

against your food blockade of Germany. In us there is no wile or guile. May we say that we expect to find none in you? We have taken your professions that you are fighting for righteousness and peace at face value, without any discount. May we say that we expect those professions to be lived up to?

"And may we add further, that we realize that words are slippery things, and may mean different things on different sides of the Atlantic? We do not want to destroy the future to avenge the past. A peace without victory may no longer be possible, but we shall certainly want to see a peace without punishment. We want to teach Germany a lesson, we do not want to reduce her to impotence. A minimum of common sense would tell us that a despoiled and ravaged Germany would simply make Central Europe the breeding ground for new wars. We see no more reason to give free play to French hate than to any other variety of it. Hate cannot insure peace; only magnanimity can. We can shoot guns, big and little, but we do not expect to find any blood on the nails of our soldiers' boots.

"In that way and for these purposes, our English friends, America makes war. And for these purposes she will make her future wars."

SYMPATHY FOR POLAND IN GERMAN POETRY.

BY MAXIMILIAN J. RUDWIN.

SUFFERING Poland has never failed to arouse the sympathy of the poets of Germany. The critical events in the history of this martyr of Europe have always been accompanied by expressions of deep compassion on the part of the literary men in Germany.¹ The first partition of Poland touched the heart-strings of the Swabian bard Christian Daniel Schubart (1739-1791), and this unfortunate poet, who afterward became the innocent victim of the tyrannical duke of Würtemberg,¹ has the credit of having written the first German poem which gives expression to the grief of Poland.²

¹ On the life and imprisonment of Schubart see the article in the London journal *Leisure Hour*, 1854, III, 667f, and 685f.

² *Vide* Robert Franz Arnold, *Geschichte der deutschen Polenliteratur*, Vol. I: *Von den Anfängen bis 1800*. Halle, 1900. The appearance of the second volume, which is to bring the subject down to date, has been unduly delayed. Professor Arnold has shown in the first volume such an intimate acquaintance with the subject that the continuation of his scholarly work is being eagerly expected even on this side of the Atlantic.

The following rhymeless verses of Schubart, which were published in his journal *Deutsche Chronik* for 1774, are filled with that mighty passion which lends such beauty to his lyrical rhapsody "The Wandering Jew."

"Da irrt Polonia
 Mit fliegendem Haare,
 Mit jammerbleichem Gesichte,
 Ringt über dem Haupte
 Die Hände. Grosse Tropfen
 Hangen am Auge, das bricht
 Und langsam starrt—und stirbt,
 Doch sie stirbt nicht!
 Versagt ist ihr des Todes Trost.
 Sie fährt auf, schwankt und sinkt
 Nieder an der Felsenwand
 Und schreit: ach, meine Kinder,
 Wo seid ihr? Ausgesät
 In fremdes Volk und hilflos.
 O Sobieski, grosser Sohn,
 Wo bist du? schau herab!
 Hörst du nicht am Arme
 Deines tapfern Volks die Fessel ras-
 seln?
 Siehst du nicht den Räuber
 Aus Wäldern stürzen
 Und dein Land verwüsten?—
 Ach, der Greis versammelt seine Kin-
 der,
 Seine Enkel um sich her
 Und zückt das Schwert und würgt sie
 nieder.
 Sterbt! so spricht er wütend,
 Was ist ein Leben ohne Freiheit?
 Ha, er rollt die offenen Augen,
 Durchstosst die Brust und sinkt
 Auf seiner Kinder Leichen nieder.—
 So klagt Polonia."

"Behold Polonia,
 With flowing hair,
 And mournful brow,
 Wringing her hands above her head.
 Her eye full of big tears
 Grows dim
 In staring vacancy—and dies.
 Yet she dies not!
 Denied to her is death's comfort.
 She starts and sways, she sinks
 Down at the foot of the rock
 Crying, O my children
 Where are ye? Scattered
 Over foreign lands and helpless.
 O Sobieski, great son of mine,
 Where art thou? Look down!
 Hearest thou not fetters clanking
 On thy brave peoples' arms?
 Seest thou not the robber
 Rush from the woods
 And devastate thy fields?
 Alas! the grandsire gathers around
 him
 Children and grand-children,
 And draws his sword to slay them.
 'Die,' he says in rage,
 'What without liberty is life?'
 Rolling his eyes
 He pierces his breast and sinks down
 Upon the dead bodies of his children.—
 This is Polonia's plaint."

