POLISH LITERATURE IN AMERICA

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PREFACE

There is an advantage in studying literatures comparatively as well as by themselves. Polish literature is one of the so-called minor literatures of Europe about which Americans have only a very superficial knowledge, but which, nevertheless, deserves our attention both for the merit that it possesses intrinsically and for the important place that it has attained in America.

This thesis attempts to make a survey of what is best in Polish literature and to trace as much of it as, through translation or through historical and critical accounts, has become available to the American reader. Because it is often hard to draw the line, some British as well as American treatments of Polish literature will be considered.

I am greatly indebted to Professor S. L. Whitcomb for suggesting this subject to me and for the invaluable help he has given me in gathering and selecting the material. I am also indebted to Professor J. H. Nelson for the aid he has given me in the final preparation of the study.

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I

INTRODUCTION

Poland's national aspirations have struck a sympathetic chord in the hearts of the American people. Evidence for this is not far to seek. When, in 1863, Poland was finally partitioned by Germany, Russia, and Austria, our periodicals branded the act as an atrocious political crime. Recently, when the commonwealth was restored as one of the results of the World War, the American papers reflected our hearty approval. During our Revolution Kosciuszko and Pulaski, fighting for and with us, won for their country a permanent claim upon our interest and sympathy, and since then great Poles such as Sienkiewicz and Paderewski have also drawn our respect for Polish accomplishments in the great arts of peace. Indeed, if we think of the Poles as a suffering race, whose ideals, language, and religion were suppressed by the usurpingtions round about, we also think of them as the race of artists, as the race of Chopin as well as of Kosciuszko; we think of them, to use the poet Krasinski's phrase, as "the nation buried alive, but raising the coffin-lid"[1] to release the genius of music, dance, and poetry.

1. Quoted by Mad. M. M. Gardner in The Life of Sigmund Krasinski, p.16.

Still the average American, notwithstanding his interest in Poland, knows very little about Polish literature. To him it frankly means Sienkiewicz, and Sienkiewicz means Quo Vadis. The average American does not know that almost a hundred Polish authors are available to the English reader.[1] He hardly believes that by 1850 Poland could boast over 1500 literary names.[2] And when he hears that Polish historians of literature claim many Polish authors to be of first-rate ability and that they do not hesitate to name such authors in the same breath with Goethe, Byron, Scott, or Ronsard, he is inclined to indulge in a polite doubt as to the verity of such claims. In fact any foreigner, be he from England, France, or Germany, reading about the alleged great works written by Poles, or Hungarians, or Czecns, questions the exceeding excellence of those works, not one of which he has ever seen mentioned in the leading periodicals of London, Paris, or Berlin. He is only too ready to condemn outright anything that comes from those nations which, so far, have not succeeded in playing the first fiddle in the European concert.

But an honest investigation of the literature of the Poles reveals much that is worthy of our attention.

1. See Appendix III for list of authors who have been translated.

2. Paul Soboleski: Poets and Poetry of Poland. p.13.

In the field of the historical novel the Poles have few, if any equals; in certain types of lyrical poetry and in the realistic short story they compare favorable with the greatest writers of any nation, and in almost every other field they have acquited themselves with fair ability.[1] They have a literature, one might say, which in miniature and with limitations really exhibits all the glory, all the art, all the ramifications which one can find in the greatest literatures of the world. However, in several respects Polish literature is unique. It has remained, in spite of the dismembered condition of the country for almost a century, a strongly national literature.[2] It has been the expression of rising and falling hopes, of ideals trodden under foot, of a political existence repeatedly swept with fire and sword. It has been the deepest utterance of the Polish national soul; of that soul as it first burst forth in ecstacy at the thought of political and intellectual importance during the classical days of Copernicus and Kochanowski, as it later shrank back in despair and pessimism because the country was being divided, and as it rebounded with a sublime hope when romanticism taught Polish genius to look to the past and have faith in the future.

1. See pp.59,79 ff. for estimations of Mickiewicz Sienkiewicz.

2. This has been contested. See pp. 21 ff.

But before going any farther in discussing Polish literature or tracing it in America, it is fitting to say something about the Polish race as a part of the greater Slavic group. P. Selver gives the following convenient classification of the Slavonic peoples;[1]

Western Slavs -	Poles,	20 millions
	Czechs,	7 millions
	Slovaks,	2 millions
	Wends,	150 thousands
Southern Slavs-	Serbo Croatians,	9 millions
	Bulgarians,	5 millions
	Slovenes,	1½ millions
Eastern Slavs;-	Great Russians,	65 millions
	Little Russians, (Malo-Russians, Ruthenians or Ukrainians)	31 millions
	White Russians,	7 millions.

A classification of this sort is of necessity inacurate because of the racial mixtures resulting from the Tartar and Germanic infusions, and because of the difficulty of making statistics where the people are politically dependent; still it is clear that the Slavs comprise a large part of the European population and that some kind of grouping is to be kept in mind when considering the literature of any one branch.

The language of each of the above divisions of the Slavs is descended, it is generally conceded, from the

1. P. Selver: Anthology of Modern Slavonic Literature, p. viii. W. R. Morfill: Early Slavonic Literature, also gives a classification, but it makes no Southern division.

Old Bulgarian or Old Church Slavonic.[1] Among the modern offshoots there is considerable dialectic variation, of course, owing to the separate development of each group; but there is also close kinship, especially noticeable among the members of a larger division. The Czech and Wendish languages, for example, are closely related to the Polish. Only the Western branches and the Croats employ the Latin alphabet; the remainder use the so-called Cyrillic system. All show the influence of the Latin; but the extremely susceptible Poles exhibit the Latin influence more than do the remote, Greek-Catholic Eastern Slavs. The latter races have adopted a number of Greek and Tartar elements into their language instead. Moreover, the language of the Poles is unique among the Slavic languages in that it has been in close touch with the French and German and hence has taken over a large number of words from these languages.

Returning now to the literature, we note that its

1. Morfill: Early Slavonic Literature, p. 13, gives three theories of the origin of Slavonic.
   T. G. Tucker: Natural History of Language, p.223; "A statement of the exact inter-relations of the Slavonic languages is not yet agreed upon. The oldest recorded forms are those of the Old Bulgarian etc."

2. A. Brueckner: Osteuropaeischen Literaturen, p.153, emphasizes the susceptibility of the Poles. "Der Druck des Lateinischen fand laengere Zeit keine Gegengewicht."

story is similar to that of the language. Like the literatures of all the Slavonic peoples, except that of the Czechs, which flourished early, the Polish literature was slow to rise above the importance of a mere provincial literature. It began in Latin, was limited to a few types, mainly the chronicle, and turned to the vernacular only when it imitated the popular poetry of Bohemia or translated Psalms from the Latin. But gradually, as the Poles rose in importance politically, a national literature began to evolve, and by the time the country had reached the height of its prosperity in the reign of Sigismund II (Jagello), 1546-1572, the greatest poets and prose masters of the classic age had appeared.

Rej of Naglowicz was the earliest Polish poet. He wrote works of various types, ranging from commonplace explanations of the Apocalypse to a long quaint poem, like The Steele Glass of Goscoigul, called The Mirror, or Life of an Honourable Man. He was followed by Jan Kochanowski, born in 1530, who represented the Polish Renaissance, and who was the first to break away from the Latin influence. His Return of the Greek Ambassadors was the first drama of Poland and his poetic laments (Threns) are justly admired for their lyrical beauty. Next to Rej of Naglowicz he is considered the greatest early poet.

In the eloquent Jesuit priest, Peter Skarga, Poland found its first master of prose. He did for the Polish prose language what Kochanowski did for Polish poetry; he raised it to its height in pitch of excellence. He is called the "Polish Chrysostom", and his numerous Lives of Saints and Sermons enjoyed both popularity and influence.

But neither Skarga nor Kochanowski was able to dispel the domination of foreign literature for long. Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries Polish writers poured forth a continuous stream of imitations of Virgil, Horace, and Cicero. Seldom did anyone venture to produce something original. Seldom did the truth pierce through the armour of artificiality. Krasicki, who had been the Voltaire of Warsaw and who had written serio-comic epics, fables, prose novels after the fashion of Robinson Crusoe, and books on history, became earnest and powerful only when he wrote a satire on The Corrupt Age. It was an age, writes Professor Brueckner, "when everybody from king, ministers, and magnates down composed poetry according to classic standards" and when wars and the "events of the day filled by themselves the epic sail," [1] so that the long-winded Slavic epopee saw its greatest triumphs during this time of intellectual and political decline.

1. Osteuropaeischen Literaturen, p. 156.

The domination of the classics and the accompanying superficiality and decline was only broken by the arrival of romanticism and the downfall of the Polish commonwealth.[1] Most critics agree in placing the golden age of Polish letters in the first half of the nineteenth century, at a time when the confiscation of Polish lands was in full progress. Indeed, the greater the humiliation of the state, the greater was the glory of the literature. One can almost say that the supreme Polish epic, Pan Tadeusz, came as a result of the hopeless insurrection and partition of 1830[2] and that the great Trilogy of historical novels of Sienkiewicz came, as though inspired, out of the last fateful insurrection of 1863.[3] Paradoxical as it may seem, the weakest literature of Poland is not of the period of her political straits.

The previous paragraph has indicated the condition of Polish literature in the period which is best known in America. We shall, therefore reserve further discussion of this important period for the main body of this thesis.

During the last two decades Polish literary genius has been rich and productive. Only one Slavic country,

1. For example, Harvey Genung: Warners Library, 17: 9995, says, "The Golden age of Polish letters was ushered in by the romanticists. With the passing of Poland from the family of European states, the genius of her people received a fresh and passionate impulse."

2. See pp. 55,58.

3. See pp. 78 ff.

that of Turgenev and Tolstoy, can rival the output of Poland. The realistic age which began with the romantic-realist, Sienkiewicz, has given way to what is called the "impressionistic movement" and this, with its extreme sensualism and symbolism, has in turn given rise to a conservative reaction. Wladislas Reymont, whose Peasants was lastyear awarded the Swedish Noble prize, gives the most typical expression of what is wholesome and good in recent Polish literature. To his school of positive realism belong a number of other promising novelists, such as Zeromski, Boleslaw Prus, and Eliza Orzeszkowa, and in the field of poetry they are accompanied, says Professor Wiener, by "the healthy poets of might, Orkan, Danilowski, and Mickiewicz, who sing of loftier ideals in a time of decadence."[1]

In the discussions of Polish literature much has been made of the Polish national traits. Professor George Brandes devotes several pages to the subject in his study of the people and literature of Poland;[2] Van Norman has chapters on "Polish Music and the Slav Temperament" and "The Race of Artists by Birth;" while Mad. Monica M. Gardner calls one of her books Poland, A Study of National

1. Leo Wiener: Polish Literature, Encyclopedia Americana, 22:303.

2. Poland; A Study of the Land, People, and Literature, pp. 125, 156 ff.

3. Poland; The Knight Among Nations, pp. 256 ff.

Idealism. Even that pioneer student of Polish literature, Sir John Bowring is careful to state in the preface to his Specimens of Polish Poets[1] in what way the Poles express traits in their literature which are peculiar to themselves and which cannot be found in the literatures of any other Slavic or European people. Scarcely any writer on the Poles or their literature fails to mention the characteristics of the Poles and many take the oportunity to wax extremely sentimental.

Professor Brandes, than whom there are few more competent critics of European literature, takes the sanest view of the matter. He acknowledges that the Poles as a people have an intense patriotism, a strong faith in Christianity, and a peculiar interpretation, through their literature and art, of the romantic spirit. Speaking about Polish Romanticism, he says:

> "The national character, as it had been developed down to this period, was especially adapted for the influence of romanticsim. It was intelligent and magnanimous, splendor-loving and visionary, with a propensity to chivalrous virtues and religious aspirations. Then, as now, it lacked the ballast which the Germanic nations have in their native phlegm, and the Latin races in their native logic."[2]

1. London, 1827; see pp. 47 ff.

2. Brandes: Poland, p. 199.

But Professor Brandes also sums up the Polish defects. He says the the Poles "have a propensity to put forward pretensions which are only half real,"[1] and as proof of this he gives some striking illustrations. He says, for example, that he knows an editor in Warsaw who, though he never writes and article, yet takes a naive and sincere pleasure in hearing himself mentioned as an editor and talks gravely, without any intention of lying, of his great work, his struggles with censorship and so on. Or, says Professor Brandes, a party of patriots has assembled every fortnight for twelve years to rescue their fatherland by ingenuous plans; yet no one in this party perceives that each time they meet things remain just as they were.

Let us quote a paragraph from the same author which discusses this trait of the Poles:

> "The Poles are perhaps the only people on earth who do not claim common sense as a national quality. Frenchmen, Englishmen, Germans, Italians, Danes are convinced that common sense reigns among them. The Poles do not believe this. They know too well that they never have been able to take practical advantage of any historical situation."[1]

1. Brandes: Poland, p. 202.

Whether this is exaggeration is not a question of this thesis, but anyone who has made a study of Poland's history will admist that there are faults common to all the Polish race which in a large measure explain their political and literary weaknesses.

The importence of the Polish people in government is also emphasized by Professor Brueckner. He shows how, after the great Jagellon epoch (seventeenth century) the Polish nobility suppressed the peasantry, ignored the rise of threatening monarchs in the neighboring countries, and in fact pursued the very policy which would inevitably end in political disaster. He, furthermore, points out the relation of the Polish incapacity for government to the tenddency of the literature. He says the "literature became as the state had become, caste-like and provincial;" and, "this gradual fall from the height of political power, bespoke the decline of culture and literature."[1]

But when romanticism swept over Europe, Professor Brueckner is careful to affirm, the peculiar political intelligence of the Poles gave their literature a decided advantage. He explains that the new movement brought about

1. Brueckner: Osteuropaeischen Literaturen, p. 154, "Diese Literatur wurde was der Staat ward, eine staendische und laendliche;..dem allmaehlichen Niedergang von der Hoehe politischer Macht entsprach der Niedergang von Kultur und Literatur."

a protest in Poland, not like in Germany and France, against the three unities and the aesthetics of classic literature, but against the political and social condition of the country- the protest which forms the greatest theme of the greatest Polish literature.

