes the physical well-being and strength of every component element. And how to reach such a desirable state of affairs, how to cultivate the nation's energy, how to raise the health of a people?

To this question Tyrš found an answer in physical training, based on the model of ancient Greece. He was convinced that Greece owed its unparalleled excellence to the passionate cultivation of the physical training of her children, and that the bodily vigor created by athletic exercises was the cause of the devoted patriotism which preserved the nation's liberty. And so Tyrš boldly went back to the classical era for the means to strengthen his own race that he might train the youth of his beloved Czech nation into a similar harmony of physical and mental faculties and instill into it an ardent patriotism—the desires of the individual to be subordinate to the interests of the nation.

The Sokol idea is the realization of this philosophy. Sokol — the falcon — is the bird that by his swiftness and energy best symbolizes the active, vigorous life which is the ideal of Sokol societies; the falcon who flies high in the free skies is also the symbol of freedom — and every Czech is born with a devotion to freedom. The ideas of Tyrš found many followers. The Sokol Unions gathered in them the best elements of Bohemia, and in a surprisingly brief time this organization became the pride of the nation, as the personification of the nation's yearning after a more vigorous and untrammelled life. The Sokols came to be the first national institution, awakening Czech consciousness in weak and indifferent breasts and arousing the desire for a more distinctive racial life. In every great popular demonstration and manifestation the Sokols had the place of honor.

There was soon apparent a danger that such a sudden success might turn the heads of the membership and dissipate its strength in superficial parading of patriotism. Tyrš the founder was also the instructor and leader of

the organization. An organizer, as well as a thinker, he directed the energy and loyalty of the Sokols into the gymnasium whence came the motive power for internal organization and for patriotic work.

Here, too, he was working in a new field. If physical training was to be the means for the cultivation of the nation's energy, it was necessary to take into account racial characteristics; the method must be such as to fit the needs and temper of the people. That method had to be discovered by Tyrš. He gave his Sokols a purely Bohemian system of training, one that satisfied completely the instincts of the young body for exercise and at the same time gave heed to aesthetic considerations: the search for the true beauty of the body. The system of Tyrš includes training for various classes and occupations and makes provision for the needs of the whole people in the way of physical exercise.

It is in this rich variety of exercises for every age, calling and sex that the Bohemian method of physical training differs from other systems. The Sokol institution thus obtained a distinctive, solid foundation from which the further education of intelligent Bohemians could proceed. A sound and strong body, the primary requirement, fostered by the numberless Sokol societies, assists in the better development of the individual man's higher faculties. For we know now that man's mental processes are closely connected with his physical make-up; every thought, every emotion corresponds to some change in the body. Strength and nobility of mind and soul develop in connection with strength and efficiency of the body.

Regular gymnasium training has a beneficial effect on all the activities of the man who takes the Sokol idea seriously. He learns to submit to voluntary discipline which commends itself to him through its noble aims; he cultivates the sense of duty to himself, to his family, to his fellow-citizens, above all to his nation. Thus he strengthens and improves his character as he aims at Tyrš's definition of an ideal Sokol—a well rounded, honest man and citizen.

The Sokol societies train not only young men, but also the older boys, especially those of the laboring classes. Before the organization of the Sokols the youngsters of the Bohemian cities were left to themselves and grew up undisciplined in miserable social conditions. The Sokols are entitled to credit, because they welcomed these neglected apprentices into their halls and through athletic exercises and brotherly intercourse toughened their physical and moral fibre. It was natural that sooner or later room would have to be made in the Sokol organization for the Bohemian women, for Tyrš planned for the education of the whole nation and especially for the strength of the future generations. Bohemian women have appreciated the importance of the teachings of Tyrš, and the intelligent Czech woman considers it her duty to join the Sokol society of her town. At the last great Sokol meet — one is held every five years and is looked upon as a great national holiday — over five thousand women and girls took part in the athletic exhibition in Prague. Women who are members of the Sokol organization give to the nation sound, healthy children, and teach them passionate devotion to Bohemia.

