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Mgr. ZYGMUNT KACZYŃSKI

THE KEYS OF ST. PETER

THE ATTITUDE OF THE HOLY SEE to the present world conflict is being eagerly discussed both among Poles and among Englishmen. This alone is a token of the vitality of the Church, as on the whole one does not discuss institutions which have no vitality about them. It is also a proof of the interest which people are now taking in religious and moral problems, and of their realization of the link between them and the future world order.

The Poles are prone to raise many objections and complaints with regard to the policy of the Holy See. Complaints are heard that it passes over in silence crimes committed against the Polish nation, crimes unheard of in history, that there is no representative of the Pope accredited to the Polish Government in London, that the administration of Polish dioceses is entrusted to clergy of non-Polish descent, etc. Some writers go even to the extreme of pretending that the Pope has alleged sympathies for Nazism and call for the creation of a national church.

We know from experience that in moments of despair and suffering it is easy to exaggerate, and to forget the rules of logical thinking. Let us face the facts straight in the face.

The statement that the Holy See is silent with regard to Polish affairs is fortunately inaccurate. We know that at the very beginning of this war, immediately after the conquest of Poland, the Pope issued the most authoritative statement, in a document to which the dogma of papal infallibility is attached, that is to say in an Encyclical, in which he upheld Poland's right to an independent existence. In this document he revealed the fundamental attitude of the Holy See to the Polish state, which had momentarily lost its independence and to the aims of the present war:

"The blood of these men, including those who suffered death, though not in the ranks of the forces, cries to Heaven, above all the blood of that nation—we think of Poland—which, owing to its unshakeable fidelity to the Church and its pre-eminent services in spreading Christian culture, services which are truly historic and truly immortal, has every right to claim the human and brotherly sympathy of all. This nation, putting its confidence in the Mother of God, the helper of the faithful, waits for the longed-for day on which it will emerge unscathed from the present turmoil, the day when peace and justice will be restored." (Encyclical—"Summi Pontificatus" of October 22nd, 1939.)

Everyone should read these words carefully and ponder over their meaning, and everyone should remember that the Pope wrote them at a moment when, in the same Rome, Mussolini was proclaiming that Poland had been liquidated.

I shall not quote the subsequent statements of the Pope, nor the articles of the "Osservatore Romano," the Vatican Radio and the excerpts from letters of the Holy Father to our bishops; though all this may be important, it cannot be compared with so important a document of the Universal Church as an Encyclical.

However, one of our readers may say: "All this is true, but it is not enough. The statements of the Holy See on Poland are inadequate to the mass of suffering which Poland is enduring daily in the defence of the Church and of Christian ideals."

To this I reply that the patriotic feelings both of myself and of every Polish priest would be greatly relieved if there were more statements of the Holy See with regard to Poland. Every word of the Holy Father addressed to Poland is a balsam for hearts which are deeply grieved. This, however, cannot in the least affect our fundamental attitude to the Universal Church and its Head. Indeed, it is the essence of the Church that it embraces the whole world, that it is above nations and works for all of them, even if they are at war with each other, and that it is universal. The aims of the Church are supernatural by their very

essence, they are not earthly or temporal. The salvation of the soul is the mission of the Church. If we judge the Church by purely political and material yard-

sticks, we shall never understand its essence, and our conclusions and opinions will have to be wrong.

Those who propose the creation of a so-

called National Church in Poland as a reprisal against the Holy See fail to understand its essence. Even from a patriotic point of view they forget the unmistakable

historical truth that politically the Polish nation has been greatly indebted to the Catholic Church. In the past we earned a high position in Central Europe not so much owing to our arms—for we have never been a nation of conquerors—as owing to the radiation of our Polish Catholic culture. Furthermore, during the partition period the Church defended not only our faith but also our language and our national traditions, which always found shelter within church walls.

The most orthodox Catholicism and the most filial attitude to the Head of the Church does not forbid anyone to approach the Holy See and urge it—as we Catholics used to say—"instante, instantius, instantissime"—to listen to our justifiable demands and claims. This is our right. But we are not allowed to back these demands by threats of creating a national Church, because such threats unmask a false Catholicism and a lack of logic and decency.

The Vatican Council drew for ever a boundary between the eternal and the temporal, between faith and politics, when it proclaimed, in accordance with the centuries-old traditions of the Church, the dogma of papal infallibility in what concerns faith and morals. If therefore any complaints are made against the Vatican diplomacy, these cannot affect the Church nor can they be considered as directed against the faith or against the Catholic truth.

One of our young writers, W. Ipohorski-Lenkiewicz, wrote, quite rightly: "The keys of St. Peter are the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven. We cannot ask that they should open every lock of earthly affairs nor that they should fit the doors of the diplomatic offices in which people like Talleyrand, Metternich or Macchiavelli are working."