Even a Polish critic like Professor Roman Dyboski expresses himself regarding the peculiarities of Polish Romanticism. We quote a passage from his recent history of Polish literature:

> "Polish Romantic poetry is undeniably full of nationality and of the necessity for it. It all rests on the belief- right or wrong- that a national spirit is as unavoidable an ingredient in everything we think, do, or produce, as colour is inevitable in everything we see.
>
> "But the very greatest works of Polish Romantic genius at the same time teach the world that nationality need not be a limitation, but may become a stepping-stone to higher, to the sublimest things-"[1]

With regards to the relation of Polish literature to the rest of Europe, the story can be summed up in a few words. Russia and Germany, the standing foes of Poland, have never received Polish literature except with reluctance. While Austria was unique in that she was tolerant

1. Periods of Polish Literary History, p. 112. Oxford University Press, 1923.

toward the Poles, even when the Cracow territory was under her control, Russia dn Germany rigorously suppressed the language and literature in the Polish regions which were under their jurisdiction. France and England, on the other hand, being more distant and less concerned in Polish politics, have always received Polish literature and art as well, with a ready hand. France welcomed the Polish exiles and did homage to the fleeing nobility. England did almost as much; it honored Kosciuszko, gave a home to Count Krasinski, the general, and received scores of the exiled patriots.

But America stands unchallenged as the supreme friend of the Poles. It has harbored Polish patriots from the days of Washington on. To-day it counts over four million Poles among its citizens, Chicago alone having more native Poles than any city in Poland save Warsaw and Lodz. There are thriving Polish communities in many of our Eastern cities; Detroit has a Polish Theological Seminary, Chicago a Polish theatre, and many localities have large churches where services are still conducted in the Polish language. During the war Paderewski and others raised funds in America for the Polish legion and, last of all, Woodrow Wilson gave material aid at Versailles in bringing about the restoration of the Polish state.

CHAPTER II

EARLY POINTS OF CONTACT WITH AMERICA

The first point of contact between Polish literature and America is, with perhaps a little stretching, Copernicus. Although Germany also claims this great astronomer,[1] he was born in Thorn, Poland, in 1473 and educated in the most Polish of Universities, that of Cracow. He later continued his studies at Padua, Bologna, and Rome, and finally, in the year of his death (1543), gave to the world the treatise [2] which set forth what is called the heliocentric system of astronomy. His methods and observation substantially established the doctrine that the sun and not the earth, as the Ptolemaic philosophy had held, was the center of our planetary system. There is no way of telling how great was the influence of the Copernician system upon subsequent philosophy. America was born, as it were, with the shock of that great teaching, and notwithstanding that Columbus may not have known of Copernicus when he first sailed, the new idea left its impress upon later discoveries. Copernicus did for the scientist what Columbus did for the common people; he altered, as Edwin S. Holden would have it, "for

1. Talvi in her Historical View of the literature of the Slavic Nations, p.224, accords Germany equal rights to Copernicus with Poland; the mother was of German extraction. However, the concensus of opinion is in favor of the Polish claim.

2. De Revolutionibus Orbium Caelestium; begun about 1509, published in 1543.

every thinking man his entire view of the world and laid the foundation for all subsequent human progress." [1] Indirectly at least, no one will doubt, Copernicus exerted a profound influence upon all that pertains to America and her literature.

The first point of contact may have been a bit far-fetched, especially with reference to literature, but the second one can present a better case. Thaddeus Kosciuszko, born in Lithuania in 1746, educated in the Warsaw School of Knights and at Paris, came to America in the summer of 1776. He had letters of recommendation from Benjamin Franklin, and Washington, to whom he presented himself, asked him, "What can you do?" The response, "Try me", is characteristic of the spirit that was behind the Polish patriots. Kosciuszko not only bore the brunt of many battles during the eight years of war, but he also taught our army much of fort construction, planning the defense at Bemis Heights and the present fortress at West Point. He won the hearts of all Americans. At the end of the war Congress voted him a member of the Order of Cincinnati and a large tract of land, and the people erected monuments to his honor in Philadelphia, Washington, and several other places. Kosciuszko even taught at the West Point Academy, and his text book on cavalry tactics was in use there for some time.

1. Warners Library; vol.VII, p.4040.

Returning to Europe the great patriot became the leader of the famous Polish insurrection of 1794. He won against great odds, but was finally captured by the Russians and held a prisoner till he was released by Emperor Paul. While all others in Poland were throwing their hopes at the feet of the conquering Napoleon, Kosciuszko alone saw through the rash promises of the Frenchman, and by his sane advice kept Poland from rushing to an immediate destruction.

In 1796 the defeated Kosciuszko returned to America. His progress through northern Europe was one of continuous ovation. He was honored at Stockholm, where embassadors and statesmen paid him tribute. He was almost worshipped at London. Fox, Sheridan, and Grey paid him respects, and the poet Campbell wrote the familiar lines, "Freedom shrieked when Kosciuszko fell." America continued to honor him as she had begun to do at the end of the Revolution.

Since then Kosciuszko has been frequently a subject in literature. In 1803, Jane Porter wrote an historical romance with Kosciusko as the hero.[1] She had spoken with many of the poor and proud, but noble, refugees in London, and she wrote with pen dipped in their tears. Recently Madam Gardner has written a more accurate story of the "real Thaddeus",[2] while Zaleski celebrates the anniversary

1. Tadeusz of Warsaw, London 1803.

2. Mad. M. M. Gardner: A Biography of Kosciuszko, N.Y. '20

of the patriot's death by a life in the Contemporary Review.[1]

With Kosciuszko, the second time he came to America, was his fellow patriot, the poet Niemciewicz. Both theses Poles had been wounded and taken prisoner at Maciejowice, and both now sought confort on American shores. Julian Niemciewice lived in America for ten years, meeting Washington - of whom he wrote a Life - and marrying a rich widow from New Jersey. In 1807 he returned to Europe, where he became secretary of the Polish Senate and lastly president of the Royal Scientific Society of his country. After the insurrection of 1830 he was forced to leave his country, and he died as an "émigré" in Paris at the age of eighty-four.

His literary career had been as long and varied as his life. To his credit are novels, plays, odes, epigrams, fables, translations of Pope's Rape of the Lock, and of Gray's Elegy, and two works on history. His patriotic comedy, The Return of the Deputy was successfully acted at Warsaw after 1791. His writings are extremely voluminous and, to some extent, still popular. Sir John Bowring[2] gives him more praise, in his Specimens from ten Polish poets, than any of the other poets. There are almost twenty-five pages of Dumy (heroic elegies), and the selections chosen and translated by Sir John Bowring are repeated in other anthologies which include early Polish poetry.[3]

1. Cont. Review, 112:519. Nov. 1925.
2. Sir J. Bowring: Specimens of Polish Poets, pp.146-72.
3. For example: Soboleski: Poets and Poetry of Poland, pp. 159 ff.

CHAPTER III

TREATMENTS OF POLISH LITERATURE IN GENERAL

The present chapter will consider those treatments of Polish literature which are not limited to one or the other of the major Polish writers. It will be concerned, primarily, with American treatments, whether they be translations, historical accounts, or ciriticisms; but it will also include several British and a few German works.

The year 1827 is epoch-making for Polish literature in English, for in that year Sir John Bowring published in London his Specimens of Polish Poets, with Notes and Observations, representing the first attempt to bring the poetry of Poland before the English speaking world. Six years before, Sir John Bowring had startled England with his Russian Specimens, and he now continued his pioneer work for the Poles. The impulse which his book gave found a ready response in the periodical press of England and in a short time reached America. It opened the eyes of the English public to the hidden Slavic genius and helped kindle the fire of enthusiasm for Slavic art and literature which long affected the cultured of London and New York and which even today has not abated.

Before Sir John Bowring's day Slavic literature was practically unknown in the mind of the average English

reader. The occasional remarks of travelers and literary critics concerning Russian and Polish literature had gone by unnoticed. No one thought that the Slavic hordes were capable of the constraint necessary in producing a finished piece of art. No one believed Slavs much better than slaves, - the terms were once synonomous in Western Europe. The wars of Charles the Great and Albert the Bear had caused many of the Slavic people to be taken prisoner, and for a long time afterward the European markets were glutted with captive Slavs.[1] It was the opinion that, like the Mongolian bands which roved about in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the Slavs were threatening civilization from the security of their steppes and of their cossack army. They were not to be studied; they were to be conquered. That is what the western nations believed, at least that is what France and Germany tried to put into practice. It remained, therefore, for such pioneers as Sir John Bowring and Chopin, in music, to reveal to the world what art lay buried in the native Slavic poetry and music.

But Sir John Bowring affects Polish literature in America only indirectly. It is because his book is reviewed by Mr. Peabody[2] and because it is otherwise often

1. Morfill: Slavonic Literature, p. 35.

2. North American Review, 26:146-157, Jan. 1828. W.B.O. Peabody: Review of Sir J. Bowring's Specimens.

mentioned that it bears upon the present study. Several remarks in the review are noteworthy and deserve to be commented upon in the light of some statements made in our introduction regarding Polish literature in general.

Mr. Peabody says, characterizing the Polish specimens translated by Sir John Bowring, that they are "not remarkably national", but they are "plaintive and thoughtful, sometimes powerful and inspiring."[1] The first part of this criticism would seem to contradict our previous assertion that Polish literature as a whole is "strongly national".[2] Mr. Peabody hastens to add "but this may be explained by the fact that the glory of Poland was on the wane before the age of inspiration began"; nevertheless, he fails to reconcile his summary view of the character of Polish poetry with the verdict of other critics.[3] He has, apparently, taken those specimens which, because of dread of patriotic demonstration in a submerged commonwealth, have been patriotic under disguise, as not being national at all. As a matter of fact, even thos early poets included by Sir John Bowring exhibit that trait of the Poles as a whole which we have before called an intense love of country, and by

1. North American Review, 26:146-157, Jan. 1828. W.B.O. Peabody: Review of Sir J. Bowring's Specimens. P.146

2. P. 3.

3. For example, Harvey Genung in Warners Library, 17: 9995, says: "Love of country, pride in the great past grief at the misfortunes..etc..these were the themes of the poets.

the time that Poland as a nation had waned into oblivion, her poetry was heart and soul afire with national patriotism.[1]

The other part of Mr. Peabody's criticism, that Polish poetry "is plaintive and thoughtful, sometimes powerful and inspiring", is well taken and can be verified from almost any page of the Specimens.

As Sir John Bowring's are almost the only translations of Polish poetry before the nineteenth century available to the American reader and as the same selections are also included in Paul Soboleski's book,[2] we should not dismiss this pioneer anthologist without discussing some of the poetry he included. Four poets among the ten stand out above the rest. One of them, Niemciewicz, we have already considered: the other three are so typical that they deserve special attention.

John Kochanowski (1530-1584), who traveled in southern Europe and whose Latin poetry was deemed superior to that of any of his contemporaries, obtained his principal reputation by a series of Laments (Threny) in which he mourns the loss of a little child. Sir John Bowring[3]

1. H. Genung: Warners Library, 17:9995,"Scarcely one of the great works of the time (when Poland was dismembered) was written on Polish soil and yet never was the literature more intensely national."

2. Poets and Poetry of Poland. Chicago, 1881.

3. Pp. 47-66.

gives a translation of five Threns and of about fifty stanzas from Tales of St. John's Eve. Paul Soboleski[1] includes the same Threns and adds a poem, The Greatness of God. He calls Kochanowski "the Polish Ronsard". Kochanowski had met the greatest of the Pleiades in Paris, and his one act play, The Dispatch of the Greek Ambassador, resembles the characteristic French drama of the sixteenth century. Talvi [2] also gives Kochanowski much praise and points out that Mickiewicz compares him to Goethe in his treatment of the classic elements. Morfill calls him "the prince of Polish poets"[3] and adds that he came of a poetical family, his brother, Andrew, having translated the Aeneid and his nephew, Peter, having published a version of Tasso's Jerusalem Delivered.

Ignatius Krasicki (1734-1801), to whom Sir John Bowring devotes thirteen pages, [4] is another important Polish poet. Krasicki introduced a new epoch of literature under Stanislas Poniatowski, was a favorite of Frederick the Second, and distinguished himself in the translations of Ossian and of Lucian and in his satiric allegory, The Battle of the

1. Pp. 41-53.

2. Pp. 245

3. Morfill: Story of Poland, London, 1893, p. 276.

4. Pp. 121-134.

Mice. He was one of the liveliest of Polish satirists.[1] His most elaborate work, according to Sir John Bowring,[2] is the War of Chocim. Of this both Sir John Bowring and P. Soboleski give one canto.

The last poet included in Specimens of Polish Poets and the one who receives the most attention is Casimir Brodzinski. A quotation from Sir John Bowring's sketch of this poet will illustrate his position and show how Mr. Peabody's criticism can be disproved through Sir John Bowring himself.

> "Casimir Brodzinski, who is now living (b.1835) and who has translated The Lay of the Last Minstrel, is a poet of most decided genius, who has given and intense character of nationality to all his productions. If any man can be considered the representative of Polish feelings, and as having transfused them into his productions. Brodzinski is certainly that man."[3]

Sir John Bowring - and Soboleski follows him again - gives an extended selection from the poet's delightful idyl, Wieslaw.

1. A. Brueckner: Polnische Literature, calls him "ein ausgezeichneter Satiriker"(an outstanding satirist) p. 175.

2. This famous work has since been ascribed to Potocki. Morfill: Poland, p. 289; Dyboski: Periods of Polish Literary History, p. 39-40.

3. Sir John Bowring: Specimens..... p. 176.

While meager accounts of Polish literature were appearing both in England and America because of the impulse given by the Specimens of 1827, there was published in the Biblical Repository of Andover, Massachusetts, the remarkable Slavic work of Talvi.[1] This had the modest title An Historical View of the Languages and Literature of the Slavic Nations; with a sketch of their Popular Poetry, but it was more thorough going than any other English work in the field even to the present day. It, says Professor Wiener of Harvard, "is the first to encompass the whole field in a scholarly and yet popular manner. It is authoritative even now in many departments that have been overthrown by later investigators, and it is a matter of surprise that none of the English writers should have based their Russian literatures on this important work".(Professor Wiener has Russian Literature specially in mind, but his judgment characterizes the whole book).

