

police to arrest me and transport me to Siberia," but how relieved he was when the stranger came in, excused himself for the intrusion, and explained that he was Jan Matejko, well known to every Pole as their great national artist. Szwarcze gladly acceded to his request to sit for his portrait as a model for Skarga, the great Polish reformer, in fact he acknowledged it as an honor to be thought a fit subject for this noble purpose.

PETRUS SKARGA PAWENSKI S. J.

A PROPHET OF POLAND.

BY A FRIEND OF FREE POLAND.

NOTHING in this world is perfect, no thing nor person possesses that fulness of every good which really could and should be possessed. All creation is working unceasingly toward the realization of all its latent potentialities, toward the actualization of a better and nobler reality. No rational being casts a doubt on this fact to-day, nor is he in any position to doubt it, since no creature gives such eloquent testimony to this fact as man himself. The recognition of a true, vital evolution in the cosmic universe is accepted to-day, and with full justice too, as the most important conquest of our science. Man himself assumes an odd position in the process of universal evolution, for we may truly call him the lord of creation. Man it is who, to be sure, succumbs to the laws of nature and must reckon with them, but who in spite of this can command these laws and all the forces of evolution and exploit them for the realization of his wishes and ideals: the creation of a better reality lies within the power of man. It is the most sacred duty not alone of every individual but also of the whole of human society to create more and better being and living.

This task is not at all easy and for that reason it is no wonder that the leaders of human society along with peoples and states generally put forth vigorous efforts for anything else than the realization of that which we all accept as most sacred. Nor can we even blame these people for their choice of action, for: Do not temporal possessions, material treasures, position, power and physical force make man, and especially peoples, safe from all enemies? Are not economically strong peoples always victors? Thus it seems in reality, but this is only a superficial impression, for history teaches us that those peoples which do not strive for the realization of the

highest ideals have ruined themselves by their own behavior. The Greeks and the Romans, those peoples who so merit our admiration, afford perhaps the most striking illustration of our assertion. The ultimate reason for their ruin lay precisely in their not recognizing the folly of their policies, but persisting in their course. In such moments when a people forgets the fulfilment of its most sacred obligations, there come to the front in every people men who foresee with the insight of genius the true future of their fellow citizens and, spurred on by the spirit of love for people and country, warn their compatriots of threatening dangers. No country has lacked such geniuses and prophets, and yet their fellow citizens, like those of the patriarch Noah in the days of the Flood "were eating, drinking, marrying and giving away in marriage until . . . the flood came, and carried them all away"! (Matthew xxiv, 37-39.) Generally speaking, all warnings of such men were in vain and the majority of them died in dishonor and disgrace, derided and jeered at by those to whom they extended a helping hand.

So it was with the Polish nation. There was no lack of prophets nor of preachers admonishing to penitence and pure living for this people either, but yet all was in vain (they imitated the contemporaries of Noah, made merry at the expense of the "seers" and remained in their evil ways and in sin until the "Flood," the fall of the Polish state, came. To-day we should like to introduce to our readers one of those great seers of the Polish people, a true prophet of this nation, and this man is Petrus Pawenski Skarga, humble monk and priest, a member of the Society of Jesus. How majestic the figure of Skarga was can be perceived from the circumstance that the Dominican Florian Birkowski, who delivered the funeral address, the most prominent pulpit orator of the day after Skarga, chose as the text of his sermon a paraphrase of the words of the apocryphal writer Ecclesiasticus, xlvi. 1: *Et surrexit Elias propheta, et verbum ejus quasi facula ardebat* (and the prophet Elijah rose up and his word glowed like a torch).

Petrus Pawenski was born in 1536 at Grojec, a little town in Masovia. His parents did not belong to the nobility but were of civilian origin and we now know for certain that it was his brother Francis who first received the diploma of nobility with the cognomen Pawenski, from King Zygmunt III. Petrus lost his parents in early youth. After the completion of his course at the Gymnasium, he studied for two years at the University of Cracow, where he received the degree of bachelor of arts in 1554. With this diploma he went to Warsaw where he was appointed rector of the

parochial school belonging to the collegiate church of Saint John. During two years, 1555-1557, he conducted this school with honor, then we see him in Cracow as private teacher of the oldest son of the castellan and senator Tenczynski. In 1560 he accompanied his charge to Vienna, where he remained two entire years. In 1562 he returned to Poland and, following the advice of Paulus Tarlo, archbishop of Lemberg, he resolved to enter the clergy. In 1563 Tarlo ordained him sub-deacon, and in the following year deacon and priest, and appointed the young clergyman to the position of cathedral preacher and canon at the cathedral of Lemberg (Lwow). A little later he received the parish of Rohatyn, which he soon renounced, however, to devote himself entirely to his official duties in Lemberg, a number of whose noble families owe to Skarga their return to the mother church.

In 1569 Skarga went to Rome, joined the Jesuit order and was appointed by Pius V Grand Penitentiary at St. Peters, especially for those of the Polish race. Two years later he returned to Poland and officiated as preacher, first in Pultusk, and from 1573 on in the Jesuit college at Wilna. When Stephen Bathori founded a new Jesuit college at Polock (Polotzk) in 1580, Skarga was the first rector of the institution. In 1584 he was transferred to Cracow as Superior of the Jesuit residence ad Sanctam Barbaram. Here he was tireless in his labors in the confessional and the pulpit and regained many dissidents for the Catholic Church. For the assistance of those too proud to beg when poor and ill, he founded in 1584 the Brotherhood of Mercy (Bractwo milosierdzia), and at the same time established the "pious bank" (Bank pobożny) which was to lend money without interest to the needy on the receipt of a pledge or pawn. Nor did he forget the daughters of respectable but impoverished families, for whom he founded the "Arca Sancti Nicolai" (Skrzynka Sw. Mikolaja), in order to furnish them with a suitable dowery. Thus the social reformer Skarga was a true philanthropist in the best sense of the word. In addition to this his services toward the accomplishment of the union of the Ruthenian Church with the Roman were incontestably of the greatest value.