The Polish insurrection of 1794 under the leadership of Tadeusz Kosciuszko found an inspired singer in the Königsberg poet Zacharias Werner (1768-1823), who was living at that time as a Prussian official in Poland. In the three poems which he devoted to the Polish nation ("Battle Song of the Poles under Kosciuszko," "Fragment," and "To a people") he gives poetical expression to his deep sympathy with Poland in her death-struggle with her mightier neighbors and hails the legions who were fighting under Kosciuszko as the champions of liberty for all Europe. In the last strophe of his poem "To a People," which was written before the

fall of Warsaw, this sanguine poet gives voice to his hope for the speedy restoration of Poland:

“Dir—zwar im Meer ein Tropfen nur—
 O Volk! wird auch die Stunde schallen,
 Und—sollt’st du auch noch einmal fallen,
 Verlöschen deines Namens Spur—
 Der Aufwecker lebt und wacht,
 Und eh’ im grossen Strom der Zeiten
 Ein Lustrum wird vorüber gleiten,
 Ist alles gleich gemacht!”

German sympathy for Poland reached its zenith, however, on the occasion of the Warsaw revolt of 1830. The first attempt of the Polish nation to throw off the foreign yoke awakened great enthusiasm in all German states. The German people had a few years before responded generously to the struggle of the Greeks for independence. But their response to the struggle of the Poles for freedom was more spontaneous and general. “The Germans,” says Brandes,³ “then possessed the quality, which Bismarck afterward laid to their charge as a fault—a fault of which he has cured them—of being almost more interested in the welfare of other nations than in their own, to the extent even of desiring that welfare when it could only be purchased by some surrender of power on the part of Germany.”

But the emotionally sympathetic attitude of the Germans toward the struggle of the Poles for national independence was not, as Brandes would have us believe, altogether due to altruistic motives. The Germans sympathized so strongly with the Poles in their fight against Russian despotism because they realized that the Poles were fighting not only for themselves, but for the whole of Europe. The Polish rebellion of 1830 was to decide whether absolutism as dictated by Nicholas I in St. Petersburg and by Metternich in Vienna or national and constitutional liberty were to prevail in all the countries of Europe. The young men in Germany, who were chafing under the heavy weight of spiritual and political reaction, which had its center in Austria and was spreading over all the German countries,⁴ saw in the fight of the Poles for liberty their own fight. What wonder if they responded to every heart-throb of the champions of liberty across the Vistula.

³ Georg Brandes, *Main Currents in Nineteenth Century Literature*, Vol. VI, p. 84. 6 vols., London, 1901-5.

⁴ For a vivid picture of the vicious system which dated from the congress of Vienna and succeeded in ruling Europe for more than thirty years see Karl Biedermann, *Fünfundzwanzig Jahre deutscher Geschichte*, etc., (1815-1840), 2 vols., Breslau, 1889.

Naturally enough those men who suffered most from the tyranny of the literary police, from the caprice of an ignorant censor, those men who were the greatest victims of the bloodhounds of a reactionary morality, had the most passionate enthusiasm for the Polish cause and showed the most intense sympathy with the Polish rebels. Platen and Lenau, Börne and Heine were for this reason the strongest advocates in Germany of Poland's case for independence. After the failure of the Polish revolution Platen and Lenau turned their backs upon their country, which now seemed to be drifting more and more toward Russian despotism. Platen died a few years later in voluntary exile in Sicily, and Lenau, who had hoped to find in the free republic across the Atlantic the freedom which through the suppression of the Polish revolution had been dealt such a deadly blow in Europe, ended upon his return to Germany in an insane asylum. Börne and Heine did not even wait to see the effect of the Polish revolution on Germany. They hurried soon after the Paris revolution to France "in order," as Heine expressed himself, "to breathe fresh air." But they took their sympathy for Poland with them. Even in Paris they feverishly followed every movement of the combatants in Warsaw. In his introduction to Kahldorf's book on the aristocracy⁵ Heinrich Heine writes in 1831 as follows: "I feel while I am writing as if the blood shed at Warsaw were gushing upon my paper, and as if the shouts of joy of the Berlin officers and diplomatists were ringing in my ears."