Talvi's former efforts as translator, says Dr.Edward

1. Wife of Dr. Edward Robinson. She was the daughter of a German professor under whom Mr. Robinson was a student.)

Robinson in the preface,[1] had already attracted the attention of Goethe, Von Humboldt, and Grimm. Her comprehensive Historical View, says A. G. de Gurowski,[2] is no less worthy than her previous work. Yet, excepting the latter's review of the book in the North American Review, there is not another mention of it save by Weimer, whose appraisal is given above. No bibliography of Slavic or Polish literature includes it. Paul Soboleski, who laments the lack of English treatment of Polish literature and who could have used Talvi's book to great advantage, does not mention it. Mrs. M. L. Putnam, who gives a sketch, in the North American Review,[3] of the early writers of Poland before she describes one who is then living, does not give an clue to Talvi either. Few students of the Slavs seem to know about it, yet it is, for them, a most important work.

Several points can be mentioned to show the value of and fault with Talvi's book. Throughout, in tracing the origin of the Slavs[4] and otherwise, it reflects the German point of view. It emphasizes the Slavic scholarship of

1. The preface is to the edition of 1850.
2. The North American Review, 71:330, Oct. 1850
3. The North American Review, 66:323-48, Apr. 1848.
4. The North American Review, p.330; A. G. de Gurowski says, "of the hypothesis concerning the origin of the Slavs, she accepts the most indefensible one." It is based on Schlegel's.

the Germans, it shows the cruelty of the Russian treatment of the Poles[1]- obviously at a neglect of similar action on the part of the Germans - and it makes a point of showing the influence of Goethe upon Mickiewicz and Slowacki and of other Germans upon Lelewel and so forth.[2] This prejudice, however, is under the circumstances not a very grievous fault. Most other writers on Poland, being without German connections such as Talvi's, have joined the Poles in decrying everything German and in upholding all that is French. As a result, the relation of Germany to her Slavic neighbor has been pictured as hostile and the reciprocal influence of their literatures as negligible, while the relation between France and the Poles has been unduly glorified. A fairminded person cannot deny that such a policy has neglected a factor which is quite evidently of importance for a complete study of the literature of the Poles. In view of this Talvi is not much to blame; she is, one might say, merely filling a gap which the friendly relation between France and Poland has created in the

1. Talvi says, Historical View, p. 287, "The Russian emperor declared openly that it should be his aim to annihilate all traces of Polish nationality, to metamorphose it into a Russian people." The Germans actually followed a similar policy with even greater vigor.

2. On pp.286-7, Talvi points out the affinity of Mickiewicz and Goethe. "Lelewel(Loelhoefel)",she says "is really a German."

discussion of the place of the literary influence of the Germans.

Talvi's strength is in the elucidation of the causes which lie behind the various trends of Polish literature. Mr. Gurowski summarizes her very plausible explanation of the Polish lack of initiative, especially in the field of the drama.

> "It cannot be contested, that there is a want of originality through all the stages of Polish literature. This deficiency had its origin in the adoptation of the Latin language and literature, and in the consequent estrangement from Slavic antiquity and national form. The Poles in politics and literature forgot their very early Slavic origin, they invented a Sarmatic ancestry, without any historical foundation, of which they were very proud". [1]

Talvi is just as strong in her discussion of Slavic popular poetry. In fact her efforts in this line did for the Poles what Wieland did for the Germans. But, because the popular legendary poetry had never developed in Poland as it had in Russia and Bohemia, Talvi is forced to limit her Polish section of popular poetry to a discussion of a few remnants.

1. Talvi: Historical View, p. 365.

After Talvi's Historical View of the Slavic Languages and literature, the next important account of Polish literature is Mrs. M. L. Putnam's article in the North American Review.[1] This was designed to be a criticism, "with extracts," of Krasinski's Nieboska Komedyia, but the introduction, Living Writers of Poland, was long and complete enough to stand by itself in the April number. The second part was not brief either; for, according to her promise,[2] "with extracts so copious as shall, better than commentary, enable the reader to judge the character and turn of thought of the writer," it filled a gap in the account of the three greatest Polish poets which would otherwise have long remained unbridged.

In her discussion of the living writers Mrs. Putnam adds considerable to previous accounts of Polish literature. She emphasizes the great seriousness of the literature during its golden age. Let us quote a paragraph which she translates apparently from Mickiewicz' Slavic Lectures:

> "This literature, more than the existing literature of any people, deserves the attention of serious men; for this, above all others, bears upon itself the stamp of reality. It is serious, earnest, noble; noble both by the spirit which inspires it, and the aim after which it strives. Every work is at the same time a deed. It is the life of the man himself

1. North American Review, 66:323-48 and 67:26-84.

2. North American Review, 66:346.

that animates his book. What he has thought, has felt, reveals itself in the written word, -

'As joy in smiles; as sorrow in the tear'." [1]

This paragraph gives the essence of Mrs. Putnam's contention. It also illustrates the idea, which was common to the Polish Romanticists, that a literary work is inseparable from a deed.

Mrs. Putnam, furthermore, recognizes the great originality of Polish literature during its golden era. This is noteworthy in view of the claims to the contrary of Talvi and Mr. Peabody. She says:

> "At no period of the history of Poland has her literature been distinguished by a character so original as at the present time; never before has it been so completely the exponent of the character and genius of the nation; never before animated by a spirit so truly Slavonian."[2]

Nor does she leave this statement without substantial evidence. She sketches the character of the living writers and, in the second part of her article, gives passages from Nieboska Komedyia (The Undivine or Profane Comedy), pointing out its similarity to Dante's great work, but also

1. North American Review, 66:323. The lectures on Polish literature were delivered in the Collége de Paris.

2. North American Review, 66:324.

indicating where it is the product of a creative mind.

In Paul Soboleski we have the first and only American anthologist of Polish poetry.[1] He avails himself, it is true, of the translations of Sir John Bowring and of a Dr. Thomas English; nevertheless he himself is responsible for the greater part of his selections. He includes sixty poets, with a sketch of the life of each, and he makes a preliminary survey of the five epochs of Polish poetry. He praises all that is worthy, and he follows a school of Polish critics in omitting or lightening the faults. Yet in spite of such deficiency, his extensive selections give a better idea of the scope and character of Polish poetry than any other one book.

The following is Mr. Soboleski's division of the periods up to his time (1881): [2]

I Piast Epoch.....1000-1500

II Epoch of King Sigismund.....1500-1620

III Jesuit Epoch.....1620-1750

IV Classic Epoch (Konarski Epoch).....1750-1822

V Romantic Epoch.....1822-1881.

There are selection from the poets of each period; however, the greater proportion is from the classic and romantic

1. Paul Soboleski: Poets and Poetry of Poland, Chicago 1881. The Polish poetry in Warners Library is taken largely from this book.

2. P. 17.

epcohs, a fact which points to the late and rapid development of the literature. Professor Brueckner corroborates the latter conclusion, and we are able to explain, in part at least, why so much of the Polish poetry which has come before the English public belongs to a comparatively recent period in the development of European literature. Among the sixty poets treated by Soboleski some ten, judging by the amount of praise and the number of pages they receive, stand out above the rest. They are: Rey of Naglowicz, Kochanowski, Niemciewicz, Brodzinski, Mickkiewicz, Slowacki, Krasinski, Malczewski, Berwinski, and Krasicki. Of these only the first two - six of the total number - wrote before 1750. This makes it clear that, whatever early Polish poetry may have to offer, only a few specimens from it have seemed to translators worthy of being brought before the English reader.

Since 1900 articles on Polish literature have appeared frequently in the American magazines. Most of these are brief and only a few show first hand knowledge of their subject. Some have been based on English articles, as for instance, those in The Living Age,[1] which

1. The Living Age, 233:14-27, for example, reprints Sienkiewicz and His Contemporaries from The Quarterly Review, 195:117-138.

are often merely reprints of articles in The Quarterly Review and Blackwoods Magazine; others are just as desultory sketches of travelers. But a small number are important and pertinent to our subject, and of these we will make a brief survey.

We begin by mentioning two articles by the famous Madam Helen Modjeska on Early Polish Drama. These appeared in the December,1899,and January,1900,numbers of The Critic. Madam Modjeska had already won an international reputation as an actress, playing leading Shakesperean roles in England and America for over a quarter of a century, and her study of the native Polish drama qualified her to speak to Americans with authority.

She opens her article by comparing the early Polish religious spectacles with the mysteries, moralities, and autosacramentales produced throughout Western Europe during the later middle ages. She shows how they are similar; she explains that Polish dramatists were long mere imitators and that only at rare intervals did they let that "characteristic Polish humour," which Sienkiewicz has so nobly embodied in his character-creation, Zagloba,[1] come out in their drama. She translates and describes a large part of a nativity play called Sopka, meaning

1. The character appears in With Fire and Sword; see pp.

the stable wherein the Lord was born. She gives an extended account of the beginnings of the theatre.

An interesting trait of the Polish audiences is brought out in this connection. Madam Modjeska says that because the Poles are "highly impressionable and apt to take illusion for reality," they often let their "exuberant demonstrativeness" go beyond bounds at a dramatic performance.[1] At the Warsaw theatre, for example, which was founded in 1863, it was not an infrequent occurence to see the unsophisticated audience climb angrily upon the stage and kill the actor. This was especially likely to happen in those early days, she says, when the actor had played well the part of the villain and had thereby aroused the unfeigned displeasure of the audience. She concludes by saying that Poles continue such demonstrations in a milder form to the present day.

We pass over such articles as Sienkiewicz and His Contemporaries,[2] which comes under consideration in the next chapter, and The Literary and Artistic Renaissance in Current Literature for 1905, which is rather fantastic, and turn to a series of articles which have recently appeared in a magazine called Poland.[3]

1. The Critic, 35:1119.

2. See note p.32.

3. Published at 953 Third Avenue, New York. Editor, Paul Le Tallec.

The first of these, which is called Poland's Literary Revival and which appeared in the February and March numbers for 1924, is by Charles Phillips. It attempts to prove that Poland is a literary country. The author speaks from experience, having spent more than three years since the World War traveling in Poland. He draws attention to restrictions under which Polish literature had to exist under alien rule. He says the Poles have developed a venturesome way of outwitting the alien censor by a sort of double entendre.[1] This can be exemplified by a score of literary works. The case of Sienkiewicz is most striking. While the author is ostensibly picturing the life of the persecuted Christians in Quo Vadis, he is really telling the story of Poland in an allegory which every true Pole understands. Likewise Krasinski, in his classic drama Iridion, does not mean to characterize a Roman tyrant of the past but a living Russian one.

In another part of his article Mr. Phillips sums up the most popular foreign reading of the Poles. He says:

> "Alongside with Shakespeare you behold Mark Twain (a great favorite in Poland and usually published in sets of volumes); Dante and Bernard Shaw consort together; Shelley and Jack London; Hawthorne, and

1. Poland, February, p. 90.

J.M. Barrie; Keats and Walt Whitman. Edgar Allen Poe's weirdness and originality have a great attraction for the Polish reader, as has also the fantastic mysticism of Robert Hugh Benson, who, of all the recent British authors, seems the most popular; his Lord of the World and The Dawn of All I saw on every newsstand. Dickens and Thackeray are standard favorites; Pickwick appears in a dozen different editions and seems known to every Pole who reads. Emerson is likewise an established favorite". [1]

Another article in Poland commands our attention. It is Polish Literature in English and bears directly upon the present thesis. Mrs. Eleanor E. Ledbetter, who writes this article for the April, 1924, number of the magazine, is Branch Librarian for the Cleveland Public Library. Her activity as Chairman of the Committee on Work with the Foreign Born for the American Library Association and her study of the Polish immigrant and his reading[2] led her into a field which is parallel to the present study. However, her account is very brief and enters into detail only in a few instances where it characterizes the main Polish classics. As these, and the greater part of her treatment otherwise, are repeated in various parts of our thesis, we will dismiss

1. Poland, February, p. 92.

2. A pamphlet, The Polish Immigrant and His Reading, by Mrs. Ledbetter will be considered in a later chapter.

her article by quoting her summary of Polish literature in English as she has become acquainted with it:

> "Looking back over the field traversed, one is struck by the fact that Polish literature depicts only a limited group, the INTELLIGENTSIA, and with a few exceptions only the well-to-do. In all the books surveyed only the people in The Comedienne, by Reymont, and the business man in The Argonauts can be said to work for a living. Przybyszewski's characters seem to be poor, but they don't work. Not a single hand worker, not a peasant is depicted in any of these books. And yet Poland is preeminently an agricultural country. It is evident, therefore, that the picture of Polish life drawn from these books is very incomplete. When Reymont's Peasants is published, it will help to round out the picture."[1]

A recent article, "Polish Literature at a Turning Point" is by Princess Casimir Lubomirski, wife of the first Polish minister to the United States. This gives a summary of the romantic, the realistic, and the positive-idealistic reactions in the successive periods of Polish literature. She says Polish literature "embraced a wide

1. Poland, April 1924, p. 251.

field of thought from abstract researches on fundamental idealitic problems to practical questions belonging in other countries to the domain of politicians, for the leading idea of Polish literature during the whole period of Polish captivity was the restoration of independent Poland."[1]

The remaining treatments of Polish literature in general, excepting those which are in a foreign language, are British rather than American. However, in as far as they have become available to the American reader, through republication or otherwise, they will be briefly considered.

Noteworthy work in the history of Polish literature has been done by W. R. Morfill, whose books have already been mentioned. His Early Slavonic Literature, published in London (1883) under the direction of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, treats early Polish literature up to the year 1606 with considerable detail.[2] It presents an excellent resume of those early literary productions which have remained in manuscript and which have escaped the other historians of Polish literature, and it compares the native popular poetry of Poland with the characteristic Russian "bilini" and Bohemian "Latinised Psalter". Morfill's other book, The Story of Poland (1883)

1. Bookman, Oct. 1925, p. 144.

2. Early Polish literature, pp. 178-206.

is primarily a political history, but it also includes an account of the literature up to the end of the nineteenth century.[1] In it are specimens from several lesser luminaries among Polish poets, such as Malczewski and Ujejski.[2]

With respect to the translation of Polish short stories Else C. M. Benecke has been active in England. In 1915 she published at Oxford Tales by Polish Authors in which are included the following selections:

Henryk Sienkiewicz:	Bartek, the Conqueror.
Stefan Zeromski:	Twilight. Temptation.
Adam Szymanski:	Srul - from Lubartow.
Waclaw Sieroszewski:	In Autumn. In Sacrifice of the Gods.