This extraordinarily active man was also very busy with his pen. The writings of Skarga, some forty in number, may be classed as dogmatic-polemical, historical, homiletic and ascetic. The most important are *Pro Sacratissima Eucharistia contra hæresim Zwinglianam*; *Artes duodecim Sacramentariorum*; *Upon the Unity of the Church* (in Polish, this was burned by disunionists): *Contra Thraenos et Lamentationes Theophili Orthologi, ad Ruthenos Græci*

religionis cautela; Confusio Arianorum; Confusio secunda Arianorum; and Messias novorum Arianorum. The last three works combated Socinianism which had found a refuge in Poland. During his life there were printed nine editions of his *Lives of the Saints*, written in popular style, and the book is still much read among the Polish masses. His *Sermons for Sundays and Holidays* continue to be regarded as models of pulpit eloquence. All of Skarga's writings are very valuable even to-day, for they have had a very great influence on the development of the Polish language, and they contain exceedingly important contributions to the contemporary political history of Poland. This so great Catholic and priest was at the same time a great patriot, full of genuine love for the whole Polish people, for all estates without distinction, for his beloved fatherland.

In January of 1588 King Zygmunt III made Skarga his court preacher in which office he remained active up to shortly before his death in 1612. His *Sermons for the Diet*, which occupy the first rank in point of oratorial style, reveal most clearly and well his genius and bear witness to his patriotism. We should like to acquaint our readers briefly with the contents of these *Sermons for the Diet* since they cast much light upon the political and religious conditions obtaining in Poland at that time.

When Skarga undertook the office of court preacher Poland was a world power, and this fact brought down much misery and misfortune upon this kingdom. We cannot regard the foreign policy of Zygmunt III, of the house of Wasa, as fortunate, it seems to us to-day an uninterrupted chain of endless political mistakes, which entangled Poland in useless wars with other peoples without the slightest advantage to the country. In addition to this the king was headstrong, arrogant, suspicious and amenable to no counsel. Conditions ruling in the interior of the country were no better, the Reformation and the religious strife resulting from it weakened to a very great degree the national life, the power of the state and of the king, national unity and love of country. Such conditions could not but destroy Poland, but unfortunately the majority of the people refused to recognize this wretched state of affairs and even asserted that the kingdom existed through disorder, "*Nierzadem Rzeczpospolita stoi.*" In order to rescue Poland from certain destruction, swift measures had to be taken to relieve existing conditions. The man who undertook this burden was Skarga. Without flattery but with apostolic freedom he declared to king and nobles the Christian truths and principles and pointed out to the Estates of the Realm

the fruits which their actions would mature. This took place especially at the sessions of the Diet and thus his *Sermons for the Diet* came into being. To them, possibly, he owes his cognomen, Skarga, a word which means "accusation," "complaint."

There are eight of these sermons preserved in writing by Skarga and the question arises. When and where were these really delivered? We learn from the Dominican Birkowski that Skarga preached at eighteen diets, and this assertion gave rise to the belief that the sermons which have come down to us were held at different times and at different diets. In course of time the view prevailed that Skarga delivered all at the "Sejm" of 1592 and it was reserved for later and critical historical investigations to bring scholars to the conviction that they had been held at Warsaw in 1597 in the presence of the king and the assembled Estates. Warsaw was the capital of the Polish kings from 1596 on, and Skarga delivered the sermons in the cathedral church of St. John. For the view last expressed the sermons themselves are evidence. It is easy to refute the argument that he would not have had time enough to deliver them at this diet which lasted from the tenth of February to the twenty-fourth of March. At the opening of the *Sejm* Skarga held his first sermon, the next ones on the following Sundays and on St. Matthias day, the last on the twenty-third of March. In any event the opinion that they were delivered in 1597 is to-day almost universally recognized as historically certain.

Let us now hear what this humble priest and monk announced to these haughty, headstrong, uncontrollable men. Every one of us would think the preacher must have been a good flatterer if he desired to get a hearing from such people, but just the contrary was the fact, he demanded repentance and conversion from king and estates and publicly reproached them with sins committed against God and Fatherland, yes, he even threatened them with the destruction and ruin of their country if they did not improve their conduct. That is the substance of the sermons for the diet. Charles Henry Wachtel, who is well known to the Poles as author and poet, has very cleverly excerpted and arranged their most beautiful and powerful passages. The reader who knows Polish can obtain these selections in the *Jednodniówka*, published on the twenty-ninth of September, 1912, in memory of the three-hundredth anniversary of the day of Skarga's death, a very small number of which may be still procured from the *Dziennik Chicagowski*, or "Polish Daily News." It would be a praiseworthy task for some one to translate

this article of Mr. Wachtel into English. In lieu of it our readers will have a short résumé of the Diet Sermons of Skarga.

As has been stated, Skarga delivered the sermons in 1597 before the session of the Diet which was a complete failure. It was opened on Monday, February 10, with the mass in the cathedral church of St. John at Warsaw. From 1588 on, Skarga had been preaching regularly before each diet and was in this way compelled to be a witness of the ever more and more increasing anarchy in Poland. Voices were heard on various sides saying: "We are headed for ruin!" Even before Skarga there were people who foresaw the danger threatening Poland and directed the attention of the Polish government to this by pamphlets, sermons and speeches. This condition of affairs reached its culmination in 1597 and fixed Skarga's determination to deliver his sermons. Let us make a brief survey of the causes of this growing anarchy.