Neither did Ludwig Börne leave his interest in the Polish uprising in the *Judengasse* of Frankfort. He trembled in Paris for the fate of the Polish rebels in Warsaw. Although at first very optimistic in regard to the outcome of the Polish revolution, he finally came in his "Letters from Paris" to the conclusion that "not even the wisdom of God, nothing but the stupidity of the devil can save Poland now" (March 5, 1831). Sympathy with Poland, indeed, had a most far-reaching effect upon Börne.⁶ It determined

⁵ *Kahldorf über den Adel, in Briefen an den Grafen M. von Moltke*. Edited by Heinrich Heine. Nuremberg, 1831. Heine's introduction to this book is also to be found in any complete edition of the poet's works. Kahldorf is a pseudonym for R. Wesselhoef.

⁶ How the Polish rebellion absorbed the attention of the liberal element in Germany can also be seen from the words of Frau Jeanette Wohl: "The Polish Scythemen, the liberty of Poland—nothing else is worthy to be mentioned with this." (*Briefe der Frau Jeanette Strauss-Wohl an Börne*, edited by E. Mentzel, Berlin, 1907.) These words were directed at her august correspondent as a reproach for being able to write of the Italian opera in Paris at a time when the life of the Polish nation was hanging in the balance.

not only his political but also his religious views. Though a convert to Lutheran Protestantism in 1818, Börne began after the Polish rebellion, especially when he came under the influence of Lamennais, to incline more and more toward Catholicism. To Börne, who thus came from Judaism by way of Protestantism to Catholicism, Christianity, especially in its Catholic form, was the religion of humanity, of liberty, and in the ardent love of the Poles for liberty he saw a proof of the liberalizing power of Catholicism. "The only nation of the North," Börne writes,⁷ "that for three hundred years has not ceased to make a stand for liberty is Poland; and Poland remained Catholic." It was his bond of union with the Poles, the love of liberty which he had in common with them, that won Börne over finally to Catholicism.

National sympathy for Poland during the revolt of 1830 found its most beautiful expression, however, in the German poetry of that time. Almost all the contemporary German poets struck a note of sympathy for the Poles. The *Polenlieder* (Songs of Poland) form a not inconsiderable part of the poetry of Germany for about a quarter of a century following the Polish uprising. August Count von Platen (1796-1835) and Karl von Holtei (1797-1880), Heinrich Heine (1797-1856) and Karl Immermann (1796-1840), Nikolaus Lenau (Franz Nicolaus Niembsch Edler von Strehlenau, 1802-1850) and Anastasius Grün (Anton Alexander Count von Auersperg, 1806-1876), Julius Mosen (1803-1867) and Friedrich Heibel (1813-1863), Moritz Hartmann (1821-1879) and Ferdinand Gregorovius (1821-1891), Ferdinand Freiligrath (1810-1876) and Gustav Pfizer (1807-1890), J. Chr. Biernatzki (1795-1840) and Wilhelm Zimmermann (1807-1878), Ernst O. Ortlepp (1800-1864) and K. Herloszsohn (1804-1849), Otto von Wenckstern (1819-1869) and Friedrich Ruperti (1805-1867), these and many others pressed their muse into the service of the Polish rebellion.⁸ They wrote poems on the Poles, sang of their successes and failures, victories and defeats, and when all was over aroused the sympathy of the German people for the plight of the unfortunate refugees.

It seems strange at first that the name of the greatest poetical

⁷ Quoted in Brandes, *Main Currents in Nineteenth Century Literature*, VI, 97.

⁸ A collection of poems on Poland in the German language (*Polenlieder deutscher Dichter*) is being prepared by S. Leonhard. The first volume, the only one so far in print, which has the subtitle *Der Novemberaufstand in den Polenliedern deutscher Dichter* (Cracow, 1911) does not contain all poems written by German poets on the occasion of the Warsaw revolt of November, 1830. No mention is made in this volume, for instance, of the *Polen- und Magyarenlieder* of Ferdinand Gregorovius (Königsberg, 1849).