A year later Miss Benecke, in collaboration with Marie Busche, published More Tales by Polish Authors.[3] In this the table of contents is:

Szymanski, A.:	Maciej the Masur. Two Prayers.
W. St. Reymont:	The Trial.
Stefan Zeromski:	The Stronger Sex.
W. Sieroszewski:	The Chukchee.
Boleslaw Prus:	The Returning Wave.

1. Polish Literature, pp. 269-326.
2. Malczewski's Marya, pp. 313. Ujejski's Z Dymem Pozarow, p. 325.
3. Published by Longmans, Green and Co. New York, 1916.

Paul Selver, who has been called the modern Sir John Bowring, limits his Anthology of Modern Slavonic Literature[1] almost entirely to writers living at the time of publication, 1918. The few exceptions to this are authors who wrote early in the nineteenth century, but already exhibited the style and tendency of the moderns. Selver's aim is to include what is most typically racial, and he draws both from the short story and the poetry. The following is his contents for the Polish selections:

Prose (pp. 71-117)

W. Gomulicki: The Ploughman.

Boleslaw Prus: From the Legends of Ancient Egypt.

Stanislaw Przybyzewski: Chopin.

W. S. Reymont: In the Town at Lodz.

Poetry (pp. 208-222)

A. Asnyk: Without Limits.
The Torrent.

J. Kasprowicz: The wind whips.
What is Life worth?

M. Konopnicka: Now when the King.
Fragment.

L. Rydel: Centaur and Woman.
The Syrens.
Arise, O Song!

L. Staff: The Strange Shrine.
The Goblet of my Heart.

1. Anthology of Modern Slavonic Literature, London 1918, E. P. Dutton & Co., New York 1919.

L. Szczepanski: The Artist to the Woman.
Weariness.

K. Przerwa-Tetmajer: Song of the Night Mists.
On the Lonely Road.
Czardas.

Roman Dyboski, Professor of English Literature at the University of Cracow and Reader in Polish literature at Oxford, is the most recent and, perhaps, the best English-speaking authority on the literature of the Poles. His recent volumes, Periods of Polish Literary History[1] and Modern Polish Literature,[2] are written in excellent English, are complete in their respective fields, and have the additional merit of connecting the stages of Polish literature with the stages of English literature. The first named work, Professor Dyboski states, is based on voluminous Polish literary histories and, in the selection of material, upon the complete German history by Professor Brueckner. The second is intendednto be a companion to the first and complement it, especiallyn in the field of the modern Polish novel and in Polish dramatic literature.

The two books give a comprehensive survey of the important periods of Polish literature. The chapters

1. Oxford University Press, 1923.
2. Oxford University Press, 1924.

are complete in themselves, and each section ends with a summary of the characteristics of the literature considered. Wherever possible the author shows how the trends in Polish literature run parallel to similar trends in other European literatures, and in every case where the Polish writers have been influenced by the English, he draws attention to the fact. By his method of comparison, he finds in Poland a Walter Scott, a Byron, a Shelley, a Shakespeare, a Tennyson, a Dickens, and several Wordsworths. But in several ways he brings out how Polish literature is unique. For instance, "Coming to the end of this survey (of the seventeenth century) ... we miss the glories of the drama, which by that time had reached, or even passed, its heighest splendour in England, France, and Spain";[1] or, "the Romanticism of England is mainly a revolt of personality, that of France a revolt of literary programme, and that of Germany a revolt of historical thought. The Romanticism of Poland, necessarily, under the hard conditions of national defeat and captivity, becomes a revolt of nationality chiefly, and being a matter of life and death to the people, and not a mere affair of literary battles, acquires the gravity, the power, and the width of a religious creed".[2]

1. Periods of Polish Literary History, p. 51.
2. Periods of Polish Literary History, p. 87.

In another way these books reflect a peculiarity of Polish literature when compared with the leading literatures of Europe. About eighty pages of the two books are devoted to the golden age, the century of wars, and the era of enlightenment of Polish literature. More than one hundred and twenty pages are devoted to the Romantic period alone, and almost as much to the period which follows that. This indicates quite clearly that, whatever Polish literature may be since the nineteenth century, it was extremely meagre and undeveloped in the centuries before that. As we have said before, Polish literature, as far as the English reader is able to study it, is of late development and the period which most Poles call their golden age (the sixteenth century) is a golden age of the country rather than of the literature.

A number of non-English histories of Polish literature are available to the American reader; of these we will mention only the most important. Professor Alexander Brueckner of Leipzig - he is a Pole by birth - has written both a complete history of Polish literature in six hundred and twenty-eight pages[1] and a short article on the subject in Die Osteuropaeischen Literaturen.[2] His Slavic scholarship

1. Geschichte der Polnischen Literatur, Leipzig,1901.
2. Polnische Literatur, pp. 153-175.

is well recognised, as witnessed by the tribute Professor Dyboski has given him in his preface[1] and as shown by the bibliographies which are appended to English works on Polish literature.[2]

A very attractive presentation of Polish literature is in the series of histories of Slavic literature by Pipin and Spasowicz. It is the latter named scholar who has written on the Polish literature and his work is available both in the Polish and in the German language. Many of the critical treatments of Polish literature by Professor Chmelowski have also been translated into the German. Besides these, there are the somewhat shorter German works of H. Nitschimann and of R. F. Arnold.[3]

The histories of literature in general, the so-called histories of world literature, usually give only scant attention to the literature of Poland. Otto Hauser.....p.44.

Otto Hauser has treated Polish literature in forty-one pages in his compendious German work, Weltgeschichte der Literatur.[4] This, alongside with a short French work

1. See p. 41 of this thesis.

2. Paul Werner in his Bibliography of Slavic Europe, for example, refers to several works by Professor Brueckner on the Slavic literatures.

3. See Appendix VI.

4. Leipzig u. Wien 1910, pp. 368-409.

by Faguet,[1] is the only so-called history of the literature of the world which gives more than passing attention to the Literature of Poland. Richard G. Moulton, for example, in his fairly complete World Literature, in two volumes,[2] gives only a brief paragraph to a comparison of Sienkiewicz and Sir Walter Scott. Richardson and Owen, who deign to give fifty-three pages to such a literature as the Irish in their introduction to The Literature of the World, mention only one Polish work.[3] Likewise, Professor Saintsbury, who edites a series of books on Periods of European Literature, has allowed only one page to the literature in the volume on The Romantic Triumph.[4] And with every work of this general type the situation is the same.

The general encyclopedias of course have considerable treatments. The Encyclopedia Britanica has about 22,000 words devoted to the literature of Poland.[5] The Americana

1. Emile Faguet: Initiation into Literature of the World. Translated into English.
2. MacMillans, New York, 1911, p. 424, vol. I.
3. Quo Vadis, p. 513.
4. Osmond: The Romantic Triumph. pp. 387-8.
5. W. R. Morfill: Britanica, vol. XXI, pp. 923-9.

has an excellent summary of Polish literature by Professor Leo Wiener of Harvard.[1] But with these exceptions all English histories of literature in general fail to treat Polish literature, except in passing.

Before concluding this chapter it is necessary to mention once more a work to which we have often referred, but which is so important that it deserves special attention. Poland, a Study of the Land, Literature, and People, by the greatest of Danish critics, is perhaps the most authoritative comparatative treatment of Polish literature available to the English reader. Professor Brandes is one of the leading critics of European literatures living today; his judgment carries weight in a large range of literary fields. Moreover, Professor Brandes has not made the study of Poland through second-hand sources. His book is really the product of four separate visits to the leading Polish literary centers, and each impression, as he calls the visit, is uninfluenced by the foregoing impression.

1. Encyclopaedia Americana, 22: 305-8.

CHAPTER IV

TREATMENTS OF THE MAJOR POLISH WRITERS

Our survey of Polish literature in America now has come to treatments of the major Polish writers. The previous chapter was concerned with treatments in general, that is, with treatments that had to do with Polish literature as a whole, and not with one or the other of the more important authors. The present chapter will consider the treatments of those authors who, because of their importance to Polish literature or because of their attraction for the American public, have received the most attention in this country.

Only six among the many Polish authors of merit have been given enough attention in America to warrant their being included in this discussion. There are several reasons for this. The great trefoil of Mickiewicz, Slowacki, and Krasinski includes the only poets who have been extensively translated into English, as well as the only poets who have been individually treated in English books and periodicals. They are, critics agree, the greatest masters of the Polish verse, and in their united love of Poland, and ardent patriotism, together with their distinct poetic gifts, they stand unchallenged as the preeminent representatives of Polish poetry.

Likewise, the prolific and versatile novelist, Kraszewski, and the even greater Sienkiewicz, together with the realist, W. S. Reymont, represent all that is best in Polish prose. As novelists they stand for the great movements which have affected the literature of the Poles since that gained a national importance. As representatives of Polish prose in America they have the greatest rights because they alone have been repeatedly translated. These three need no defense. If other novelists are greater than they, critics and translators have failed to notice them, and if there is one writing today who can surpass any of them, the test of time will have to sanction their claims and bring them a permanent reputation.

The six, therefore: Mickiewicz, Slowacki, Krasinski, Kraszewski, Sienkiewicz, and Reymont, include the best Polish authorship which is known in America. They represent, moreover, most of the literary fields in which the Poles have been able to compete with other nationalities. The exceptions which might be advanced to this claim can, from our standpoint, reasonably be put aside. Lelewel, for example, to whom Morfill gives a prominent place among Polish historians,[1] and whom Talvi praises

1. The Story of Poland, pp. 316-320.

with enthusiasm, is not even mentioned in the important books of Professor Dyboski.[1] Nor have any of his works, as far as the present writer is aware, ever been translated into English. Likewise Kochanowski, of whom Morfill speaks as "the prince of Polish lyric poets"[2] and whom Professor Dyboski calls "the greatest poet of Poland's golden age,"[3] is given only passing attention by Professor Brueckner, and is represented in English only by the brief selections of Sir John Bowring and P. Soboleski.[4] And with Elizabeth Druzbacka, the foremost Polish poetess, according to Soboleski, the situation is the same. Only Mr. Soboleski deigns to give her poetry a place among his translations.[5] In that way all the Polish authors could be eliminated up to the six we have selected for consideration.

A certain thesis presents itself in the discussion of these six representative authors. We have already noted that, in spite of the fact that some Polish critics place their golden age in the sixteenth century, almost nothing of Polish poetry before the eighteenth century has been presented to the English reader. We now find that,

1. (a) Periods of Polish Literary History.
   (b) Modern Polish Literature.
2. The Story of Poland, p. 276.
3. Periods of Polish Literary History, p. 17.
4. See p. 23
5. Poets and Poetry of Poland, p. 79.

although a good deal of the poetry of the Romantic period has been translated, none of it has ever received anywhere near the attention that has been bestowed upon the Polish novel. Whereas to-day the name of Sienkiewicz is on the lips of all Ameridans who speak of Polish literature, the name of his equal in the field of poetry, Mickiewicz, is scarecely heard at all.

We can assign several reasons for this neglect on the one hand and interest on the other. In the first place, we are now living - and have been since the middle of the nineteenth century, when the literature of Poland was first being translated - in an age of prose rather than of poetry. Everyone knows that the average reader of today - whether the cause be modern inventions and cold science or a natural evolution of a prosaic mind - reads a great many more short stories and facinating novels than poems whatso-ever. This is especially the case,at least so Europeans believe, in America. Here the "speed and money mad" people have little time and less desire for an aesthetic appreciation of a poem. What our public craves is excitement, Western fiction, and the like. There are so few exceptions to this that we must all admit that it characterizes the greater part of the American reading public. Many of our novels - and Quo Vadis was one of them - have

gone through six or seven editions in a short space of time. The great epic of Mickiewicz, Pan Tadeusz, on the other hand, is known in America mainly through the prose translation which Professor Noyes made for the California Centennial Publications. In part, at least, it is the popular demand for prose which has caused the American neglect of the poetry of Poland.

A second and more pertinent reason for the undue American neglect of Polish poetry is in the intrinsic nature of that poetry. Following the dictum of Goethe,[1] we would say that in order to understand Polish poetry, one must go among the Polish people. The three great poets of Poland, though strongly contrasted in personality, were united by their love of country and their desire to serve it through every poem they wrote. Each was at his best when he re-incarnated the spirit of his fellow patriots. Each wished to give utterance to that desperate protest which was agitating all Poles as a result of the partitions of 1794 and 1831. Each wished to instill a faith in a future political and social salvation. And when one of them wrote on a remote or neutral subject, the strife between Poland and her foe was always

1. "Wer den Dichter will verstehen
Musz in Dichters Lande gehen."

Motto at beginning of West-Oestlichen Divan.

in the background. We need only instance the Iridion of Krasinski, the Beniowski of Slowacki. Whatever the theme of the Polish poet, the poem and the nation were so closely linked together that we cannot appreciate the one without understanding the other.