In all candor we must acknowledge the introduction of the Reformation into Poland as the first cause of confusion. Incessant riots against those of the opposite faith, started by Catholics as well as Protestants, partisan religious writings diffusing mutual hatred, and other reasons made a unified national life simply impossible. Zygmunt did not know how to win the confidence of the dissidents, nor was he esteemed or much of a favorite with the Catholics. The *szlachta*, or nobility, did not like him because of his devotion to alchemy, painting, goldsmithing and lath-turning and passionate fondness for ball playing. The masses disliked his marriage with the Austrian princess. The king's efforts toward absolute rulership deprived him of the sympathies of the party of the chancellor, Jan Zamojski, indubitably one of the greatest politicians and statesmen of Poland. The chancellor did not like the House of Habsburg, and the king based his policy on an alliance with the kaiser. The diets were another source of confusion. The diet was the ruling power. From 1572 on we notice that everything was consistently done to weaken the authority of the diet. The provincial diets, or *Sejmiki*, wished to assume all the powers of government, to have the last word in all affairs of state, and to seize the control of courts, financial administration and even of the army. In 1591 this hangman's work was completed and the death-blow given to the Diet, for after eight weeks the provincial diets were to be held, in the possession of powers, which gave the decrees of the royal diet entirely into the hands of this convention.

It is in order to give a few facts to show how matters went in the royal diets. An electoral reform was proposed in the year

1589, but the proposal was not accepted. In the year 1590 a poll tax was adopted in order to raise money in case of war with the Turks. This law was declared null and void by the provincial diet in Kolo. But later on the worst was yet to come in this whole affair: the royal diet, opened in 1590, confirmed the statutes of the provincial diet at Kolo! Things were no better at the diet of 1592: here it came to open blows between the party of the king and that of the chancellor Jan Zamojski. The king abased himself even to such a degree that he lost all regard in the eyes of the whole *Szlachta*. The "chancellorists" were not even willing to kiss the king's hand! On November 25, 1592, the father of the Polish king died and Zygmunt was compelled to depart for Sweden in order to be crowned there as king of Sweden. The royal diet also had to give its consent to the trip of the king. The Sejm was opened on the fourth of May with a dispute as to who was really marshal (*marszałek*) of the diet. It took more than ten days before they hit upon the "corresponding" person in Danilowicz, a young man who had scarcely left school. Not until the last day was permission granted to the king to proceed on his journey to Sweden. The diet of 1595, where the question of joining the league against the Turks, formed by Emperor Rudolf and other princes, was at issue, also failed of results, for the matter of joining the league was referred to an extraordinary diet. Matters were still better at the diet of 1596, at which we find deputies chosen unlawfully or through violence. *Propter bonum pacis* ("for the sake of peace") these gentlemen were allowed to take part in the sessions of the body which quarreled about trifles during its whole session and left the Sejm without results.

For all these reasons Skarga regarded it as his sacred duty to save his dear country at any price and to warn his erring countrymen of mistakes which were ruining them. Poland was threatened with war by Turks, Wallachians and particularly by the Tartars, the last named sending an embassy to the diet which demanded satisfaction for the injuries and rapine suffered by them at the hands of the Cossacks. Hence the situation of Poland at this time was not at all favorable. At the opening of the diet of 1597 we see Skarga in the pulpit, and the text of his first sermon were the words from the Epistle of St. James i. 5. "Ye have come together here in the name of the Lord," so the preacher declares it to be the purpose of the assembling of the deputies, "to prevent the danger threatening the crown, to support the tottering fabric of the state, to repair injuries, to heal wounds, to join anew what had fallen

apart, and as chiefs of your people, as watchmen of the sleeping, as leaders of the ignorant and beacon of those sitting in the dark, as fathers of simple children, to take counsel for their welfare." In order to perform this office conscientiously, one needs an unusual dose of wisdom, at least in these so difficult times. A multitude of dangers threaten the dear country, there is no unity in the country, no reciprocal love, no trust, envy is everywhere rampant, people cheat each other, there is no lack of troublemakers and grumblers, decency and order are absolutely non-existent, selfishness is the moving spirit of the entire public life, the diets pass their time without results and in addition, the worst thing is the fact that the danger of war with the Tatars and Turks threatens the land. To this disunion of the political nature there has been added as a source of various disorders and distractions, religious discord, which is the source of the decay of kingdoms in accordance with the declaration of the Lord in Luke xi. 17. All these misdeeds are committed under the cloak of noble freedom, appealing to the privileges of the *Szlachta* (the nobility). As the preacher ironically exclaims, "Isn't that a beautiful liberty which is distinguished for obstinacy and immorality, thanks to which, the strong oppress the weaker, transgress and do violence to the laws of God and man, refuse to accept punishment from the king or any other office, and all are without decency and without leaders like the children of Belial!! You know I am speaking only of what all men see." He warns them that they need much wisdom in order to devise the necessary means for the abolishment of these abuses. But there are two kinds of wisdom, one gained by experience and one the gift of God. He demands that those presents shall derive every advantage from homely good sense, and where this is not sufficient, that they shall implore God to reveal his Divine Wisdom.

The subject of the next discourse was love of country. As his text he chose John xv. 12 and xiv. 27, "There is nothing permanent under the sun" (Ecclesiastes ii. 11). "Not alone houses and families pass away, but also kingdoms and monarchies and one people succeeds another. Every people which perishes owes this fate to its political ills, which it did not cure in time. Poland suffers from six such ills, of which unfavorableness to the country (*nieżyczliwość*) is the first. "External dangers such as war and spoliation by hostile neighbors can be easily withstood if the internal ills of the country are cured, for how shall a sick man defend himself if he cannot even stand on his own feet? Therefore before all else heal your sick mother, our dear country!"