BOGDAN ZABORSKI

SIR PAUL EDMUND STRZELECKI

POLISH GEOGRAPHER AND EXPLORER

IN THE HALL OF THE ROYAL Geographical Society you can see a set of portraits of famous geographers and explorers, amongst them two are of Polish

Europe, the geologic mapping was very inaccurate and primitive. On the basis of this map and the knowledge of the territory he could make his explorations.

every friend of freedom and honour—Kościuszko."

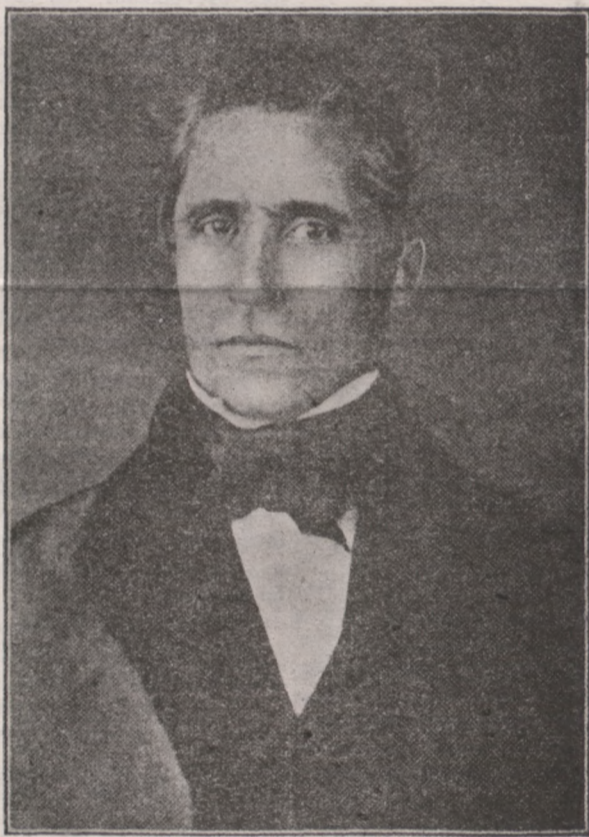
Strzelecki made his explorations for the future prosperity of Australia, and with the vision of his oppressed fatherland in mind. In his imagination stood the picture of a future free Poland, which would need raw materials for developing her economic life and with possibilities of colonising the waste lands of Australia with the surplus population of Poland and other over-populated countries.

His love for the whole of humanity and his purely altruistic character inclined Strzelecki in the sterile year 1846 to give relief to Ireland in its distress.

Recognising Strzelecki as a scientist, geographer and eminent explorer, the Royal Geographical Society honoured him, giving him the gold medal.

Strzelecki was honoured by being made a Knight of the Bath, and having conferred upon him the membership of the Royal Society and the degree of the Oxford University.

The remembrance of Strzelecki as a scientist, geographer, explorer and a noble philanthropist still lives in Great Britain and Ireland, in Australia and Poland.



P. E. Strzelecki

PAUL EDMUND STRZELECKI

On the back page: Mount Kosciuszko (7328ft.) in the Australian Alps.

extraction: Nicolaus Przewalski, well-known as the discoverer of the wild horse, found in Central Asia; and the explorer of Australia, Paul Edmund Strzelecki.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the geographical knowledge of Australia was very scanty. Large regions of the continent were entirely unknown, many others were known only superficially. As a naturalist and geographer, Strzelecki intended to explore and to survey the south-eastern part of Australia.

The itinerary of his scientific journeys cut in all directions New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania. The good knowledge of the country enabled Strzelecki to prepare a scientific description of the physiography of the south-eastern part of Australia.

He published in 1845 a book of nearly 500 pages about the "Physical Description of New South Wales and van Diemens Land." The book contains an analytical description of the country. It became a standard work on Australia.

It is indeed a comparative geography of south-east Australia. In this book Strzelecki compares New South Wales with many other countries which he got to know well during his many journeys.

Strzelecki gave a first geologic map of the country, surveyed in a large scale. In those times, even in most countries of

Strzelecki's geological researches had not only a purely theoretical scientific aim. The intention was to expand and develop the country. He intended to discover the main mineral resources, necessary to develop mining and industry. He did, indeed, find layers rich in coal and precious metals—first of all, iron and gold. Strzelecki found many other useful minerals, like asbestos. In his researches Strzelecki was helped not only by his scientific knowledge, but also by his instinct, without which the explorer cannot work. This explorer's instinct was in Strzelecki's work a very important factor.

Wishing to give to the country possibilities of economic development, Strzelecki has explored some districts, good for agriculture. He surveyed and scientifically prepared for exploitation a part of south-east Australia with good natural conditions, mild climate and fertile soil. He found this country a paradise for agricultural colonization.

The explorations of Strzelecki, made in Gippsland and van Diemens Land, had a great importance for the future of these countries.