And the American of today has much difficulty understanding the Poland about which Mickiewicz, Slowacki, and Krasinski write. At one time Americans fought for political freedom with sons of Poland at their side. Then Poles and Americans had aspirations which were very much alike. But that is long ago. In our era American standards of taste are so deeply at variance with those which prevailed in romantic Poland, that in order to understand the time of which Mickiewicz speaks, for example, in his epic about contemporary Lithuania,[1] we have to study the wars of Napolean and thir connection with the fate of the Poles. In fact, we have to go even farther; we have to reproduce the very emotions upon which the poet bases his poem; we have to re-enact each scene. That is often a feat which only the devotee of the poetry of the past can perform. Most Americans find it much easier to look at Poland from a disinterested, historical view, such as

1. See pp.

Sienckiewicz and Krasciuszko, for example, permit in their novels. Let us quote in this connection a paragraph from Professor Dyboski which contrasts the romantic poetry of Poland with the historical novel of Sienkiewicz:

> "The later efforts of Sienkiewicz, however, have carried us forward into a new and different era of larger and less commonplace national aspirations which revived on the eve of the war. The atmosphere of the more distant, gloomy years which immediately followed the defeat of 1863, necessarily at first produced another and more severely restrained type of realism in national literature...Poets could not, if they would, rave in their verse now on the glories, heightened by the imagination, of Poland's past or future. It was the drab existence of Poland in the present that had to be dealt with, in its meanest material aspects, in a necessarily quite different style of verse, or preferably in sober prose." [1]

Professor Dyboski is really explaining two transitions, one from romantic poetry to the historical novel, the

1. Periods of Polish Literary History, p. 139.

other from the historical to the realistic novel. Sienkiewicz was a writer after both the historical and realistic types. He was at once an idealist and realist. He belonged to both the romantic and the post-romantic ages. This is, perhaps, one reason why Jermiah Curtin saught him out and gave the American reader a translation of every important work that the great novelist produced.[1] Again, to continue the contrast, Mickiewicz belongs entirely to the era of yesterday, to the era when romantic poetry was in vogue. That is why, we assume, he has remained in comparative obscurity. But we shall reserve further exemplification of this thesis for a more detailed discussion of the six representative writers.

Adam Mickiewicz, the greatest poet of Poland and the successor of Pushkin both as "undoubted head of Slavonic literature" and as interpreter of Slavonic Romanticism, was born near Wilno in 1798. He received a part of his education at the Wilno University, but owing to the discovery of some secret societies which had been formed there among the students, he was sent at the age of twenty-six to live as a kind of hostage in Russia. While in that country he

1. Mr. Curtin has translated more of Sienkiewicz than any other one man. See Appendix III.

made the acquaintance of Pushkin, visited the Crimea, to which he dedicated some beautiful sonnets,[1] and wrote Konrad Wallenrad, an epic or story which treated of the relations between Russia and Poland.

In 1829 the exiled Mickiewicz voluntarily left Russia, never to return, and soon took up his residence in Paris. On his way to France he passed through Weimar, paying a visit to Goethe, whose cold objectivity horrified him, but whose literary genius, nevertheless, made an impression upon the Polish idealist, as shown by his Feast of the Ancestors. This fantastic drama accompanies and expresses successive phases of the author's life, like Faust, and it also describes an unhappy first love with a resulting consecration to the muse. Mickiewicz' travels also took him through Geneva, where he met his fellow poets, Krasinski and Slowacki, and through Rome, where he formed an intimate friendship with the American novelist, James Fenimore Cooper.

Wherever Mickiewicz went he lived his mission "to sing the nation's martyrdom and to inspire its souls for endurance."[2] His earliest writings had come as a result of the wave of Byronism which was sweeping over Europe

1. These have been translated into English, See p. 64.

2. Dyboski: Periods of Polish Literary History, p.90.

and which affected Pushkin and Slowacki especially. His poetry presently caught the fire of patriotism, and Mickiewicz became the foremost singer of the brave and exiled Polish soldiers. The insurgents who flocked to Paris in 1831 after an unsuccessful revolution aginst Russia, found in him their greatest teacher. The text was The Pilgrim's Book, the highest achievement of Mickiewicz in the study of citizenship. No Pole under the influence of this book or its author could help becoming strengthened and ennobled.

But a still greater work than The Pilgrim's Book came out of the disaster of 1831. Mickiewicz wrote his epic, Pan Tadeusz, he said, because among the clouds which were hanging over the nation and darkening men's minds and because of the dispari which was shaking all Poles, men needed the comfort of recollections of older days.[1] And he made Pan Tadeusz "a perfect poem of self liberation".[2] He set the scene in the idyllic surroundings of his childhood, in Lithuania where the Poles had lived in hopes of freedom when Napoleon was marching against Russia and where

1. G.P. Noyes: Pan Tadeusz(Mr. Thaddeus), note p.375. "To drown the grief and dispair with which that tragedy had filled his mind Mickiewicz turned back in the next year...to the scenes of his childhood, to the days full of hope and joyful expectation that preceded Napoleon's attack on Russia." See also Dyboski, p. 93.

2. Charles H. Genung: Warners Library, 17:9995.

Kosciuszko had grown up to be the liberty-loving patriot that drew the admiration of all the world. But let us postpone further discussion of this great epic for a later chapter.

After his marriage in 1834, Mickiewicz wrote no more poetry. Family cares, it seems, and his growing devotion to Towianski, a Polish fanatic and visionary, disqualified him for further creative work. However, he was summoned to Lausanne as professor of classical literature, which position he held until he was called to the head of Slavonic literature at the College de France. Here Mickiewicz was in his element. Chopin, George Sand,[1] David d' Angers, Turgenev, Sainte Beuve, Lamennais, and many other illustrious Europeans came to listen to his lectures. All France had his name on their lips. His poetry was all being translated into French. Renan spoke of him as "a sort of giant Lithuanian full of the pith of the great races of to-morrow, of their warning, freshly born of the earth".[2] As prophet and poet he had already worked a spell upon

1. George Sand: Revue de deux Mondes, Dec. 1839, wrote of Mickiewicz, "Since the tears and the imprecations of the prophets of Sion, no voice has been raised with such power to sing a subject so vast as that of a nation's fall."

2. Gabriel Sarrazin: Les Grands Poetes Romantiques de la Pologne, p. ix, quotes Renan: "une sorte de géant lithuanien plein de la sève des grandes races au lendemain de leur eveil, fraichement né de la terre"

his countrymen, as lecturer he now charmed the cultured of Paris with his magnificent aesthetic critiques and his animated improvisations. It is true that his knowledge of Slavonic literature outside of the Polish was limited to a cursory acquaintance with Russian literature before Pushkin, and that his lectures were often disfigured by many fantastic derivations of words, which proved too clearly that his scientific method was faulty; nevertheless, his lectures added to his reputation and helped him to bring the native Polish poetry before the civilized world.

After four years as professor, Mickiewicz' revolutionary ideas forced him to give up his chair and turn to journalistic work. In his lectures he had again and again emphasized the importance of the mission that Poland had fulfilled as the outpost of Latin Christianity and the bulwark of European civilization in the East. After he turned mystic - he never became passively contemplative, as Oriental or Russian mystics do - as a result of the Messianic gospel of Towianski, he looked about for an opportunity to aim a deadly blow for Poland. Italy, 'the second native land' of every civilized man, was preparing to rise against Austria, and Austria was one of the three foes of Poland. Accordingly Mickiewicz

rushed to Italy to organize an auxiliary corps of Polish volunteers there. But the Italian revolt was short-lived and Mickiewicz could accomplish nothing. It is difficult for a Pole to speak calmly of this truly heroic, though fruitless attempt. The poet's son has written its elaborate history, and the great modern poet and artist, Wyspianski, has crowned it with laurel in his drama The Legion. But another opportunity soon arose before the poet's eyes, for a few years later the Crimean war aimed to hit Russia, the greatest oppressor of Poland. It was in this last heroic attempt that the poet lost his life, and it is the picture of him rushing to Constantinople to fight against Russia that the Poles like to recall when they think of the last days of their greatest poet.

We turn now to Pan Tadeusz, the literary masterpiece of Mickiewicz and of all Polish poets. As this has twice been translated into English,[1] it is the work which should most concern the American student of Polish poetry. Our discussion of it will be based mainly upon the prose version by Professor Noyes, though the estimations of Professor Brandes and Alexander Brueckner will be included.

1. Mr. Thaddeus, or the Last Foray in Lithuania. A story of life among the Polish gentry folk in the years 1811-1812, translated by Maud Biggs, London, 1887, and by Professor George Rapall Noyes, 1917.

Let us begin by quoting a paragraph which Professor Noyes translates from a letter by Krasinski, himself a great poet of Poland, which characterizes the great epic:

> "No European nation of our day has such an epic as Pan Tadeusz. In it Don Quixote has been fused with the Illiad. The poet stood on the border line between a vanishing generation and our own. Before he died, he had seen them; but now they are no more. That is precisely the epic point of view. Mickiewicz has performed his task with a master's hand; he has immortalized a dead generation...Pan Tadeusz is a true epic". [1]

Professor Noyes adds: "This verdict upon the great masterpiece of all Slavic poetry, written a few years after its appearance, has been confirmed by posterity; for the chapter on Pan Tadeusz by George Brandes, than whom there have been few more competant judges of European literatures, is little more than an expansion of Krasinski's pithy sentences."[1]

This can be corroborated by a number of quotations. Professor Brandes says, after comparing Mickiewicz with Oelenschlaeger and Tegner, "The Norse poets draw from legendary history, while Mickiewicz, especially where he is

1. Pan Tadeusz, tran. by Noyes, Introduction.

at his best (as in Pan Tadeusz and inccertain parts of Dziady), reproduces a life he has seen with his own eyes, or a life the memory of which still hovers in the air about him".[1] Professor Brandes continues:

> "This is the secret of his superiority over a whole army of contemporary national poets; it is this which gives his Romanticism a comparatively modern stamp".[2]

We add to this the weight of the judgment of Alexander Brueckner:

> "Out of that which the reflecting child and the dreaming boy had seen and heard, grew the greatest poetic work of Slavic literati....."

Speaking of the description in Pan Tadeusz, he says:

> "What lends value to the pictures, what places them far above all modern epics, is, next to the uncommon art of the master poet, his feeling for nature and sense for color, together with the unsurpassed plasticity of his landscapes and surroundings, the emotions, the tears under the laughter, yes under the

1. Brandes: Poland, p. 202.
2. Brandes: Poland, p. 203.

light irony, the inmost sympathy, in which the reader participates."[1]

Professor Dyboski speaks of the epic as "the outcome of humble longings and familiar chats." He points out that it presents a narrow social sphere, but that it surrounds with the glamour of cherished memories the petty incidents of a family feud which form the plot of the story. It is only the story of a country gentleman, he says, "Yet this unpretending verse chronicle of provincial life has become the only great national epic which the modern world possesses."[2]

As has been intimated, the epic is based on actual events which happened in Lithuania in the years 1811 and 1812. However, the author allows himself considerable freedom in the handling of historical facts. For example, he frequently brings in the character of Thaddeus Kosciuszko, and it is very evident that the great patriot whom the world knows was Mickiewicz' ideal Pole; still, we are surprised to find, the gentleman after whom the work is

1. Brueckner: Osteuropaeischen Literaturen, p. 160, "aus dem, was daheim das sinnende Kind, der traeumende Knabe erschout und erlauscht hatten, erwuchs das groeszte poetische Werk Slawischen literaturen. ...Was diesen heiteren Bildern, den Wert leiht, der sie weit ueber alle modernen Epen stellt, ist, neben der auszerordentlichen Kunst des Meisters, seines Naturgefuehles und Farbensinnes, neben der unuebertroffenen Plastik seiner Landschaften und Gegenden, das bewegte Gefuehl; die Traenen unter dem Laecheln, ja unter der leichten Ironie; die inige Sympathie, die sich dem Leser mitteilt".

2. Dyboski: Periods of Polish Literary History, p.95.

named is a very commonplace son of a certain Monk Robak. There is still another discrepancy in this. Not the Thaddeus after whom the epic is named, but his gifted father is the real hero of the poem; the son figures only more or less incidentally. The father, however, is well presented; he is really the epitome of Mickiewicz' longings; he is "the masterly representation of that particular element in Polish national life which concentrates in it the very life-force of Polish history during the age of captivity."[1]

At times the exiled, homeless poet lets his feelings run away with himself as he writes. But that is only for a moment. After having given vent to his depression, he immediately recovers "the epic ease and comfort", as Professor Brueckner describes it,[2] and returns to a rabbit chase or bear-baiting, or the humming of the birds.

Professor Brandes concludes that throughout the epic "we find realistic traits. But that which is peculiarly Polish, is that hand in hand with the hankering after reality and futurity, there is an unconquerable tendency to abstraction, allegory and superstition...Poles are at once realists and spiritualists."[3]

1. Periods of Polish Literary History, p. 97.

2. Oseuropaeischen Literaturen, p. 162. "epische Ruhe und zemachlichkeit."

3. Brandes: Poland, p. 203.

Having taken a glance at the greatest Polish poem we can sum up some of the factors which make it undesired by the American reader. The scene of the poem, Lithuania, was 'near and dear to every Pole'. That is why every thing that Mickiewicz said about it was alive and vital to the Polish reader; for him there could be no better topic. But the American is not certain whether Lithuania is an outpost of Poland, or a separate country. Beyond Kosciuszki not another of the historical characters in the epic is known to him. Nor can he sympathize with that Polish habit of presenting the real things together with a cloud of mythical matter. The panegyrics and quaint bits of lyrical poetry may strike him as beautiful. Other factors may excite his admiration. But, taking the poem as a whole, he has ann interest in it which is passing, and he will wait a long time before he will call for a second edition of the poem.

The remaining poetry of Mickiewicz which has been translated is limited to a few brief lyrics, some extracts from The Litany of the Polish Pilgrim,[1] and Sonnets from Crimea. We quote a sample from the latter volume which seems typical of Mickiewicz at his best:

1. The Pilgrim's Book. See Appendix. III

The Grave of Countess Potocka

In Spring of love and life, My Polish Rose,
You faded and forgot the joy of youth;
Bright butterfly, it brushed you, then left ruth
Of bitter memory that stings and glows.
O Stars! that seek a path my northland knows,
How dare you now on Poland shine forsooth,
When she who loved you and lent you her youth
Sleeps where beneath the wind the long grass blows?