In lofty words the preacher declares to his hearers that it is God's will and law to love their country. We shall love our fatherland because we owe to it the greatest blessings of this temporary world. Our country in the full sense of the word is our mother, it has given us all manner of blessings and presents; to it we owe the Catholic faith, the beautiful golden liberty of not having as a people to serve tyrants, property and wealth,—yes all are well-to-do, only our mother alone of all is poor. "O dearest Mother, thy children are in a riot of gluttonous living, putting their property to bad use, it serves them only for sin, immorality, profligacy, vanity! This mother, our country, gave us life in peace, martial glory and the respect of all peoples, our king is honored by embassies from the West and the East.... (in the year 1595 from the Empire, the Papacy, Hungary, Transylvania, Moldavia, and others). What more could our mother do for us? Why then should you love her with all your heart, protect her and be ready in case of need to lose everything in order to keep this dear mother sound and alive? By loving your country you love yourself, by abandoning it you commit treason to yourself. The saints loved their country, of which Moses, Samson, Nehemiah, Zerubbabel, Matathias, Judith and Esther are witnesses. Patriotism was foreign not even to the Gentiles. O, my lords, love your country,.... be not selfish and avaricious, seek not your private comfort as of first importance! Is it not first and foremost avarice which renders all sane and wise counsel actually impossible? And more too, one estate oppresses the other." Skarga concludes his second sermon with an appeal to his hearers to cure this malady and act virtuously.

The subject of the third sermon is the second disease of Poland: domestic disunion, for which he drew his text from the words of the Apostle of the Gentiles in 1 Corinthians i. 10. "Unity and Unanimity is a thing willed by God. To this our Lord and Saviour first joined us through his sacred religion. The same faith, the same sacraments, the offering of the same sacrifice, participation in the same communion of the body and of the blood of the Lord, these are the bonds by which the Lord binds us to a unity of faith. But there are also other bonds of a non-religious nature which bind us into the unity of the same country. The same land, one king, the same laws and diets, the same kingdom, all these are bonds which make a unity of us." Skarga regrets that these means to unanimity are either not used at all, or else perversely for the injury of national unity. This lack of national unity brings countless injuries to the people, makes the rescue of the country absolutely

impossible; the realm must lose its freedom in spite of all diets and all counsels. In prophetic mood Skarga cries out to his hearers: "An enemy neighbor will arise, clinging like a rapid growing vine to your disunion, and he will say, 'Your hearts have become divided, now they shall be destroyed.' He will exploit this moment, so fortunate for him, so unfortunate for you. Why, he who wishes you evil is but waiting for this: 'Aha, aha!' he will say, 'let us now destroy them, ye know their foot hath slipped and they can no longer escape us' (Psalm xxxv. 21 etc.). This strife of yours will bring you into captivity, your liberties here will be lost and become a subject of universal mockery, and it will be as the prophet describes in Isaiah xxiv. 2: 'For ye will all groan in the hands of your enemies with what ye possess, subject to those who hate you.' Lands and principalities which have been united to this realm and have become one body, will secede and must disintegrate, and this, thanks to your discord, and yet your hands might be powerful and strong, but terrible to the enemy. . . . Ye will be like a childless widow; ye rulers of other peoples will be an object of scorn and mockery to your enemies. Ye will lose your language. . . . and your nationality. . . . and like other peoples you will change into a foreign people who hate yourselves. You will also be not only without a sovereign of your own blood and the right to elect such an one, but also without a country and kingdom in the true sense of the word: exiles, everywhere in poverty, despised, poor, vagabonds who will be kicked in those very places where you were formerly honored. How then will you acquire a second country, in which you may enjoy such glory, such wealth, treasures and prosperity? Will a second such mother be born to you? If you lose this mother, then you can think of no other.

"You will serve your enemies in hunger, thirst, nakedness, and all possible privations, they will put a yoke of iron upon your necks, for you have not willingly served your Lord and God when you had everything in abundance as it is said in Deuteronomy xxviii. 48. . . . Your strife and contentiousness will bring you to such losses and curses. War and the robber attacks of your hostile neighbors would not ruin you so soon as your wretched dissensions."

After these truly prophetic words which were fulfilled, point by point, the preacher discusses the causes which produced disunion and contention in Poland. Heresies, contempt of royal power, avarice, arrogance and wealth, and in addition mutual jealousies, all united with hypocrisy and sins, conjured upon Poland her greatest misfortune, namely discord. If Poland is not to cease to exist

as a free country, then all must become better, unity and charity must prevail, all must be in reality one body and one soul, in which the different estates conscientiously perform their patriotic duties.

Skarga regards the Catholic religion as the best support for that unity which is so necessary to the Poles. He attempts to show this in his fourth and fifth sermons. When we read such assertions they seem to us educated in a modern age exaggerated, but when we read Poland's history, we must admit the absolute truth of Skarga's assertion that the Protestant Reformation was a real misfortune for Poland. We will omit the proof of this proposition, for it does not come within the scope of this article.

As a text for the fourth sermon, which was probably held on the day of Saint Matthias, Skarga chooses the words of Exodus xix. 6, "Ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation." He takes the Jewish people as an example. God freed them from the yoke of the Pharaohs, but he put them under the restraint of His own sacred law. On the first tablet were commandments referring to God, and then on the second those which are necessary for the political existence of a people. Consequently the priesthood is the foundation of kingdoms and the king must act in harmony with the priesthood if order and quiet are to rule in the land. Kings are duty bound to defend religion since they receive their power from God through the priest for Christ has installed a royal priesthood in the New Testament. Besides history shows that all kingdoms have been based and built up on religion. So it was in Poland for six hundred years, now, alas, heresies had come and these most threatened the existence of Poland. Only the Catholic religion is capable of guarding realm and people from decay and destruction.

The preacher elaborates this idea in his fifth sermon, citing 1 Samuel xii. 20 and 21, "Serve the Lord with all your heart and run not after vanities which cannot help you." Unity and concord are a great blessing for any state, and it is the Catholic faith which keeps people best in unity and concord. Heretics are deprived of unity in faith and where there is no unity in faith there can be absolutely no question of its presence in political affairs, for in the case of strife between Catholics it is not difficult to restore peace, because they are accustomed to submit to an umpire in such moments, but with non-Catholics there is not merely lack of unity in faith, but in addition no umpire. According to Skarga's conviction, lack of unity in faith makes true friendship impossible, awakens mutual distrust between citizens, and produces barren strife among children of the same people. To speak plainly, heresy causes a

separation of minds and disunion in the realm and renders the rule of justice impossible. Skarga thinks heretics cannot possibly be sincere and virtuous, since false doctrine knows no true virtues, for only the Catholic religion is capable of making out of men good and honorable citizens who love virtue and their country. Catholics are accustomed to obedience, non-Catholics to the assertion of their obstinacy everywhere. Disobedience is something quite peculiar to them. In conclusion the preacher says that God blesses peoples which increase His honor, and the Almighty generally punishes apostasy by the sword of the heathen.