In other respects, too, Sokols make their influence felt. They take interest in popular education, fight corrupting literature and coarse entertainments, oppose reactionary tendencies in politics, agitate for equal rights. Not the least of the good effects of the Bohemian Sokol movement has been the closer contact and co-operation of the Slav nations. From the Bohemians the Sokol idea has spread to the Slovaks, the Poles, Russians, Croatians, Serbians, and everywhere it is a power making for progress, patriotism and liberty, and for common effort to make all Slav peoples free.

They say in Bohemia that to be a Czech is to be a Sokol. The Sokol idea penetrates all classes of the people and makes the entire nation democratic and liberty-loving. It is no wonder that in the present war the Bohemian people have taken an anti-Austrian stand, and that thousands of members of Sokol societies here have enlisted as soon as this country declared war on Germany. It is a fact that sheds clear light on the results of Sokol training that

in Bohemia the gymnastic societies were promptly dissolved by the Austrian Government as hostile to it, while in the United States many Sokol societies had to close their physical training classes, because every younger member joined the American Army.

The great emergency for which Tyrš tried to prepare his people has come. The very existence of the Czech people is in the balance. But the Sokol idea has proved its soundness. In the forefront of the determined opposition to German tyranny are men trained in the Sokol halls of the Bohemian cities. The leaders of the people at home, men charged with high treason to Austria, because they are fired with love of their own land, the men who led Bohemian regiments over to the Russians, the heroes who created a Czecho-Slovak army in Russia, the workers who have organized the Bohemian National Alliance of America, are nearly all Sokols.

Will the Bohemian nation perish or will it emerge free from the awful, bloody contest? The Bohemians fight for their freedom and for the liberty of mankind. But they are not strong enough to win the fight alone. They look to the Allies, above all, to America, with hope and confidence.

One great president of the United States led his people into a great war in order that six million black people should become their own masters. Another great president brought the United States into the greatest war of all ages, that all nations of the earth might be free to live their own lives. The Czecho-Slovak nation of twelve millions looks to the United States and to President Wilson for help in their struggle to become free from the yoke of the Hapsburgs.





"No lapse of time, no defeat of hopes, seems sufficient to reconcile the Czechs of Bohemia to incorporation with Austria."

WOODROW WILSON.

"The civilized world knows that they (the aims of Allies) include the liberation of Italians, Slavs, Roumanians, and Czecho-Slovaks from foreign domination."

EXTRACT FROM THE ALLIES' REPLY TO PRESIDENT  
WOODROW WILSON'S NOTE.

"Relying at this historical moment upon the natural right of each nation to self determination and free development, strengthened further by irrevocable historical rights and state papers of undoubted validity, we shall demand at the head of our people the union of all branches of the Czecho-Slovak nation into one democratic Bohemian state which shall include the Slovak branch connected geographically with the historical Bohemian fatherland."

DECLARATION OF THE BOHEMIAN (CZECH) DEPUTIES IN THE  
VIENNA PARLIAMENT, MAY 30, 1917.

"Bohemia recreated should never again be overwhelmed, and by her very existence will destroy the nightmare of a German-Magyar hegemony of Europe."

LEWIS B. NAMIER, in "THE NEW STATESMAN", London, 1916.

"But the liberation of the Czechs would not be complete unless their close kinsmen the Slovaks were included in the new Bohemian State; and every reason alike of politics, race, and geography tells overwhelmingly in favour of such an arrangement. The Slovaks, who would to the last man welcome the change, have long suffered from the gross tyranny of Magyar rule."

R. W. SETON WATSON.

"And still, in spite of all this unfair treatment the Bohemians stand at the head of all the Austrian nationalities in the matter of education."

THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW, SEPTEMBER, 1917.

"The master of Bohemia is the master of Europe."

BISMARCK.

"In the words of Bismarck" Bohemia is a fortress created by God Himself." But she must become the fortress, not of Reaction, but of Liberty."

R. W. SETON WATSON.

"It must be made impossible for Prussian power to hold the road to Constantinople and Bagdad. One of the most effective bars would be a Czech-Slovak state and that free state, I confidently hope, will emerge from the contest."

HARRY PRATT JUDSON, Presid. UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO, 1917.

"But we, on the contrary, will do nothing to oppose Bohemians' just desire for independence and free national expansion."

PRUSSIAN HIGH COMMAND, on 8th, JULY 1866.