genius of Germany is not found among those who gave voice to the national German feeling of love and sympathy for the Polish nation. But one must not judge from Goethe's silence that his heart-strings were not touched at all with admiration for the heroic struggle of the Polish people for independence.⁹ It was the futility of this attempt, which the Olympian foresaw, that prevented him from giving expression to his feeling of sympathy. Goethe believed that the Poles were incapable of self-government because of certain national characteristics, and only on this ground did he defend Prussia's participation in the dismemberment of Poland.¹⁰ Goethe was, however, deeply interested in Polish history and literature.¹¹ He himself had known many prominent Poles, among them Prince Radziwill, who composed the music for his "Faust," and the Polish poet Mickiewicz, and only four months before his death Goethe received in audience the poet Wincenty Pol, who had taken part in the Polish revolt. Goethe even had the opportunity of knowing a part of Poland from personal experience. In the year 1790 in the company of the Prince of Weimar he went by way of Breslau and Cracow to the salt-pits of Wieliczka. Immediately before his arrival in the Jagiellonian city Goethe wrote the following poem, which, to judge from its tone of deep sorrow, would almost seem to express the grief of the Polish patriots:

"Ach, wir sind zur Qual geboren,
Sagt ihr unter Tränen wert,
Erst in dem was wir verloren,
Dann in dem was wir begehrt."

Germany's songs of Poland (*Polenlieder*) are on the whole elegiac in tone. A jubilant note is struck, however, in those poems written in the early phase of the rebellion under the influence of the glad tidings of the victory of the Polish white eagle. Pfizer's *Siegesgruss* was written in the first flush of jubilant joy over the capture of Warsaw by the rebels. The first and last stanzas of this song of victory run as follows:

"Frohlockt, ihr Berge! jauchzt, ihr Hügel!
Der weisse Adler spannt die Flügel
Aus über ein erlöstes Land;

⁹ For Goethe's attitude to the Polish question the reader is referred to the following two articles: "Goethe und die Polenfrage" in *Deutsche Erde*, 1908, VI, No. 5, and B. Merwin, "Goethes und Hebbels Beziehungen zu Polen" in *Oesterreichische Rundschau*, 1913, XXXV, pp. 154-158.

¹⁰ Cf. *Goethes Gespräche*, edited by Biedermann, IV, 425 (Jan. 1, 1832), 5 vols. Leipsic, 1909-1911.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, IV, 145, 267-268.

Dass er von Staub und Blut und Asche
Den Glanz der Flügel rein sich wasche,
Enteilt er zum Meeresstrand.

.....

“Und durch Europa hallt es wieder,
Und tausend sinken betend nieder,
Und dankend faltet sich die Hand.—
Frohlockt, ihr Berge! jauchzt, ihr Hügel!
Der weisse Adler spannt die Flügel
Aus über ein erlöstes Land.”

When all hope for Poland's victory was lost, the *Polenlieder* also took on a tone of deep wrath and indignation against a world which allowed such crimes against humanity. But the most pathetic and the most beautiful of the songs of Poland are those inspired by sympathy with the Polish fugitives, who, after the crushing defeat of the Polish army, fled in great numbers across the border. One recalls Lenau's "Polish Fugitive," and who does not know Julius Mosen's ballad "The Ten Last Men of the Fourth Regiment," which is still so often on the lips of the youth in Germany:

“In Warschau schwuren Tausend auf den Knien:
Kein Schuss im heil'gen Kampfe sei getan!
Tambour, schlag an! Zum Blachfeld lass uns ziehen!
Wir greifen nur mit Bajonetten an!
Und ewig kennt das Vaterland und nennt
Mit stillem Schmerz sein viertes Regiment!

.....

“Und ob viel wackre Männerherzen brachen,
Doch griffen wir mit Bajonetten an,
Und ob wir auch dem Schicksal unterlagen,
Doch keiner hatte einen Schuss getan!
Wo blutigrot zum Meer die Weichsel rennt,
Dort blutete das vierte Regiment!

.....

“Von Polen her im Nebelgrauen rücken
Zehn Grenadiere in das Preussenland
Mit düsterm Schweigen, gramumwölkten Blicken;
Ein 'Wer da?' schallt; sie stehen festgebannt,
Und einer spricht: 'Vom Vaterland getrennt,
Die letzten zehn vom vierten Regiment!'”

The laurel for the best *Polenlieder* is due, however, to August Count von Platen. Platen was the first German poet who responded to Poland's call in her hour of greatest need. The revolt of Warsaw of November 29, 1830, was followed on December 11 by his

Russophobic poem "The Realm of Spirits" with its Dantesque *tersa-rima*, in which he pours out his ire on the autocrat of Russia. The first of his *Polenlieder* proper was written on February 3, 1831, and the last, his "Epilog," in 1833 when in deep wrath he turned his back upon his fatherland. It ends in the bitter words:

"Du weisst es längst, man kann hienieden
Nichts Schlecht' res als ein Deutscher sein."