Criticize this reasoning of Skarga as we may, value his arguments as you please, be even outraged by the fanaticism of the preacher, always remembering that the sixteenth century cannot be judged by our standards, one fact stands out clear: these arguments dictated to Skarga his love of God, of his neighbor, of his people and of his country. "Not sophistry, not cunning argumentation, but deep conviction, dictated these words to Skarga," says Prof. Ignatius Chrzanowski of the University of Cracow, on page 60 of the Preface to his edition of the *Sermons for the Diet*, Warsaw, 1903, Gebethner and Wolff.

A vigorous government is the fourth foundation stone of the state. In Skarga's eyes the best of all forms of government is the monarchy, the *absolutum dominium*. To prove this is the purpose of his sixth sermon. "Constitue nobis regem, ut judicet nos, sicut et universae habent nationes," 1 Samuel viii. 5, are the words chosen by Skarga for the text of this sermon. "In every body," as he says, "there are two very important members which give life and strength to it, that is to say, heart and head. So it is also in the state where the hierarchy constitutes the heart of the state, while the king is the head. The weal of the state depends on the soundness of these members. But the natural state of the body shows us that in every body only *one* head rules." From this Skarga deduces the necessity of there being the same order in the state and for that reason a monarchy is the best form of government. We find this form of government among the ancient Jews, for God who is also a monarch in the fullest sense of the word has himself so ordained. Even Christ established the monarchical form of government in his Church. History shows us that monarchies have maintained themselves longest in a political sense, as long as they remained monarchies in a strict sense. In Poland, too, the kings were true monarchs in the beginning, it was the priests who interpreted the law of God to the monarchs and in this way guarded rulers from

abuse of their power. Later the limits of royal power were bounded by statutes and laws in order to render it impossible for the monarch to become a tyrant, and to provide sufficient protection for personal safety. But certain persons have nevertheless abused the liberty belonging to them.

Skarga finds three kinds of liberty good and praiseworthy, first, not to serve the devil; second, to be free from the yoke of heathen rulers; and third, to serve no king who is a tyrant. However there is a fourth liberty which is a product of hell, something absolutely devilish, and this consists in acknowledging no authority at all, in not yielding obedience to a legitimate king, and in wanting to weaken the royal power as far as possible. Many abuses contribute in a high degree to the weakening of the royal power, especially disobedience to king and law, the dishonest administration of royal and national estates. The deputies to the diet do not perform their duties and make it simply impossible for king and senate to realize the best plans, those of advantage to the state. "Just see," the preacher reproaches his listeners, "to what turmoil you have come, thanks to your indecent behavior and almost childish, actually ridiculous conduct, into which you allow yourselves to be plunged at the diets."

Next, Skarga assails the choice of deputies: during the times of election the rich and those possessing sufficient boldness do as they please; certain lords even elect themselves; others manage so they are deputies for life; but many manage to have only their own candidates elected. Matters are not better in the assembly of deputies, where quarrels, contention, screaming, tumult and even recourse to arms obtain to such an extent that one must blush for shame if one should tell it to anybody. "Then too, the election of the various officers of the house of deputies is a regular disgrace. The election of marshal of the diet, (*marszałek Sejmu*), lasts for several days, and as I remember, you once quarreled about it for two weeks and a half." Skarga here alludes to the marshal-election of 1593, in which eighteen days of quarreling were spent. (This was the first diet in which Szczensny Herburt of Dobromil introduced the motion that only those resolutions should be legal for which there was the unanimous vote of all members.) At last they elected Danilowicz, a young man who had but just come from school! The whole tendency of these lords was "to manage everything so that the king should have nothing at all to say, and should only be a spectator of how the estate of nobles (*szlachta*) rule through their deputies." "My lords," admonished Skarga, "make no German

free city of the kingdom of Poland! Make no painted holder of an empty honor, as has been done in Venice, for you have not the sense of the Venetians at all, nor do you remain continuously in one and the same city. . . . In states, where all want to share the government, every good counsel is vain, even diets miss their goal. As an illustration of my assertion, let the last few diets serve, which made it absolutely impossible to help this kingdom in its so great and urgent distress!! What shall be the end of this if the diets waste their time without results? Have you any better means to save our country than through the agency of the diet? If not, then tell me why you use this sole means for your own ruin and make of it an object of ridicule and scorn among all foreign peoples. What is the purpose of meeting if you only accomplish discord, strife and tumult? You are down, lost, if God does not have mercy on you, if he shall not incline your hearts to repentance and so change them that you bear in mind not a riotous and false liberty, but your real welfare, the preservation of your health, and the possession of your houses and estates.”—“Yes, but Poland was strong! Curtain lecture! Good for old women, Jesuitical balderdash, that is of a narrow-minded, fanatical ‘heretic-eater’! Crazy talk!” Such were the thoughts of probably the most of his listeners, and they probably made sport of the figure of the humble preacher of penitence, since Poland of course can not possibly fall because “it is so strong!” But history justified the words of the preacher.

Just laws are the best foundation of every state. But *Vae*, to those, as the prophet Isaiah says, x. 1 and 2, “qui condunt leges iniquas: et scribentes, injustitiam scripserunt: Ut opprimerent in judicio pauperes, et vim facerent causae humilium populi mei.” This was the text chosen to bring home to the consciousness of the diet the injustice of the laws prevalent in Poland. After introductory remarks on the various kinds of laws, such as natural, positive, divinely ordained, and canonical, Skarga attempts to show that the best status in the world is where the monarch promulgates the laws for citizens and realm. Without these written statutes no state can exist. But the executive power requires officials and judges. The laws do absolutely no violence to personal liberty, and they must not, otherwise they would cease to be laws. They indicate the way of justice. A true law must be just, advantageous to all, make upright persons and good citizens of subjects, spread the fear of the Lord and defend and advance the honor of God, the welfare of the state and the people. However, laws need persons whose duty it is to see to their proper observance, for without a proper executive

even the best of laws become a dead letter. The transgressors of the law must be punished.