Alone, My Polish Rose, I die, like you.
Beside your grave a while pray let me rest
With other wanderers at some grief's behest.
The tongue of Poland by your grave ringsttrue.
High-hearted, now a young boy past it goes,
Of you it is he sings, My Polish Rose [1]

In Julius Slowacki we have the second great poet of Poland. In him Polish drama reached its culmination. The series of tragedies which he put forth, though deficient for theatrical production, contain some of the best imaginative flights and some of the most luxuriant language

1. Sonnets From Crimea; tr. by Edna Worthley Underwood. San Francisco, 1917, p. 13.

that can be found in Polish literature. And with respect to variety of subjects and sources of inspiration, he went beyond Mickiewicz. His sources range from Percy's ballads and Macpherson's Ossian to Shakespeare and Byron, from Homer and Plato's Republic to Dante and Calderon, and even Victor Hugo; and the subjects of his poetry run through a wide circle of human feelings, from love of nature and woman - in his fantastic lyric idyl In Switzerland - to a despairing father's love of his dying children in his Oriental story The Father of the Plague-Stricken. The kingdom of his dramatic poetry was immense, extending from legendary early history, in the manner of King Lear, to airy spirits' regions like those of Midsummer Night's Dream.

Although subjects from national story largely prevail, Slowacki often touched themes which are not strange to the foreign reader. In several ways, Slowacki was a precursor. He wrote a Maria Stuart before Schiller, and a Beatrice Cenci before Shelley. His first play Balladina, the tragedy of a criminal and ambitious Queen, is essentially a Polish Macbeth; his second, Lilla Veneda, the tragedy of the devoted daughter of an unhappy deposed old king, may be called a Polish King Lear. But besides

fundamental resemblances to these two great Shakespearean models, both dramas are full of echoes from the fantastic world of the Midsummer Night's Dream and The Tempest. The most popular play of Slowacki, Mazeppa, is also comparable to its Shakespearean model. It resembles Othello in its severe artistic economy, its paucity of characters, and in the completeness with which its characters are compelled to follow the same relentless fate.

But later Slowacki was able to overcome the spell of Shakespeare and his drama came to be influenced more by the magician of the drama - the Spanish Calderon. Certain mystical elements began to show themselves; but these were still in the germ when he wrote what is perhaps his most exquisite play with a Polish theme, called The Incorigible Ones. Professor Dyboski compares this to Edmond Rostand's poetic play Les Romanesques. Its charm, he says "is of a similar nature; it is breathed by two most poetical, though slightly ironic characters - Count Phantasus and Lady Idalia - who weave the gossamer of their imagination round melancholy dreams and delicate tendernesses. To see them impersonated by an actor and an actress endowed with the subtle spirit of poetry is to fall in love forever with these two embodiments of Romantic sentiment". [1]

1. Dyboski; Modern Polish Literature, p. 90.

But with all this excellence, Slowacki has much that is repellent. He had begun his career, like Mickiewicz, by reincarnating Byron; but he soon came to surpass his master in his "satanic pessimism". His dramas are seldom suited to the stage; besides they are too dark, too fantastical, too mystical. And where he turns to a beautiful Polish theme, as he does in The Incorrigible Ones, for instance, he is so keenly sensible to the faults of his countrymen, that he is constantly forced to depart from his theme for a fantastical, but better world.

Only in his long poem Beniowski is Slowacki able to overcome the influence of foreign drama and enter into a truly Polish spirit. This unfinished epic, in well-managed "ottava rima", is a veritable museum of national curiosities. "No work of Polish poetry, "says Professor Dyboski, "is such a perfect encyclopaedia of national and international, literary and social, religious and philosophical problems and subjects of interest in the revolutionary period of the nineteenth century."

But underneath the jester's garb of Beniowski there was a suffering heart which felt the woes of a captive nation and which was often shaken by passionate outbursts of patriotic sorrow. It is as such that we in America

mainly know him. One of the most striking poems in P. Soboleski's Poets and Poetry of Poland, is Slowacki's "I am so sad, O God".[1] The only other complete translation from this poet is a lyric of a similar nature. It is "An exile's hymn at sunset on the sea" and was translated by Frank H. Fortey for the Slavonic Review.[2]

A portion of one of his dramas has also come into English. It was first published in Soboleski's book, but it is also included in the Warners Library.[3] Mindowe, which names the hero, King of Lithuania, deals with the conflict between the Pagan Slavic religion and Christianity. The scene which is given in translation deals with the king just after he has been baptized into the Christian religion.

Sigismund Krasinski, the third great poet of Poland, is in every sense of the word a mystic. In the case of Mickiewicz we have seen Romanticism approached through folklore interest, in that of Slowacki by literary imagination. In Krasinski we shall find it reached by the road of profound philosophical meditation on

1. Pp. 272 ff.

2. See Appendix.

3. 23: 13511-18

social problems and by a devout faith in a mystical religion. It is a matter of surprise that the precocious aristocrat of twenty-one should carefully shut himself off from contact with other social spheres and produce such a social study as The Undivine Comedy. It is just as much to be wondered at that this son of a general should, in spite of a burning patriotism, teach his country "the philosophy of non-resistance and self-abnegation"[1] But the young mind had a balance and an independence such as are rarely found in a young Polish poet. The Undivine Comedy, a pendant to the immortal work of Dante, not only presents the class war between aristocracy and democracy, but, in allegory, depicts the class struggle which is raging even to-day. It is the struggle between the rich and the poor, the powerful and the masses, and the solution which Krasinski finds for it, bespeaks a wisdom and philosophy of life such as belongs to the sanest genius.

Born at Paris (1812), of an old aristocratic family - the mother was a princess of the house of Radziwell, the father, Count Vincent Krasinski, an adjutant of Napoleon,-Krasinski early came in touch with illustrious Europeans. At fourteen he wrote two novels after the manner

1. Warners Library, 15:8735.

When only a little older he wrote romances in imitation of Victor Hugo's which were "autobiographical fantasies and allegories in beginning, prose and verse treatises on philosophy in the Hegelian manner towards the end, and a profusion of love lyrics throughout".[1] But a crisis came to the young poet which led him to a peculiar realm of poetry. When his father, who was then in Warsaw, cast his vote for the Czar and favored the conviction of some Polish patriots, Sigismund was so offended that he renounced his family connections and never signed his name to any of his productions. He went to Geneva, where he met Mickiewicz, and began his two symbolic poems which are his greatest productions.

The Iridion, which some place even above The Undivine Comedy,[2] is half drama, half epic. It treats of the downfall of the antique world in its wisdom and beauty, and the triumph throughout the world of persecuted Christianity; it is a contrast of the degeneracy of Rome and the enthusiastic patriotism of the Greeks, climaxed by an ultimate salvation through the Christian religion.

The principal works which Krasinski wrote later are clouded by his growing mysticism. His Psalms of the Future expand the religious exaltation which already showed

1. Dyboski: Periods of Polish Literary History, p.111

2. Warners Library, 15:8735, speaks of it as Krasinski's greatest achievement.

itself in Iridion. His Psalms of Faith look back upon Poland's past and her historical mission. His Psalm of Grief mourns, with all the best Poles, the want of true Christian spirit in the world of his day. Whatever he wrote was in the interest of his genuine mission for Poland. Iridion really suggested Christianity as the national salvation. The Psalms express the prayers which were on the lips of all the inspired exponents of Poland's cause. Krasinski never lived to realize that his vision of a great future Poland was after all the creation of a poet who was far ahead of his day.

At one time Krasinski wrote to his English friend, Henry Reeve:

> "From day to day the political horizon darkens, but Poland no longer needs the light of the sun. Her blades must be brandished and lances raised by the glimmer of a meteor-light of war. I have letters from France and England, and I know that an European war is inevitable. If so, Poland is saved." [1]

That war came in the form of a Polish insurrection a few years after the poet died (1856), but it ended with the final partition of Poland in 1863. Although Krasinski

1. Atheneum, 1902, p. 139, "The Correspondence of Sigismund Krasinski with Henry Reeve".

had "an insight into the future which was almost apocalyptic",[1] he could not see that the enthusiasm which was impelling the Polish nationalists had to be accompanied by deeds before it could work out the country's salvation.

In conclusion, we note that the main traits of Krasinski, mysticism and pursuit of a phantom ideal, permeate all of his poetry and that they, though less in evidence in The Undivine Comedy which has been translated into English,[2] explain why his poetry is so little adapted to the practical American reader.

The purveyor-general of Polish historical and other novels is Joseph Ignatius Kraszewski. The five hundred volumes which, at a rough estimate, he produced place him next to Lope de Vega with respect to indefatigible literary industry. But only three of his many novels and one of a number of plays have been translated into English. Nor are there any English accounts of him except such as are found in the Encyclopaedia and in the books of Professor Dyboski. We shall, therefore, limit our brief account

1. Warners Library, 15:8735.

2. The Undivine Comedy, translated by Martha Walker Cook, J.B. Lipincott Co.

Monica M. Gardner: Life of Sigismund Krasinski, Cambridge Press, 1911

of this novelist to a few gleanings from Professor Dyboski's extended treatment.[1]

The productiveness of Kraszewski is equaled by another quality, the versatility of his genius, both in fiction and in other literary forms. He wrote historical treatises as well as novels and plays of contemporary life and manners. Some sort of literature was continually flowing from his pen. With manifold interests and a good range of sources he was able to feed his countrymen so assiduously with fiction and drama and scientific matter, that he, more than any other established a permanent place for Polish literature in the homeland.[2]

Kraszewski was born in Warsaw(1812), but he received his education in Wilno, that focus from which Mickiewicz, Kosciuszko, and many other illustrious Poles issued upon the world arena. At that time Wilno was the gathering place of the Polish gentry,and Kraszewski accordingly began his literary career by writing about the town and the men and women he found there. His outlook began to broaden, however, and with farming as a means of livelihood, he traveled from place to place, writing as he went, until he finally settled as a citizen in Dresden, Germany.

1. Dyboski: Modern Polish Literature. pp. 11-21.
2. Brueckner: Osteuropaeischen Literaturen, 164. "Erst seine polnischen Werke draenkten die Fransosischen von der Lesewelt."(His Polish works were the first to crowd out French works from the reading world.)

The first note of the novelist was struck by The Poet and the World. This sentimental novel depicted the idealist in a materialistic community, at the same time expressing the author's belief in the divine mission of art. It was followed by a number of works of the same type, only one of which, The Sphinx, stands out. Here the story of a court painter under the last King of Poland is at the bottom of a skilfull presentation of the studio and its atmosphere.

Connections with a Warsaw paper soon led Kraszewski to a greater field, namely, the description of the rustic family life of the Slav. To this epoch of his career belong a large number of powerful and sometimes glorified pictures of Polish peasants and villages. The political situation of the country also found expression in this period of Kraszewski's life. They led him into trouble though, and he was finally banished from his country because of his radical views.

Of his many novels some have been popular abroad as well as in Poland. In 1862, in fact, when Kraszewski celebrated his fiftieth anniversary by publishing his two hundred and fiftieth book, he had as great a reputation in Europe as Sienkiewicz attained thirty years later. He was called the Walter Scott of Poland. And in his old age

he was not unsuccessful with classical themes. He wrote a bulky novel called The Rome of the Time of Nero, which held the field until Quo Vadis appeared. He even translated five plays from the Latin of Plautus.

The best known of his novels in America is, perhaps The Jew. In this the dramatic action centers about the insurrection of 1863 and as it reflects a critical period of the author's life and sums up the social place of the Polish Jew, we shall give a resume of it.

The opening scene of The Jew takes place in an Italian inn; a young man, pale and thin, enters the dinning-room, is overcome with faintness at the smell of food and falls to the floor. The other guests spring to his aid. To their kindly questions he explains, "I am an exile; I am a Pole." In the rapport thus established, each one of the group introduces himself as in some measure an exile. Among them is Jacob the Jew, with whom Ivas the Pole eventually returns to Poland. Ivas, though banned by law, is irresistibly deiven to assist the next Polish struggle against the oppressor. Jacob also has a mission, but his is a spiritural mission to his own race. He is a mystic, seeking to promote a spiritual revival. Neither meets with success; Ivas involved in revolutionary intrigue, meets the martyr's death which was the only possibility of his time and temperament; Jacob's ideals are appreciated

and supported by a mere two or three orthodox Jews who are poor and of no influence. Eventually he falls under the Russian view and he is compelled to flee. The characters of Jacob, of Ivas, and of the good old Jew Jankill are very convincing, and the incidental touches indicating Russian venality and boorishness illumine the author's opinion of his own foes.[1]

Henryk Sienkiewicz has the honour of being the greatest novelist that Poland has produced. His name has gone farthest through the world. The inexhaustible productiveness and versatility of his predecessor, Kraszewski, which completely eclipsed when, in 1883, Sienkiewicz appeared upon the literary horizon. And the new and mightier genius took immediate command. With Byron-like suddenness Sienkiewicz stepped before his countrymen, and with scarcely less speed he sent his name to every part of the civilized world. Americans, who before 1890 had difficulty naming a single Polish prose writer, by 1895 were proclaiming Sienkiewicz as "the greatest creative genius at the end of the nineteenth century." [2]

1. See Appendix for other books of this author which have been translated.

2. H. Genung: Warners Library, 23:13399.

Born in Lithuania in 1846, Sienkiewicz spent his journalistic and literary youth in Warsaw. He wrote under the pseudonym of Litwos, and he followed a new-born school of realistic writers. It was the insurrectionary tragedy of 1863 that had established the realistic movement which was beginning in Europe among the Poles. That tragedy had awakened the survivors of a romantic past to the drab realities of a life of political subjection, of harsh economic and social problems, and the literary movement accordingly reflected the gloomy existance of the time. A number of Sienkiewicz's short stories belong to this early period. Charcoal Sketches[1] describes, with an artistic touch, the tragic picture of helpless darkness and aimless suffering in an old village. The same may be said of Johnny the Musician,[2] which tells with tender pity how a young musical genius is crushed by the social handicap of peasant birth. Bartek the Conqueror is hardly more comforting; it presents a Polish peasant who fights heroically for Prussia against France in 1870, only to be presently turned out of house and home by the Prussian Colonizing Commission.