These poems of his, however, were not published until four years after his death, and because of the rigorous censorship in Germany they appeared in Strassburg, which at that time belonged to France. His sympathy and love for the Polish people in its heroic fight for independence is also attested by a number of other writings in prose and verse which appeared during his life. He also championed the Polish cause in a number of odes and other poems of a general political character, several epigrams and satirical verses, and, in prose, in his "Correspondence between a Berliner and a German," in his essay "Legitimacy" (written in the form of a letter to the Czar) and finally in his satirical "Catalog of 1833" (*Messkatalog*).

Platen's *Polenlieder* are proud songs of liberty, filled with a passionate hatred of despotism, and this fire of his wrath against oppression of any sort, far from being quenched by the crushing defeat of the Poles, burst out into greater flame against an age which did not respond to the appeal of the Polish nation for protection against its murderers. In his wild excitement over the fate of the Poles Platen had in vain addressed a poem to the crown prince of Prussia, imploring him to come to the aid of languishing Poland, which was stretching out her hand to Europe praying for help. (See his poem "To a German Prince.")

It does not detract from the value of Platen's poems that they were inspired more by love of humanity than by any understanding of political matters. Platen was more of an enthusiast than a thinker, more of a visionary than a statesman.

His most powerful *Polenlied* is perhaps the one which bears as title the quotation from Horace, *Eamus Omnis Execrata Civitas*: it begins with these stanzas:

<p>"O kommt im Verein, Ihr Männer, o kommt! Vernehmt, was allein Den Geächteten frommt!</p>	<p>"Zieht aus von dem Land Der Geburt, zieht aus Und schleudert den Brand In das eigene Haus!"</p>
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Platen's mantle fell on the shoulders of Moritz Hartmann, a

man worthy indeed to be ranked among the greatest champions of liberty in Europe. His sympathy with the Slavs under Austrian rule, his championship of their rights, finally brought him banishment at the hands of Metternich's henchmen. Though born in Bohemia of German-Jewish parents, he felt for the Poles as if he were a Pole himself. Through his love for a Polish woman he became in his heart her countryman. His farewell poem to her, "To C. . . . a," is one of the most beautiful poems that sympathy with Poland has produced in German literature. The first and last verses read as follows:

"Und kann bei uns dich nichts mehr halten,
 Und zieht's dich fort ins Vaterland,
 So lebe wohl, und möge walten
 Ob deinem Haupte Gottes Hand;
 Gott schütze dich
 In Polen, dem traurigen Lande!

.....

"Stieg' auf der Brand des heil'gen Krieges.
 Dir folgt' ich nach, mein teurer Stern!
 Von dir geweiht zur Kraft des Sieges,
 O, wie verblutet' ich mich gern
 In deinem Schoss,
 In Polen, dem traurigen Lande!"

Following the example of Platen, Hartmann too addresses a poem "To the King" (Frederick William IV, who had in the meantime become king of Prussia), in which he cries shame upon him for not only having refused to come to the aid of bleeding Poland in 1831 when Platen pleaded with him on her behalf, but for having delivered her sons who had fled to his country to the knout of the Muscovites:

"Wir schleudern dir die ganze Schande
 Zu Füßen schamentbrannt,
 Dass du aus unserm deutschen Lande
 Gemacht ein Schergenland;

"Dass du die Schar, bedeckt vom Blute,
 Das sie zu Heil'gen tauft,
 Gemeiner Moskowiterknute
 Verräterisch verkauft."

Gregorovius too in the first of his *Polenlieder* describes the impression which the delivery by the Prussian soldiers of the last

Polish refugees into the hands of the Russian Cossacks in 1832 made upon the eleven-year-old boy:

“Seit jenem Tag, seit jener schweren Stunde,
Hat sich versenket in des Knaben Herz
Der Wehgesang von der Verlorenen Munde,
Der Polensöhne düstrer Seelenschmerz.”