The fifth malady of Poland results from the injustice of a number of laws and the fact that just laws lack executive officials. These are the reasons for the evil condition of Poland: many and terrible sins are committed purely and simply for the reason that such things can be done in Poland with impunity. The preacher takes under his especial protection the country folk who were bound in serfdom to the lords. "I should now like to touch upon the unjust law which makes veritable slaves of poor farmers and free men, Poles, believing Christians and poor subjects, as if these unfortunate people were prisoners of war or purchased *mancipia*. Their masters do what they please with them and with their property and life, and no forum troubles itself about the injustice done these people." Skarga cites the first Christians who restored real slaves to freedom. "We should be ashamed of such a law in sight of the whole Christian world. How shall we be able to appear in the presence of God with our souls stained by such tyrannical injustice? How can we help fearing that the heathen will treat us similarly in punishment for our sins?" Wonderful words from the lips of one living in the sixteenth century, worthy of a Skarga! Professor Chrzanowski is entirely right in adjudging this one of the most beautiful and wisest passages (p. 69 of the preface of his edition of the Diet Sermons).

It would take us too far to describe all that was done in the beginning of the seventeenth century with those who were bound to the land, and how these honest and industrious people were exploited. Skarga was mistaken in asserting that such things could only take place in Poland, for it is a well-known fact that the matter of "manorial bondage" in neighboring Germany was in no wise better. Without fear he urges his hearers, "the headstrong, earthly 'Gods,'" to proceed to an immediate reform of the law, "so that instead of bringing advantage the laws may not cause great damage." God himself has changed his laws when it was necessary, as can be proven by the Old Testament. Besides there is no tyrant as cruel as a bad law and amelioration is the most sacred duty of every intelligent being, since only the fool voluntarily remains in filth and perishes of his own fault.

The eighth and last sermon, delivered on the twenty-third of March, is the most wonderful and was especially distinguished for its prophetic character. It is a recapitulation of the sins treated in the previous discourses, followed by a prophecy of the future fate

of Poland with a demand for repentance. There is not the slightest doubt that other prominent men foresaw the downfall of Poland. Krzycki, Modrzewski, Kromer, Stanislaus Gorski, Solikowski, Rej and a host of others repeated in other words and in other form the words of Orzechowski: "If you were to cut my heart to pieces, you would find in it only the words: we are ruined, we perish." The greatest Catholic and Protestant preachers of that century, men like Clement Ramult, Malcher of Moscisk, Luke of Lemberg, Gregory of Tarnowiec and also the poet John Kochanowski; two of the most famous preachers of Poland, Sokolowski and Powodowski, preached along these lines before Skarga, but neither of these latter, if I may express my personal conviction, knew how to bring home to his hearers that love of God and love of country belong together and constitute two essential components of the law of God as given to us. Professor Chrzanowski's statement on page 107 rightly cites with approval the assertion of Mickiewicz that Skarga was the creator of political pulpit eloquence, of which the sermons of Sokolowski and Powodowski were the forerunners.

It is certainly no exaggeration, nor overestimate, to regard the eighth sermon as unique of its kind. We feel tempted to translate the whole of it so that the reader may gain a clear conception of the powerful, exalted, patriotic and prophetic figure of the man Skarga, who was absolute devotion to God's will. Citing the apocryphal Ecclesiasticus x. 8: "The kingly power is transferred from people to people on account of unjust doings, injuries, insults and various deceits," he treats the sixth malady of Poland, namely public sins, "which cry aloud to God for vengeance," which so stain the earth that it wants to devour the malefactors as the Prophet Isaiah says: "The earth is infected from its inhabitants, because they have broken the laws, upset right, cast to the winds the eternal covenant; on account of this a curse will devour the earth. . . ." (Isaiah v. 5, 6). Continuing with the quotation of verses 8-10 of chapter xxiv, Skarga thunders, "The bad part of the whole business is that such sins are allowed to go unpunished in Poland, therefore, I, your unworthy and humble prophet, will to-day express my sentiments to you roundly on the wrongs, deceits, calumnies and treason in which this kingdom and its citizens have involved themselves, unwilling to abandon them for a better life: sins for which the earth will throw you out and God will people it with different people. . . . He will give it to your enemies, but he will destroy you and your sons, *if you do not become better*, exactly as he did with the seven Canaanitish tribes in the Holy Land" (Deuteronomy ix).

After this brief introduction the preacher assumes the role of the public conscience of the Polish people and enumerates all the crimes committed in the land with impunity and which call to God for vengeance. Among these he denounces the blasphemies of the New Arians and Anti-Trinitarians; the plundering of churches and church property; the entire paralysis of the ecclesiastical execution of the sentences of ecclesiastical courts; the postponement of judgment in cases at law which are subject to the jurisdiction of the Diet, where the oppressed poor, who appealed to the Diet, had to wait years for a verdict and most often lost all their property; unpunished murder and manslaughter; the incessant sufferings of hounded subjects, who are often robbed of all their property by furious landlords who kill their miserable tenants at will and go scot-free in absolute tranquility; conscienceless usury; avarice; luxury and abuse of wealth; the absolute disappearance of mercy and charity, involving the lavish use of money for everything else, but none for national expenses; the unpunished theft of state property and even of doweries and inheritances from orphans, by guardians; and even then Skarga is not through with his catalog.