Surveying the so-called Australian Alps Strzelecki reached first the highest peak (7328ft.) to which he gave, more than a hundred years ago (1840) the name of our national hero: "a name, dear and beloved to every Pole, to every human, to

THE LATE FATHER MAXIMILIAN KOLBE

THE "OSSERVATORE ROMANO" (No. 188) reports the death of Father Maximilian Kolbe, the founder of the "MALY DZIENNIK" and other papers published by the Franciscan Fathers in Poland. For a number of months Father Kolbe was held in the concentration camp at Dachau. The German authorities sent back his habit to the cloister in Niepokalanow with the remark that he died on August 14th, 1941, and that his body was cremated.

I remember this monk vividly, with his long beard and his youthful shining eyes, with his kind smile and with a bearing which showed energy and strong willpower. Both were necessary indeed and to no small degree to create Niepokalanow, that publishing firm where 600 Franciscan Fathers and Brothers printed and published a number of papers with the largest circulation in Poland. Suffice it to recall that "The Knight of the Immaculate Virgin" had an average circulation of 700,000 copies, and that the circulation of the "Maly Dziennik" on Sundays exceeded 250,000 copies (actually it was the daily paper with the largest circulation in Poland).

We shall realize the magnitude of this work and its importance when we remember that other countries have nothing on a similar scale so far. Let us, for instance, imagine that here in England a paper like the "Daily Sketch" or "Daily Mirror," but with a larger circulation because sold at half the price and published without any regard for profit, were to be started. A paper which would not be dependent on any financial interests, independent of

shareholders and advertisements and employing exclusively Christians—devout Catholics.

Some day I shall describe at greater length this unique phenomenon, a modern newspaper published by a mendicant order. This extraordinary experiment was begun by Father Kolbe, Father Florjan, Father Marian Wojcik and others. Perhaps I shall succeed in describing the unique atmosphere of a monks' community where no one owned even his own habit, and where the Franciscan brothers worked at the newest printing-presses as efficiently as if they were employed by Henry Ford. In this unusual place a monk who was also a compositor would run from the linotype on which he was setting up the latest despatches from the tape-machine to the chapel to join in the chorus of night prayers to Mary.

The spirit of Niepokalanow, which was both modern and medieval, is strongly linked in my memory with the following almost symbolic picture. I was asked by Father Kolbe to take part in a discussion about very urgent affairs, and, Niepokalanow being forty miles from Warsaw, I had to hurry, as in journalistic work even seconds are sometimes important. On that dark December night the staff-car went at ninety miles an hour along a skiddy road which was iced over. And at the steering-wheel was seated a Brother-chauffeur, in his Franciscan habit, girt with a white belt in accordance with the regulations of his order, young and ascetic, as if from a picture of Fra Angelico.

J. R.

RYSZARD WRAGA

INCONTESTABLE TRUTHS

A NATION AT WAR LOOKS FOR comfort to its deepest moral and spiritual values. Indeed modern war is such an incredible threat to the individual and to the community that only a deep faith in spiritual values and a sense of the justice of one's cause can shield a nation against

POLISH PRESS REVIEW

The ZIELONY SZTANDAR ("The Green Banner"), the organ of the Polish Peasant Party, writes in its first issue:

"There are quite a few of us here and the attitude of our people at home, the gallantry and the number of our airmen, the keenness of our Navy and the smartness of our land troops are no mean trump-cards in our hand. Poland's armed forces are no less numerous than the armed forces of any of the neutral countries remaining in Europe. These forces, to which the potential possibilities of our country should be added, make us a serious Ally. Our attitude exerts a great influence on other peoples in Central and Southern Europe, and on their attitude to the war. Owing to these trumps, we are not only the clients of powerful protectors but their partners too."

Elsewhere in the same paper we read: "In speeches of some British statesmen, in some books and in a certain section of the British press we find a tone which makes us anxious, as it has nothing in common with the ideal of an honest reconstruction of the world based on law and morality. The proposals of a new Rapallo and all its consequences, even if the contracting parties were not the same, are far from being creative. The division of the world into spheres of influence for Britain, the U.S.A., Russia and China, is a proof how powerful are the traditions of a dismal past, and in no case could it be viewed as an inspiration for the future."

ANTONI BOGUSLAWSKI

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JERZY ADAMKIEWICZ

FIELD-MARSHAL MOLTKE AND THE POLES

IT IS A SINGULAR FACT, SYMPTOMATIC of the fundamental change in German mentality during the last century, that immediately after the collapse of the Polish revolution of 1830 and in spite of fierce anti-Polish repressions in Prussia, Austria and Russia a book could be published in Berlin, in German, which, though politically hostile to Poland, nevertheless pays tribute to her culture, traditions and liberal institutions. It is called: "A description of the internal conditions and social structure of Poland" (Darstellung der inneren Verhältnisse und des gesellschaftlichen Zustandes in Polen) and is written by Helmuth von Moltke, at that time a simple lieutenant in the Prussian Army, who later became a Field Marshal and gained a victory over the French in the war of 1870.