A poem of unique character was written by C. A. Albertus in the diary of his brother-in-arms Seydel on November 2, 1831, in Warsaw. Together with a few friends these two medical students of the University of Leipsic had been threatened with imprisonment for belonging to a *Burschenschaft*, a nationalist students' organization which because of its liberal views was obnoxious to a government following Metternichian principles. They went to Warsaw to serve in the ambulance corps of the Polish army,¹² and anticipating the wretched state in which they were soon to return home Albertus composed the following humorous lines:

“Wir gingen einst nach Polen,
Um Läuse uns zu holen,
Und kamen abgewürgelt,
Be—— und beschmürgelt,
In Deutschland wieder an.
Der Vater und die Mutter
Zerschmolzen fast zu Butter,
Als sie dies Elend sah'n.”

Heine's poem “Two Knights,” which satirizes the life of two Polish refugees in Paris bearing the significant names of Crapülinski and Waschlapski, is by no means flattering to the Poles, and this may partly account for the antipathy against Heine even in the intellectual circles of Poland.¹³ But nothing was farther from Heine than hatred and contempt for the Polish people. It is their supersensitiveness which prevents the Poles from regarding this poem as the product of Heine's peculiar wit, from which no one, not even God in his holy temple, was safe. Heine's life-long friendship with the Polish nobleman Eugen von Breza is well known,

¹² An interesting account of these German ambulance workers in the Polish army (*Freiheitskämpfer*, as they styled themselves) was given on the occasion of the Polish uprising of 1905 by G. A. Fritze, a grandson of Seydel, in his article “Deutsche Studenten als Kämpfer für Polens Freiheit” in the Berlin weekly *Die Nation* of August 25, 1906 (Vol. XXIII, No. 47).

¹³ Gustav Karpeles in his article “Heine und die Polen” in the *Pester Lloyd* for 1907, (quoted also in *Das literarische Echo*, IX, No. 21, col. 1599, Aug. 1, 1907), traces the antipathy of the Poles to Heine largely to a myth, which is widely spread in the Slavic world, to the effect that Heine was paid by the French government to vilify the Polish name.

and the poet's visit to his friend's home in Poland resulted in his memoir on Poland which shows his deep interest in the Polish land and people. His beautiful little poem beginning *Du bist wie eine Blume* is also said to have originated on the occasion of this visit to Poland. Heine is supposed to have addressed these lines to a little Polish girl in Gnesen whose beauty had captivated him.

One of the German poets, who as a young man gave expression to the national feeling of sympathy with downtrodden Poland, seems to have recanted later in life. What a contrast between two poems of Hebbel, written thirty years apart! On New Year's night of 1835 the twenty-two-year-old poet toasts the Poles with his poem *Die Polen sollen leben* ("Long Live the Poles"). Sympathy with the Polish refugees, who after the pitiful defeat of the uprising had been scattered all over Europe, also sank into the heart of this youthful poet and inspired his poem. But in 1861 on the occasion of the attempt on the life of King William of Prussia by Oskar Becker, Hebbel addresses a congratulatory poem to the monarch, in which without any provocation on the part of the Poles he gives vent to the deepest contempt for them. The following lines in this poem caused a storm of indignation in the whole Slavic world:

"Auch die Bedientenvölker rütteln,
Am Bau, den Jeder todt geglaubt,
Die Czechen und Polacken schütteln
Ihr strupp'ges Karyatidenhaupt."

Hebbel defended himself as well as he could against the attacks which he had thus unnecessarily brought upon himself.

However, it would be unjust to impute Slavophobia to Hebbel. From his diary written during the second attempt of the Poles to throw off the foreign yoke we see that he still sympathized with them in their desire for national independence, but like so many other Germans of 1863 he saw that the uprising was doomed to a pitiful failure, and he called the attempt *unverantwortlichen Leicht-sinn* (inexcusable levity).¹⁴ Ten years before this in his somewhat humorous poem *Polen ist noch nicht verloren* he held up to ridicule the class-antagonism in Poland which persisted even in the face of common danger. But this conviction of the inability of the Poles to regain their national independence did not prevent Hebbel from flaying Prussia for its contemptible role as Russia's henchman.¹⁵

¹⁴ Friedrich Hebbel, *Sämtliche Werke*. Edited by Richard Maria Werner, 24 vols. Berlin, 1901-1907. Tagebücher, IV, 285 (March 27, 1863).

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, IV, 270 (February, 1863). For Hebbel's attitude to the Poles see Merwin's article referred to in note 9.