After this so scathing indictment Skarga laments: "What shall I do with you, wretched kingdom?" But he was too keen a student of men, not to know that the accuser cannot be the judge at the same time, so he sums up the various counts of his indictment in the single sentence, "Who of those observing you . . . could dream of the sacrileges and sins rampant in this land?" and leaves the verdict to the prophet. Full of grief he cries: "Oh, if I were Isaiah, I would go about barefoot and half naked (Isaiah xx. 2) and call to you rakes and lascivious women, to you transgressors of the law of God, 'Thus they will plunder you and you will display your naked calves. . . . (Isaiah xx. 4), when God, the Lord, shall lead enemies down upon your heads and hand you over to this great disgrace' (Isaiah xx. 2-4). Therefore shall this iniquity be to you as a breach that falleth and is found wanting in a high wall. For the destruction thereof shall come of a sudden, when it is not looked for, and it 'shall be broken small, as the potter's vessel is broken all to pieces with mighty breakings: and then there shall not a sherd be found of the pieces thereof, wherein a little fire may be carried, or a little water be drawn out of the pit' (Isaiah xxx. 13, 14). The breaches in the wall of our country are continuously increasing and you answer, 'Nonsense, never mind; Poland exists just on account of anarchy.' And just at the moment when you do not suspect it, she will fall and crush you all."

"Oh, were I Jeremiah, I should bind my feet with bonds and put chains about my neck and proclaim to you sinners, as he proclaimed: Thus they will bind your masters and drive them before them like rams to foreign climes (Jeremiah xxvii, Lamentations 1). I should like to show you a tattered and filthy garment, then I would shake it and when it had become dust I would say to you: so shall your glory depart, dissolve into nothing but dust and with it all your property and riches (Jeremiah xiii). And I would take a 'potter's earthen bottle' (Jeremiah xix. 1) and after I had called you all together I would hurl the bottle against the wall (xix. 10) and say: 'Even so will I break you, thus saith the Lord of hosts; as the potter's vessel is broken which cannot be made whole again' xix. 11)...."

"Oh, were I Ezekiel, I would shear hair and beard and then divide my hair in three. One part I would burn, the second chop fine, but I would scatter the third to the winds (Ezekiel v. 1 and 2), and then declare to you: 'a third part of you shall be consumed with famine, and a third part of you shall fall by the sword; and a third part of you will I scatter into every region of the world' (Ezekiel v. 12). 'And I shall go out of my house neither by the door, nor by the windows, but I will dig through the wall (xii. 5) and really fleeing, I would call to you: so shall it be with you, no castles nor fortresses will have power to protect you, all your enemies will crush you and destroy you.'"

"O were I Jonah, I would go about all the streets and cry out to you: 'Yet forty days, and Nineveh that is your kingdom shall be destroyed' Jonah iii. 4). Have a fear of these warnings! I have, to be sure, not received a divine revelation foretelling your destruction, but I am sent with an errand from God to lay bare to you your misdeeds and to proclaim to you the penalty awaiting you in case you do not repent. Before their fall all kingdoms have had such divine envoys and preachers, who publicly reproached them with their sins and warned them of approaching destruction. So with the Jews before the Babylonian captivity, of which the Holy Scriptures tell us, 'and the Lord, the God of the fathers sent to them, by the hand of his messengers, rising early, and daily admonishing them; because he spared his people and his dwelling place. 'But they mocked the messengers of God [saying, you have been threatening us for so long a time and up to now, thank God, nothing has been fulfilled!] and despised his words, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, and there was no remedy.' (2 Chronicles xxxvi. 15 and 16.)"

Skarga distinguishes three kinds of divine warnings. The first is attended by no consequences if people do penance for their sins. The second have serious consequences only for the posterity of those sinning. The third cannot be evaded and are soon carried out because although God foresees the deeds of men bring them certain destruction, He will not change the course of events since He is unwilling to violate human freedom. Thus Jeremiah revealed to his people God's decree for Israel's certain destruction (Jeremiah xviii. 11). "I do not know, my Lords, with what sort of threats God has sent me to you, but this much I do know, that the threatened consequences of one of the three kinds of warnings will certainly strike you. My dear brethren, I wish the first for my people and for my dear country, so that the God of warning may also give you the grace of conversion. . . . so that we may not perish, but that terrified by these warnings we may strive in all our actions and thoughts to be reconciled to God."

The preacher now summons his hearers to penance since God will certainly omit the threatened punishment if we repent. "Therefore let us do penance and return to our Lord and God, and He will heal us. He will wound our hearts with genuine repentance for our sins and heal our wounds as the prophet says: 'He will revive us after two days, on the third day he will raise us up' (Hosea vi. 2). Let the first day be devoted to repentance and confession, the second be a day of improvement and reparation which are essential components of every true penitence, but the third shall be our justification. Who is a God like Thee who takest away iniquity and passest by the sin of the remnant of Thy Christian peoples in the North and of Thy inheritance? Thou wilt send Thy fury in no more because Thou delightest in mercy. Thou wilt turn again and hast mercy on us. Thou wilt put away our iniquities and Thou wilt cast all our sins into the bottom of the sea. Thou wilt perform the truth to us for the sake of Thy beloved Son, Jesus Christ, and His innocently shed blood and His death, who rules with Thee and with Thy Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever, amen."

And what was the result, what were the fruits of all this so wondrously beautiful, true and extraordinary eloquence, which gripped hearts by powerful words, of these sermons so distinguished for lofty thought and enthusiasm? On Monday, the twenty-fourth of March, the day immediately following the eighth sermon, the Diet had to be dissolved without results. For fifteen years Skarga continued to warn the estates. In the year 1610 he repeatedly urged

everybody to do penance by his tract, composed in Polish, *Summons of the Inhabitants of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania to Repentance*. In 1611 he retired to the Jesuit Monastery at Cracow where he died in the odor of sanctity on September 27, 1612, and his body was consigned to rest in the church of St. Peter. His voice died away as of one calling in the wilderness. His voice was heard, but to no avail, people did not repent, which must have caused acute pain to the heart of one who loved God, his country and his people with all his heart. To view deeds which are certain to dig a sure grave for the fatherland cannot but be a never failing source of inexhaustible sorrow for such a soul.