(in War Against Austria.)

"Without Bohemia the Slav Cause is forever lost. It is the head, the advance guard of all the Slavs."

GENERAL FADEJEV, 1869.

"To work for Austria's salvation is to work against Italy, against Roumania, against Serbia and the Southern Slavs, against Bohemia and against Russia.

In fine, any kind of Austria-Hungary, ruled by the Hapsburgs, is the German vanguard for an advance into Asia and Africa. On the terms, Austrophilism, if conscious, is political perversity, if unconscious, political naivete."

T. G. MASARYK, 1917.

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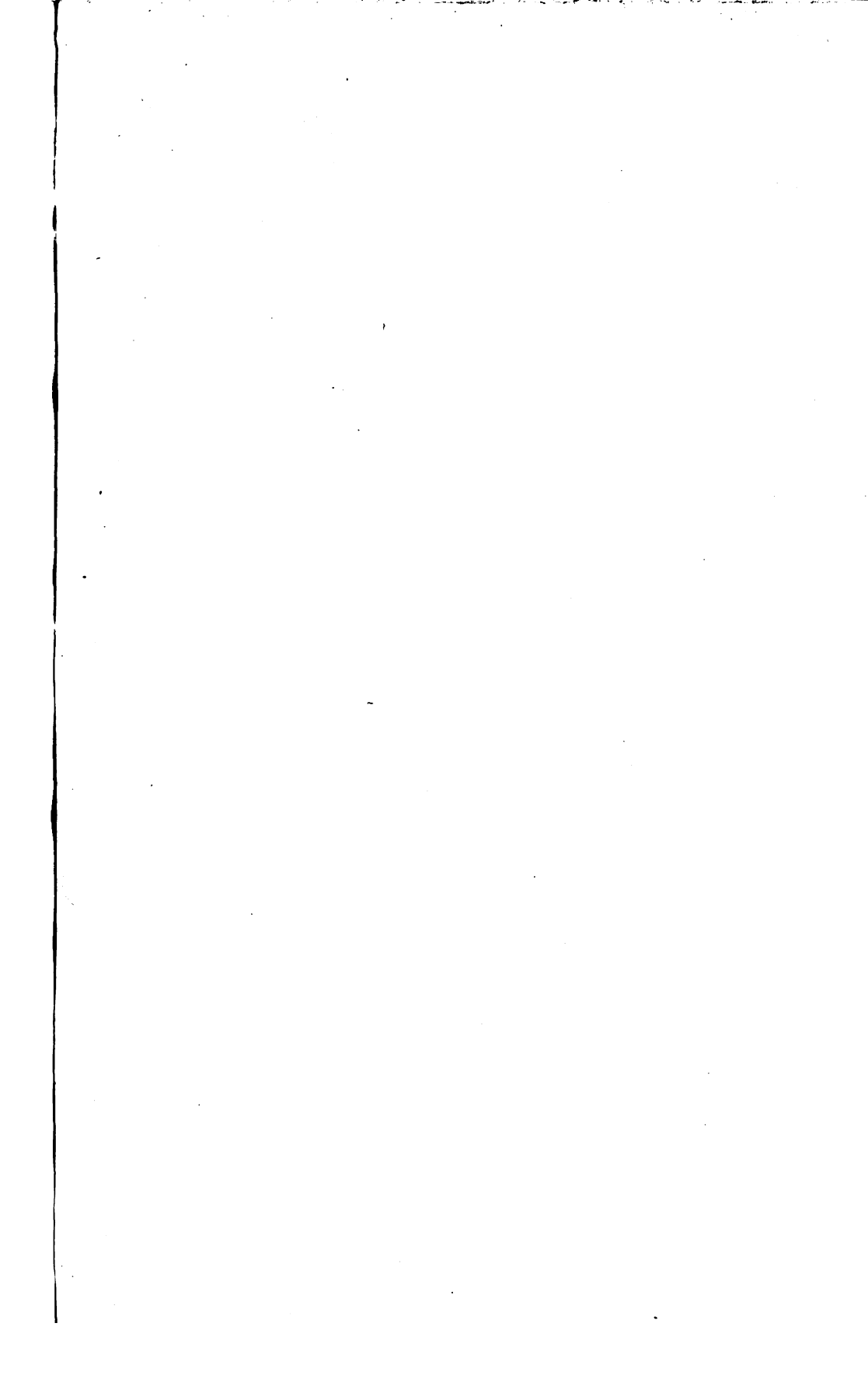