But it was in America that the prospective author was really born. Sienkiewicz came to this country in 1876

1. Most of these stories have been translated into English. See Appendix.

2. The title is sometimes Janco, the Musician.

and joined that circle of expatrioted Polish artists and musicians in California of which the famous M. Modjeska was the inspiration. Through his American associations Sienkiewicz was completely cured of the pessimism and lifted out of the provincial narrowness which had bound his early life. In America he also met an Irishman who was the prototype of his greatest character creation, Zaloba. He wrote Letters from America, which describe a foreigner's impression of American city and forst life and which until to-day remain the best of Polish books of travel. These letters were first published in Gazeta Polska, a Polish magazine in Chicago, but they were reprinted in Warsaw and also published in book form.[1] They won for the author an increasing reading-public and by the time Sienkiewicz had returned to Poland, he was confident that he had a great literary task to perform.

Combining the new-born national optimism which he had acquired through his American voyage with an intensive study of Kubala's vivid history of seventeenth century Poland and of every other book and document referring to the subject in all languages that he could lay hold of, he prepared himself for his task. Between the years 1883, and 1888 appeared his great Trilogy of historical novels, a work which is incomparably the greatest achievement of Polish prose. The series as it was first published in

1. American Sketches have been recently been translated. See Appendix, III.

Warsaw had filled thirteen volumes, but as it appeared in America and in other European countries it had the familiar form of the trilogy, With Fire and Sword, The Deluge, and Pan Michael.[1]

These novels achieved for the author an immediate and unprecedented popularity. Only the novels of Sir Walter Scott could rival their reputation in Europe. They drew the attention of the entire world to the new and looming genius. In Poland they awakened the people to a new grip on the future, a grip which was sorely needed ever since the partition of 1863, and they spoke to all Poles in unmistakable terms, though under the pretense of describing past events, of a national glory to come.

Let us glance at some of the merits of these novels. Professor Brueckner says that Sienkiewicz accomplished in his Trilogy of novels a resurrection "of the height and depth of Polish struggles. Here for the first time his unbelievable narrative ability, the unsurpassed plasticity and vividness of his vision of the past came to its own."[2] Professor Brandes speaks of the Trilogy as characteristically Polish, as the product of "an ideal-realist, or a

1. There are several translations. See Appendix.

2. Osteuropaeischen Literaturen, p. 167. "Sie schilderte Gipfel und Abgrund polnischen Ringens..erst hier kam zu ihrem Rechte seine unglaubliche Erzaehlerkunst, die unuebertroffene Plastik und Lebhaftigkeit seiner Vision der Vergangenheit."

a realistic-idealist".[1] William Lyon Phelps writes that in these novels Sienkiewicz "is epic in scope and flow of narrative power of the scenes, the vast perspective, the portraits of individual heroes, the impassioned poetry of the style." [2] Harvey Genung sums it up by saying "The Trilogy has been called an epic in prose." [3]

As has been indicated, the Trilogy describes Polish history of the seventeenth century. It was nedessary for the author to go to this remote period because of the Russian censor, who forbade all nationalistic literature which might arouse Polish patriotism. However the author's peculiar talent for restoring the past and the Pole's natural instinct for drawing nourishment for his patriotism from the glories of bygone days, made the seventeenth century an appropriate period to recall. With Fire and Sword depicts the defence of Poland's Ukranian border against the tide of Cossack revolt; The Deluge portrays Poland's deliverance from a flood of Swedish occupation, and Pan Michael Wolodyjowski describes the valiant deeds of the men who guarded the frontier against the Turk.

Throughout the three volumes we find a number of unique and powerful characters. Of them all Zabloba is

1. Brandes: Poland, p. 203.
2. Essays on Modern Novelists, p. 118.
3. Warners Library, 23:13399.

the most famous. Professor Tarnowski, a Polish critic says "Zagloba is Falstaff, Sancho Panza, and Ulysses in one."1 Sienkiewicz himself seems to have had the Shakespearian model in mind. He says:

> "If I may be permitted to make a comparison, I think that Zagloba is even better than Falstaff. At heart the old noble was a good fellow. He would fight bravely when it became necessary, whereas Shakespeare makes Falstaff a coward and a poltroon." [2]

A happier comparisoni is perhaps that of some German critics, who point out the resemblance to Ulysses. Indeed the old noble glorified in the resemblance he bore to the wily Greek. In stratagems and deception, in outwitting or placating the enemy, in making foes love each other by false yet plausible honeyed speeches, for withering sarcasm, Zagloba is certainly to be compared with Homer's great hero.

Another striking character who figures in these novels is the Lithuanian giant, Podbipienta. With superhuman strength and a ponderous sword this otherwise carefree old noble goes to war with the one aim of saving his honor by cutting three tartar heads with a single stroke

1. Living Age, 233:21, 1902,"Sienkiewicz and his Contemporaries.

2. Van Norman: Poland, p. 322.

of his unwieldy weapon. He is woman-like in his incapacity to act the part of a real soldier, but he can be as brave as Zagloba when he sees three Tartars near enough to each other to be within the sweep of his sword. One writer sums him up as follows:

> "Throughout the story the antithesis between Podbipineta's mild and, to say the truth, rather lackadaisical exterior, and his prodigious strength and daring, all the more impressive for the contrast, is admirably maintained." 1

A third character of the Trilogy and the one who gives the name to the last volume, is Michael Wolodyjowski. This brave little general personifies the best of the old Polish militia. He is in many respects the incarnation of the immortal Sobieski, who at one time saved Vienna from the Tartars and who did more than any other to raise and unify the Polish Empire of the later middle ages.

We return to the story of Sienkiewicz' career. After the Trilogy had been finished the author turned, on the same grand scale, however, to a three volume contemporary novel. Without Dogma [2] is a psychological portrait of an

1. The Living Age, 233:21, 1902.
2. The title is sometimes Without Principle.

ultra-modern hero, afflicted with what a foreign character in the book describes as "Slavonic unproductiveness of mind", but what is presented by the author as Hamlet-like irresolution typical of an age of crumbling faith and outworn deeds." [1] Although this novel introduced modern psychology into Polish literature, it never gained the reputation of the Trilogy. Sienkiewicz had virtually stepped out of his realm; he had, as Professor Brueckner states it, "stooped to modern hairsplitting."[2]

A second attempt at a contemporary study in The Children of the Soil, or The Polaniecki Family as it is also called, was from a moral standpoint more successful. In this work the author adopted a consistent and thoroughgoing conservatism in contrast to the subtle analysis and skepticism which he had exhibited in his former book. Besides he repeated his masterly presentation of Polish types when he dres a gallery of life-like Poles from modern society. Nevertheless, he could not repeat his Trilogy, for he emphasized, with irritating persistance, the commonplace hero, the narrow-minded, business-like Pole of the kind produced after the last insurrection by the stress of economic forces. To the Polish reader this merely meant that Sienkiewicz's power was waning. The real Pole, they

1. Dyboski: Modern Polish Literature, p. 35.
2. Oseuropaeischen Literaturen, "er stieg zu moderner Haarspalterei herab."

thought, was the glorious Pole of the Trilogy, the brave and witty soldier who was a match for the Cossack, the Tartar, or the Prussian; he could never be the irresolute Slav who had helplessly beheld his country's partition.

Sienkiewicz was in the heyday of his career, however, when in 1896 he produced Quo Vadis. Upon this book his fame outside of Poland chiefly rests. It has been translated into almost as many languages as Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, and it is certainly the best known Polish work abroad. "In total literature of the world," Professor Brueckner asserts, "it has attained the greatest success." [1] "It is a great novel", write Richardson and Owen.[2] Another critic writes, "it is a novel that is worthy to take its place beside those great works of fiction that have survived the crucial tests to which every product of man's genius is eventually subjected." [3] But it is needless to quote all the adjectives that have been expended in praise of this book.

1. Osteuropaeischen Literaturen, p. 167.
2. The Literature of the World, p. 513.
3. Ed. W. Van Zile: Current Literature, 21:490,1897.

We will rather attempt to get at a just estimation of Quo Vadis by refuting some of the adverse criticisms. William Lyon Phelps discounts Sienkiewicz's work in the following words:

> "His Roman panorama called Quo Vadis, although it has made the biggest noise of all his books, is perhaps the least valuable. Like Ben Hur, it was wormed over into a tremendously successful melodrama, and has received the final compliment of parody."[1]

Professor Dyboski points out some blemishes:

> "The central figures of the lovers are somewhat bloodless, the great Christian leaders somewhat abstract in their perfection,, the Roman revels and the tortures of the Christians occasionally somewhat too crude in their laboured realism."[2]

But even though Mr. Phelps says in a note:

> "One of the most grotesque and laughable burlesques ever seen on the American stage was the travesty of Quo Vadis, with the heroine Lithia, who drew a lobster on the sand; and the strong man, Zero, who wrenched the neck of a wild borax,"

1. Essays on Modern Novelists. p. 118.
2. Modern Polish Literature. p. 37.

he does not give us any valid argument against Quo Vadis. He merely points to the fate of all influential and successful books; not only Ben Hur, but Don Quixote. The Divine Comedy and many other great works have received the final compliment of parody.

Likewise, Professor Dyboski points to blemishes which are not uncommon in the greatest masterpieces of literature. Even a Michael Angelo might have fallen into the same errors when dealing with so vast a theme. The greatness of the subject of Quo Vaid is enough to impair any writer's sense of proportion; under its moral inspiration Sienkiewicz over-intensified purposely to bring out the lights and shadows.

In America Quo Vadis has been an eminently successful book. Just as the American reader turned from the peculiarly nationalistic Pan Tadeuse to a more universally understandable Trilogy of historical novels, they later turned to that most interesting of subjects, the rise of Christianity. The moral conflict between decaying Roman civilization and the rising force of the Christian religion can be appreciated by every American reader. Add to that the grandeur of the historical vision, with its wealth and vivid colour of detail, the creative force which gives life to a crowd of Roman and Christian characters, and the fullness of antique culture as embodied in Petronius,

and you have the book that can be admired by most of the nations of the earth.

Of the remaining novels of Sienkiewicz, none is of very great importance.[1] Whirlpools, as the title might suggest, is significant of the author's failing clearness of vision. The Knights of the Cross, which deals with the triumph of the Poles and Lithuanins over the German power in the early fifteenth century, depicts an age too much remote. On the Field of Glory, on the other hand, returns to the seventeenth century of the Trilogy; but unfortunately the author broke down just as he entered upon the greatest scene - the rescue of Vienna by Sobieski.

During the period of his great novels Sienkiewicz was continually writing short stories. Some of these are preparatory sketches for the great works, others are chips from a workshop. But Professor Brandes gives them as much praise as the longer novels; for in them he saw that peculiar gift of the Poles for realistic-idealism at its best.[2] In English we have such as the following: Sielanka and other Stories, In Vain, On the Sunny Shore, Let us Follow Him, and Hania.[3]

1. See Appendix for a list of the novels that have been translated.

2. Brandes: Poland, p. 202

3. Many of these have been published in English in various collections. See Appendix.

WLADISLAS STANISLAS REYMONT is the last of the representative Polish authors we are considering. His work rounds out the picture of the Polish literature that is known in English. Himself of rural origin, he writes of peasant life with a first hand knowledge of the soil which helps place his novels of this genre among the best in Europe, according to the verdict of French and German critics. So searching is Reymont's analysis of Polish character that during the Prussian occupation (1915-1918) German officials, both civilian and military, were obliged under command to read certain of his works - notably The Peasants and The Promised Land - in order to acquaint themselves properly with the psychology of the people they were governing.

Reymont was born after Poland had disappeared from the European map.[1] Nevertheless, he was so loyal to Poland that he was expelled from one Russian government school after another because he refused to give up his Polish speech and manners. He went to work finally in a store; then became a telegraph operator; an actor in a wandering stock company; a farmer, and a number of other things. He tried early to write, mostly poetry, but it was not till he started his long four-volume Peasants, in 1902 that he

1. Reymont was born in 1868; the last partition was in 1863.

realized his literary strength. This novel, completed in 1906, won for the author the Swedish Noble prize for 1925 and has remained his masterpiece. However, among the twenty-eight volumes of accredited fiction,,there are other books of merit. Most valuable, perhaps, are those which have been translated into English, namely: The Comedienne, The Promised Land, and The Trial.

Reymont's first novel, The Woman of the Theatre, gave a picture of the author's early surrounding, of the beggarly misery of strolling players. Another early novel, The Dreamer, portrayed a poor railway servant such as himself, dreaming of riches and travel. These, however, had a realism which did not attract the reader's attention. The Promised Land[1] was more successful. This takes the reader to the Polish Manchester, the rapidly-growing industrial town of Lodz, with the human ant-heaps of its textile factories and its curious types of Jews, Germans, and Poles, made and marred by their greed for wealth. It gave an indication of the power which revealed itself so rémarkably in the author's masterpiece.

1. A portion of this, In the Old Town of Lodz, was already included in Selver's anthology, though the entire book has been translated recently. See Appendix.

2. Ernest Boyd: Saturday Review of Lit., Nov.29,'24. "Wladyslaw Reymont" pp. 318-20.

The Peasants has been called, like the Trilogy of Sienkiewicz, "an epic in prose."[1] Not properly a novel, it pictures the toils and the pleasures, the customs, the loves and hates, the personal passions and social conflicts, of the inhabitants of a typical Polish village The slender thread of rivalry between Antek and his father stands in lieu of a plot. Yet in its tragedy it is comparable to Hardy's, Tess of the D'Ubervilles. Hania's sad and tragic fate is not a bit less touching than that of Tess; and behind both the tragic figures broods the same nature with a "terrible composure." Rupert Hughes speaks of The Peasants thus: "A gripping drama, with interludes of beauty, of horror, of greed, piety, gaiety. Reymont is the greatest living Polish novelist."[2] Harry Hansen is even more laudatory. He writes: "once the book is keyed to a certain pitch the author holds it. Of intense emotional interest to the reader. The peasants come alive under the author's hand... This book is an artistic unit; it shows that the author has power, restraint, coherence, freshness, self-knowledge, and selective ability."[3]

1. Ernest Boyd: Saturday Review of Lit., Nov.29,'24. "Wladyslaw Reymont" pp. 318-20.
2. The International Book Review.
3. The Chicago News.