Not only that, but he had to hear that it was not fitting for a priest to interfere in politics. "Yes," Skarga would answer, "he not only interferes, but it is even his duty to interfere, not in financial matters but in such a way that their sins do not ruin the people and that their souls may not perish. Do we not hear the words of God speaking to Jeremiah: 'Lo, I have set thee this day over the nations and over kingdoms, to root up and to waste and to destroy and to pull down [sins and wickedness] and to build up and to plant' reverence, sacred virtues, good works and repentance, so that our kingdom may escape the wrath of God and our politics may not destroy us" (*Invitatio ad poenitentiam*, page 14 and Jeremiah i. 10).

The preface to the first volume of his sermons bears the completest witness to how and what Skarga suffered from those criticisms. He wrote this preface on the first of August 1595, on the festival of "Saint Peter in Chains," addressing Him whose servant he was: "O Lord and Redeemer, I have proclaimed thy message to the Royal Council, the Senate. . . . to the nobility. . . . and to the royal and provincial diets. I have adjured them to yield a common tender and faithful love to their two mothers, the Church of God and their country, lest they perish from their very liberties and conjure down upon their heads the yoke of foreign rulers. Lord, I have urged them to make better laws and to procure a speedier dispensation of justice against horrible sins. . . . I have threatened them with thy anger, O Lord, just as thou hast commanded, with ruin and destruction at the hands of the enemy, with the desolation and surrender of this land to their enemies. I have shown to them the sword of the heathen hanging over their heads . . . so that they may remember their sins which will surely not be passed by unpunished, and rise above them. What more could I do for them, O Lord? Thou knowest I only desired their conver-

sion and salvation. I would gladly sacrifice everything if their welfare and that of the country needed it. . . . I know not how it is that thy message and my implorations are of no avail; rarely does any one repent: heavy labor has already tired the ox, and his labor has not even left a trace in a good harvest. The clever fishes escape thy nets and are not caught. . . . Who then is to blame? for thy judgments, O Lord, are terrible. I perhaps? Am I destroying thy harvest by my fear, despondency, negligence and lack of wisdom? . . . But, O Lord, receive my excuses, the explanations of thy messenger. . . . Pardon me and do not punish, O Lord, I did admonish them and make all manner of daily sacrifices for them; my prayers and implorations in their behalf never ceased. Therefore, O Lord, I beg thee, do not sit in judgment upon me and upon them who hear me. . . . bring it to pass that we walk in thy law and never cease to be thy people that thou remainest our GOD for ever."

History relates how all these prophecies were fulfilled. It was truly not Skarga's fault that his voice was not heard. But he has even to-day a message for all peoples, and to the governments of the present he conveys the lesson that every people or every power that from blind confidence in its strength believes itself given permission to do what it pleases, is headed for ruin as certainly as the former glorious Polish kingdom. As a penalty for decadence Greece fell; for want of self-control and order, Poland; and ancient Rome fell as the result of a policy of ruthless aggression, as Hermann Schell aptly puts it on page 114 of *Christus*, Mainz 1916, "she fell from sheer failure of her powers. It could not be otherwise because all force directed against the outer world produces the ultimate fruit of the despotism of an overman and debases the masses to spiritual slavery. The energy of a ruthless culture of personality destroys its subject, of that, Rome, once mistress of the world, is an example. . . . The cult of selfishness," he says a few lines before, "is the cult of death, the nursing of decay. . . . It is true the civilization of the world flatters the strong and the arrogant, but it calls into being only to destroy from within as well as from without." The wages of sin are always death. Charity, justice, morality and their observance are still to-day the source and the development of an eternal life, of the kingdom of God here on earth.

While Skarga foretold the fall of Poland, he also foresaw the political regeneration of this so glorious realm. The people of Poland really suffered much and terribly after its fall, but it also became thereby morally and religiously, as well as politically and

nationally, strengthened. Therefore let us hope that the prophet Hosea's third day is about to dawn for a new Poland. May Skarga's prophecy be fulfilled and a future Poland become a jewel of West-European culture and civilization. May this future Poland recognize most completely its debt to its Savonarola and, by everywhere forming strong personalities and true spiritual values, produce and increase true life. If this takes place, then Skarga has not lived in vain, and his lofty spirit will be in future the warning voice, the teacher and guardian of his people, which he loved so dearly and for which he would have been so willing a sacrifice. A figure like that of Skarga, Father Peter Semenenko C. R. (1813 to 1886), one of the greatest Polish minds and thinkers, calls to his countrymen, "O Polish People, you have a message from God, God tells you it himself! Do not fear, you do live! . . . Be but true to God and you shall live. Do not believe your own fears when it shall appear that you are dying,—no, you are living, you shall live, yes, you must live! You are immortal since you have a message from God. Just be true, and the truer you are the more quickly will that come to pass which has been told to you." (Page 99 of his Polish work on *God's Ideal in Polish History*, Cracow, 1892.) To which we shall add in conclusion his words from page 32: "For the Lord hath graced Poland with a wreath and aureole of sacrifice and martyrdom—and thus consecrated and chosen her as his servant."

HEBREW EDUCATION IN SCHOOL AND SOCIETY.

BY FLETCHER H. SWIFT.

II. WOMAN AND THE EDUCATION OF GIRLS.

"House and riches are an inheritance from fathers:
But a prudent wife is from Jehovah."—Proverbs xix, 14.

"A worthy woman who can find?
For her price is far above rubies."—Proverbs xxxi. 10.

THAT woman held a relatively higher status in earlier than in later times seems evident from the custom, then in vogue, of tracing the descent through the mother⁸⁵ and from the part played in public affairs by such women as Deborah,⁸⁶ Jael,⁸⁷ by the "wise woman"

⁸⁵ The descent of Esau's children is traced through their mothers, Gen. xxxvi. Abraham married Sarah the daughter of his father, but not of his mother.

⁸⁶ Judges iv and v.

⁸⁷ Judges iv. 18-24.