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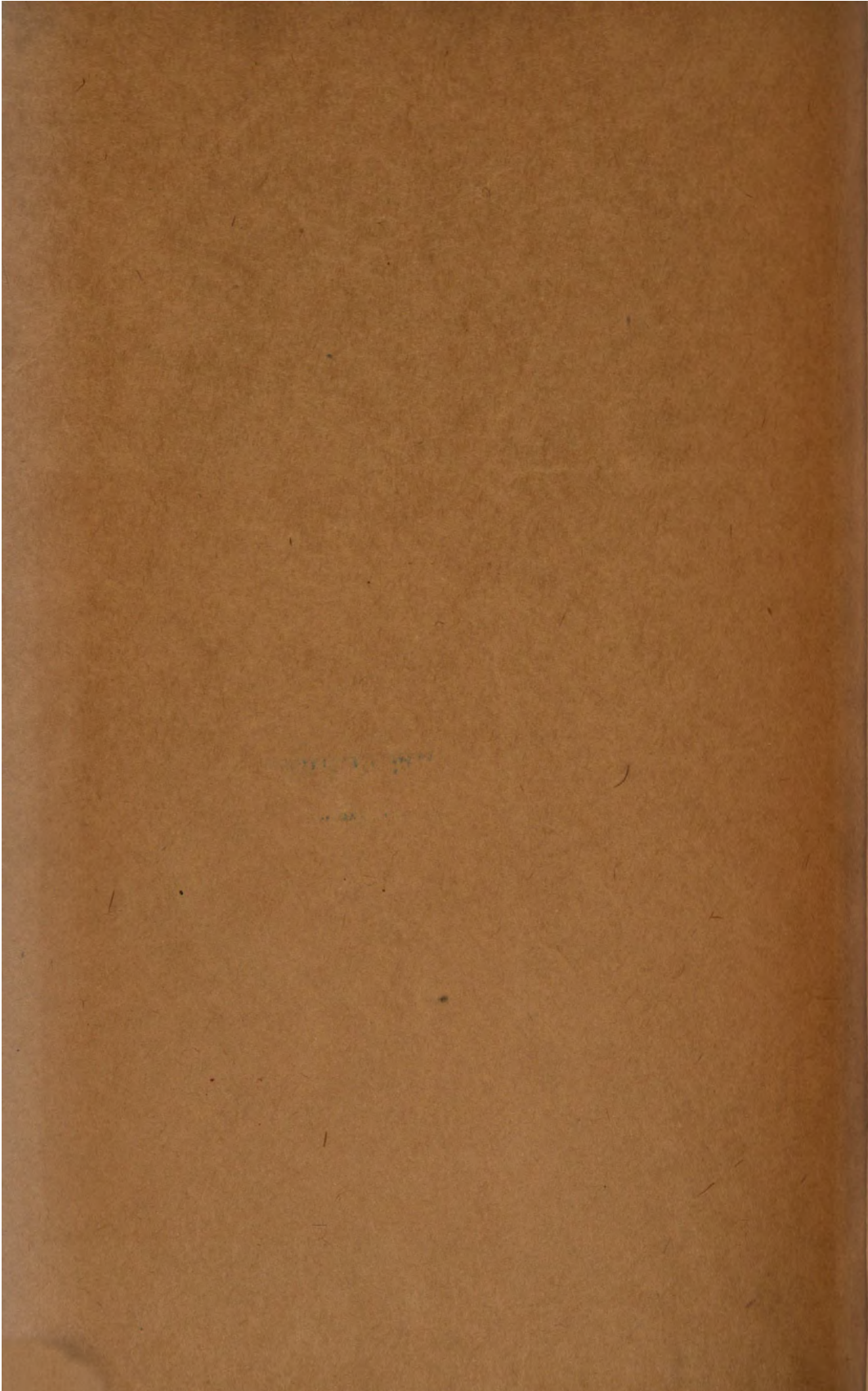
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