Hebbel was as poor a statesman as Platen, Hartmann and all other pro-Polish enthusiasts of the thirties and forties. He lacked an understanding of the facts underlying the actions of Prussia. Prussia in the nineteenth century was little more than a vassal of Russia. She did the bidding of the Czar for fear that Poland's fate might be hers also. But of course we see in Prussia's vassalage to Russia the Nemesis of history. By his alliance with Czarina Catherine, which led to the partition of Poland, Frederick II of Prussia supported Russia in her schemes of conquest and helped her become a great power, a power which has since then been highly dangerous to the civilization and liberties of Europe. Prussia's fate was that of the fabled magician's apprentice, who could conjure up spirits but could not banish them. On no country in Europe lay the arrogance and ruthless domineering of the Czar of all the Russias so heavily as on Prussia and all other German states. In no country of Europe was the fear of Russia so great as in Prussia and all other German states. Prussia was afraid to throw off the shackles of Czar Alexander also, who, we must admit, did not oppress Europe with such a crippling domination as did his predecessor Czar Nicholas. It was for fear of Czardom that Frederick William IV, who was really kind to the Poles, humbled himself as did his father before him to such an extent as to render Russia "provost service," as Hebbel says.

The Polish revolutions of 1863 and 1905 found little echo in German poetry. There were few expressions of sympathy in the German literature of those days with these attempts of the Polish nation to regain independence. The horrors connected with the quelling of the Polish uprisings brought forth few expressions of sympathy in the poetry of Germany.¹⁶ In the school of hard facts the Germans have ceased to believe in political ethics. The poets of Germany no less than her statesmen have lost their naïveté in political matters. They have suddenly awakened to the bitter realization that among nations as well as among individuals might makes right. The restoration of Poland was now considered in Germany as a fantastic notion. The results of these attempts at a re-birth of the Polish state certainly justified the Germans in calling them an incomprehensible folly. The fallacy of the familiar saying *Polonia farà da sè* has been sufficiently proved by history. The independence of Poland, which was reestablished on November 29, 1916, is not

¹⁶ Poems on Poland are said to have appeared during the Polish revolt of 1863 in Adolf Strodtmann's journal *Orion* for that year. The present writer was unable, however, to verify this statement.

due to its own efforts, but is the result of foreign intervention. The liberation of Congress Poland by Germany and Austria-Hungary, finally brought to realization the dreams of their poets of almost a century ago. What Prussia could not and would not do in 1831, she did in 1916. What was refused to the subjects of a dreaded ally, was granted freely to the subjects of a defeated enemy.

The following prophetic words of Platen addressed to the patriots of Warsaw may serve as a fitting conclusion. The poem "The End of Poland" (*Finis Poloniae*), from which these lines are taken, was written on March 20, 1831, on the occasion of the false report that Warsaw had been taken on the 28th of the preceding month and Poland made a Russian province. It was first published in 1868 in the German periodical *Grenzboten*. After Warsaw had finally been taken by the Russians on September 8, 1831, Platen worked the poem over and renamed it "The Fall of Warsaw." Mr. Edmund W. Head, who rendered these verses into English for *Fraser's Magazine* on the occasion of the second Polish rebellion, calls attention in a prefatory note to the fact that the words *Finis Poloniae* were said to be those uttered by Kosciusko when he fell wounded in the battle of Malikowice in 1794, but were disclaimed by him in a letter to the Comte de Ségur:¹⁷

I.

"Ye noble hearts beneath the sod! grudge not the blood you've shed,
The time will come when pilgrim hands shall deck with flowers your bed:
The poet too will hither haste, and sing in fearless strain
This hecatomb to Liberty, round Warsaw's ramparts slain;
Nor shall your grave be hard to find by those who tread this ground,
A quaint form—great Nemesis—sits watching on its mound.

II.

"What boots it that a thousand foes have fall'n beneath your sword?
The life-blood of a single Pole is worth a Cossack horde:
And though the tyrant's slaves may lie here, mingled in one grave
With those who lavished all, and then life for their country gave;
Fair Freedom's trophy on this spot your country yet shall see,
And your Simonides shall sing this new Thermopylae."

¹⁷ *Fraser's Magazine* for May, 1863 (Vol. LXVII, p. 612). This poem of Platen is the only *Polenlied* which has up to the present day been accessible to English readers. Of all the German poets who wrote *Polenlieder* Heinrich Heine is best known among the English-speaking peoples, and yet not one of his numerous translators has rendered his poem "Two Knights" into English. Not even Mr. Louis Untermeyer has included this lampoon among those poems of Heine which he has just done so well into English.