CHAPTER V

POLISH AUTHORSHIP IN AMERICA

It would be but a moderate estimate to say that one-half of the Polish literature known in America was produced on other than Polish soil. During the great literary period of the nineteenth century almost all the Polish writers lived in exile. To mention only a few; the great triad of Mickiewicz, Slowacki, and Krasinski lived in Paris or in Italy; Kraszewski had a home in Dresden when he was not travelling in Southern Europe; the Ukranian-Polish poets were all natives of Russia, though they used the Polish tongue; even Sienkiewicz spent much of his time abroad, having a home in Vevey, Switzerland, and visiting America on several occasions. Many of the most recent Polish writers have also experienced exile. Reymont grew up in that part of Poland where Russia was trying to stamp out the last traces of the Polish commonwealth; only during the last seven years of his life[1] could he call Poland his homeland. Przybyszewski began his career in Germany, some of his early writings even being in the German language. Zeromski, Tetmajer, Leopold Staff, and

1. Reymont died December 6, 1925.

many others can tell a similar story.

We are not surprised, therefore, to find that a good part of this literature of exile should be connected with American soil. America has always been, as it were, the home of the homeless. We have already spoken of the large number of immigrant-Poles that are scattered about the United States. Some of the Poles have also settled on the South American continent, and not a small number of Polish settlements are to be found in Canada. Many of the wealthier Poles have also been passing visitors in America. The great artists first come to one's mind. Madam Modjeska, Paderewski, Lady Sembrich, the Reszke brothers, and other have paid repeated visits to our shores. And among men of letters, there are at least two striking instances. The poet Niemciewicz spent ten years in this country. Sienkiewicz, himself, discovered the key to his popularity through his American voyage.[1] But other lesser writers-there are many of them-have been connected with America, and we shall mention some of them.

A prominent Polish writer in America is Waclaw Kruszka, of Ripon, Wisconsin. This Church father has written an elaborate ten-volume history of the Poles in America.[2] It is in the Polish language and it throws

1. See the discussion of Sienkiewicz, p. 77.

2. History of the Poles in America, Ripon, Wisc., 1905.

some sidelights on the Polish literature in America.

One of the most eminent of his race was the Polish scholar, Dr. Henry Korwin Kalussowski, who taught in New York. His father had been the chamberlain to Stanislaw Poniatowski, the last of the Polish kings. The younger Kalussowski (b. 1806) fought in the Polish insurrection of 1830 and came to the United States in 1838. Speaking fourteen languages fluently, he soon secured lucrative employment as a teacher of French and Latin in New York. In 1848 he returned to Europe and participated in the revolutionary movement of that year. Later he served as a Polish member of the German Parliament from the grand duchy of Posen. Afterwards, however, he was expelled by the Prussian government and returned to the United States to live permanently. He served our government in various ways, acting as translator of Russian when America purchased Alaska from the Russian government and organizing the thirty-first New York regiment during the Civil War.

Another eminent Polish scholar in America is Felix S. Zahajkiewicz, former editor of the Narod Polski, of Chicago, now an instructor in one of the schools of that city. Mr. Zahajkiewicz is a fiction writer, a poet, and a playwright, whose poems and songs are rendered at Polish national celebrations. His historical tragedy,

Krolowa Jadwiga, was first produced in Chicago in 1895. His arrangement of an episode from The Deluge was given at the opening of the Polish Theatre in Chicago, with the famous Madam Modjeska playing one of the parts.

Incidentally, a number of Poles in America have been successful in other than literary lines. A son of the great actress by that name, Ralph Modjeska (Modrzejewski) is an eminent engineer. He was, for some years, bridge engineer for the Union Pacific Railroad Company. He now lives in Chicago. Two Polish-American sculptors have been well known. Henry Dmochowski, among whose works are busts of Kosziuszki, returned to Poland to give his life for his country in the revolution of 1863. Casimir Choszinski has built up a large reputation in that second city of the Poles, Chicago.

There are in America seventeen daily, forty-eight weekly, and four monthly periodicals in the Polish language. Many of these have editors of ability. Professor Thomas Siemiradski is editor of the Zgoda, the offical organ of The Polish National Alliance. Formerly Professor Siemiradski taught Greek and Latin in a Russian University; recently he has written a Post-Partition History of Poland in the Polish Language. Mr. Waclaw Perkowski is another journalist writing in both the English and

Polish languages. He has been a regular contributer to the metropolitan press and to some of the best magazines of America.

But the majority of the Polish immigrants in America are by no means of the cultured class. In fact, the better class Poles have been very slow to emigrate from their European home. The study which Thomas and Znaniecki have made of the Polish immigrants[1] has revealed the awful condition in which many of the Polish peasants live in our city slum districts. Mrs. Eleanor E. Ledbetter's study of the immigrant is also enlightening.[2] We quote a paragraph from it which describes the Polish peasant in America:

> "The average Polish immigrant is timid and shy. In the Old World he occupied an inferior position and was always made to feel his inferiority; he never traveled, and he knew little except his immediate surroundings....Because of the indelibleness of the impression left by the language exactions in his native country, because also of the identification of language, nationality, and religion, the Pole reads Polish longer than any other race does the language of his country." [3]

1. Wm. I. Thomas & Florian Znaniecki: The Polish Peasant in Europe and America, 5 vols., Boston, 1918.
2. The Polish Immigrant and his Reading, A.L.A., 1924.
3. Pp. 12-13.

A study of the Polish Jew in America has been made by a Yiddish-American novelist, Abraham Cahan. "His The Rise of David Levinski," says the Cambridge History of American Literature, "is a better reflection of Jewish life in American surroundings that all American yiddish fiction put together...It takes the American reader through all the nooks of the Ghetto."[1]

A number of other studies have been made of the Pole in America. Paal Fox, whose parents came from Polish Silesia, has written a short book called The Poles in America. This treats a variety of topics, among other things, giving two pages to the literature of Poland.[2] An article in The Survey[3] discusses "The Spirit of the Poles in America." It points out Woodrow Wilson's attitude toward the Poles, quoting from his speech, "There should be a united, independent and autonomous Poland." It also describes Paderewski's visit to the Russian Czar. After the Russian monarch had complimented the great musician on his talents, Paderewski responded, "Your majesty, I am a Pole."

Poland has frequently been the subject of books of travel. Mrs. Cecil Chesterton has written an article

1. Cambridge Hist. of Am. Lit., vol. 5. p. 606.
2. P. Fox: The Poles in America, 1922, Literature pp. 33-5.
3. The Survey, Sept. 28, 1918, pp. 720-1.

for The Living Age under the title of "A Visitor in Poland," which describes conditions since the World War.[1] Louis Van Norman, who writes exclusively on Polish topics, has an article in Bookman, called "Henry Sienkiewicz' Poland."[2] The book of William Frederick Bailey, Slavs of the War Zone, also devotes a section to memories of Poland, during the World War.[3] Another recent article on travel in Poland is in The Living Age for 1926 and is called "Unofficial Observers in Poland." This, like a score of other similar articles we could name, makes passing references to almost anything that might be suggested to a foreigner in Poland and yet does not say anything very striking or pertinent either of the people, the history, or the literature of the country visited.

Articles with Polish history as a subject are even more numerous. The Literary Digest alone has enough of them to fill a large volume. We name only four from this magazine: "Resurrecting Poland,"[4] "Poland's Lost Champion,"[5] "The Tragicomedy of Poland,"[6] and "Poland's

1. Living Age, 303:613-17. Dec. 1919.
2. Bookman, 44:412-26 Dec., 1916. Reprinted on the occasion of Sienkiewicz's death.
3. Polish Memories, pp. 45-56. 4. 53:824 Sept.30,'16.
5. 53:1467, Dec. 1916. 6. 53:356-7 Aug.12,'16.

Poverty."[1] The great pianist and short-time president of Poland, Paderewski, himself, has written on the history of Poland.[2] He presents the story of Poland dismembered as a cliam for an independent Poland. He speaks of the partitions as "three acts of imperial banditry which, so any historian will tell you, are the blackest marks on the long criminal caldendar of European diplomacy."

Before concluding this thesis it is necessary to speak of one more literary figure of Poland. It is Joseph Conrad (Korzeniowski), the most recent Pole whose literary works are known throughout the English-speaking world. Although Mr. Conrad has written only in the English language, of which he is said to have been a master, he never forgot his Polish relations and at various times he let his stories reveal the traditions which he had inherited from his unhappy native country. The spirit of the sea which is so marked in his novels, especially Lord Jim, is really but anther aspect of the peculiarly Polish spitit of idealism. It is the secret of that power which has made the author famous. It is the thing which contemporary critics have so often attempted vainly to describe; it is a Polish trait.

1. 77:20-1 June 23, 1923.

2. World's Work, 37:173-9 Dec. 1918.

VI

APPENDIX

I

A CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE FOR

POLISH LITERATURE IN AMERICA.

1473-1543	Life of Copernicus, the Polish astronomer. Promulgation of the conception of a round earth revolving about the sun. Discoveries of Columbus, Drake, Magellan etc.
1776-1783	Kosciuszki, Pulaski, and other Polish patriots fight in the American Revolution.
1796-1806	Niemciewicz, Polish poet and friend of Kosziuszki, lives in America and writes biography of George Washington.
1827	Sir John Bowring's epoch-making Specimens of Polish Poets.
1836	Talvi's Historical View of the Languages and Literature of the Slavic Nations.
1848	Mrs. M. L. Putnam's articles in the North American Review.
1876-1877	Henryk Sienkiewicz visits America.
1881	P. Soboleski's Poets and Poetry of Poland.
1884-1906	Jermiah Curtin's translations of Sienkiewicz' novels and short stories.
1883-1893	W. R. Morfill's works on Polish literature.
1915-1916	Benecke and Busche translations of short stories of Reymont, Zeromski, Przybyszewski, etc.
1917	Professor Noyes translation of Pan Tadeusz.

1918 .... P. Selver's Anthology of Slavic Literature.

1923-1924 Professor R. Dyboski's works on Polish Literature.

II

LIST OF TRANSLATORS [1]

Babad, Nathan A.

Baron, Lucille

Benecke, Elsie C. M.

Biggs, Maude Ashurst

Binion, Samuel A.

Bowring, Sir John

Britoff, Henry

Bullick, Thomas H.

Busche, Marie

Cook, Martha Walker

Curtin, Jermiah

Dahl, B.

Drezmal, Max A.

Dyboski, Roman

Dziewicki, Michael H.

English, Thomas D.

Fortey, Frank H.

Gardner, Monica M.

Genung, Harvey

Heinemann

Hlaska, Vatslaf A.

Hurst, N. Y.

Malevsky

Noyes, George Rapall

Obecny, Edmund

Putnam, Mrs. M. L.

Rose, J. D.

Seltzer, Thomas.

Selver, Paul

Smith, William E.

Soboleska, Paul

Soissons, Count S.C. de

Talvi (Mrs. Ed. Robinson)

Underwood, Edna Worthley

Young, Iza D.

1. The names which are underscored are of American translators, or of such as have had their translations published in America.

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Druzbacka, Elizabeth: Spring. (In Soboleski's Poets... pp 79.)

Felinski, J.: Barbara Radziwil. (In Soboleski's Poets ...pp.133 ff.)

Gasiorowski, Waclaw: Napoleon's Love Story (Pani Walewskia;) tr. by Count de Soissons. London, Duckworth, 1905.

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A LIST OF POLISH AUTHORS WHO HAVE BEEN MENTIONED IN ENGLISH, BUT WHO ARE NOT AVAILABLE IN TRANSLATION.[1]

Adalbert, Saint
Albertrandi
Balinski, M.
Baudoin de Courtnay, Prof.
Bentkowski
Bernatowicz
Bielski, Martin (Wolski)
Birkowski
Boguchwal, Bishop
Bzowski, Abraham
Celichowski, Dr.
Cholewa, Matthew
Chwalszewski
Czacki
Czajkowski, Michael
Czarnikow, John
Czartaryski, Prince Adam
Czartaryski, Princess of Wirtemburg
Dluglosz, Jan. (Longinus)
Dygasinski, Adolf
Falimierz
Fedro, Count
Gallus
Galuchowski
Gnorowski
Goszczynski, Severin
Gornicki
Grochowski
Gumulicki, Wiktor
Gurowski, Adam [2]
Horain, Julian
Jezierski, Priest
Kadlubek
Kalinka, Valerian
Kalussowski, Dr. Henry K.
Karpinski, Francis
Kilinski, Jan
Knapski
Kniasznin, Francis

1. This list is based largely on the works of Talvi and W. R. Morfill.

2. The underscored authors have lived or are living in America; in most cases they have been writing in English as well as in Polish.

Kochanowski, Andrew

Kochanowski, Peter

Kochowski, Vespasian

Kołłatah, Hugo

Konstantinowich, Michael

Kozmian

Kruszka, Waclaw

Lelewel. (Loelhoefel)

Leszcynski, Stanislaus

Linde

Lodzia

Maciejowski

Malecki, Prof.

Martinus, Polonus

Matejko, John

Mecherzynski

Morstand, Count Andrew

Niesiecki

Oleska

Ojczyczniak

Opalinski

Orzechowski

Osada, Waclaw

Padurra, Timothy

Pasek, John Chrysostom

Pauli,,Zegota

Paprocki, Bartosz.(Bartholomew)

Perkowski, Waclaw.

Petricius, Sebastian

Petrycy, Dr.

Piasecki

Piekarski, Christopher

Potocki, Stanislaus Kostka

Raczynski, Count E.

Rudowski

Rybinski

Rzewuski, Severyn

Rzewuski, Waclaw

Salmolinska, Mrs.

Siemiradski, Thomas

Skarga, Peter

Smolinski, Col. Joseph.

Smolka, Stanislaus

Sobolewski, Edward

Stanislawska, Anna

Starowdski

Stas, Helena.

Staszyc, Stanislaus

Strykowski

Swietochowski, Alexander

Szajnocha, Karl

Szczepanowski, Stanislaus

Szujski

Szymanowski

Tarowski, John

Tarowski, Count Stanislaus

Twardowski

Wapowski

Wargocki

Weyssenhoff, Joseph

Wojcicki, Wladislas.

Wujek, Jacob

Wypianska, Stanislaus

Zyblocki, Francis

Zahajkiewicz, Felix S.

Zbylitowski, Andrew

Zbylitowski, Pierre

Zakrzewski, Vincent

Zaluski, Casimir

V

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