Moltke points out, at the beginning, that Poland never was a feudal state. No Polish noble was the vassal of the King or any other superior lord. Moltke also refutes the allegation that Poland was governed by an oligarchy. Poland, he affirms, was essentially a democracy in which sovereign power, at an early date, was transferred from the King and the aristocracy to some 300,000 nobles who at that time represented the nation as a whole. Their number amounted to about 14 per cent of the total population of Poland. This is a comparatively large percentage, if we remember that before 1832 the number of parliamentary electors

a catastrophic collapse. Total war, which affects equally civilians and soldiers, grown-ups and children, brings every day such opposite emotions of sacrifice and doubt, of heroism and cowardice, of joy and despair, that passing victories or momentary defeats cannot create alone a lasting atmosphere of triumph or catastrophe. Every war has always been primarily a moral and sociological phenomenon, but the present war is almost exclusively such a phenomenon. Operations are sometimes of secondary importance, and purely military strategy seems almost an abstraction.

These incontestable truths are particularly clearly evident in the case of the Soviet-German war. I do not wish at all to lower the immense value of the Soviet Union as an ally, but I think I may state with all the objectivity which is so necessary in discussing complicated problems that these two nations and these two countries see their present conflict in their own light and mould it on different precedents. Independently of the general Allied aims, the Soviet Union has its own political and war aims in its war against Germany. Throughout the centuries, Germany and Russia have been linked to each other by the most bloody conflicts and the most intimate alliances. Even in their internal conditions, in the forming of their ideas of nation and country, there is a curious analogy between these two powers, an analogy decreed by fate and justified by geography. For many centuries the German nation had no common state organization and could not overcome its incredible division into a mosaic of principalities and petty states. It was only the Franco-Prussian War which gave Prussia an unmistakable hold over the rest of Germany. Bismarck forged the nation and the state as two inter-connected ideas. The German nation and the German Reich developed simultaneously, and they both fed on the negative, destructive, immoral robbery-instincts of Prussia. Was it not symptomatic that the great culture of the Rhineland, of Bavaria and Weimar vanished at the same time? That the Germany of Goethe, Schiller, Beethoven, Kant and Schelling also vanished into the air? That from the days of Bismarck the nation and state, at last unified, were incapable of reaching those heights of philosophical thought, poetical spirit and art which crowned the final period of the existence of the small, feudal but liberal German principalities? The devotion to materialism, the feverish gold-rush, the exclusive interest in exports and dumping, the search for raw materials and markets, all this has finally driven the Germans, perhaps for ever, on to the road of conquest, a road marked by fire and sword, by blood and suffering, in keeping with the traditions of Prussia and the Teutonic knights. The united nation produced

Goebbels instead of Goethe, Haushofer instead of Kant. Bismarck's spirit imbued millions of Germans and a totalitarian policy of conquest became the official religion of this nation. This spirit of conquest inherited from the Prussians the main directions of its expansion. The Drang nach Osten, the path of the Teutonic Knights, became the road of the knights of the swastika. Like the Prussians, the Germans aimed at conquering the lands between the Baltic and the Black Sea, to reach as far as possible into the depths of Eastern Europe, and on their way they destroyed every political and cultural centre.

The history of Russia is no less surprising. From the small principality of Muscovy, which was for many years under the Mongol yoke, it grew into a vast country stretching its tentacles to the Baltic and Black Seas, and in the times of Peter the Great it clearly directed its expansion westwards. Its idea of the state was derived from Byzantium and Asia; the idea of empire is almost unrelated to this case to the idea of nation, and actually there is no Russian nation in the full meaning of this word to this day. Russian imperialism came across German imperialism at the end of the eighteenth century, though the latter was then still differentiated into Prussian, Saxon and Hapsburg imperialism. As a result of these united efforts of German and Russian imperialism, the whole bridge between the Baltic and Black Seas tottered; there the Union of Poland and Lithuania was the rampart of political order and culture for several centuries. From this time on, for 125 years, these two imperialisms, not having sufficient strength for a final settlement of accounts, watched carefully lest any buffer-states divided them. Both sides repressed Polish risings, both were anxious that no unified Slav state should come into being in the Balkans. The war of 1914-18 weakened both rivals for some time, but Germany was the first to break the lull. The German-Russian clash was renewed in 1941, but in conditions vastly different from those of a quarter of a century before. By then Germany had united all the German tribes and forged them into the Third Reich. Russia, too, had achieved much in unifying the various nations inhabiting her vast territories in the post-revolutionary wars. Nevertheless, it is significant that Germany has now reached a line which is close to the borderline of settlement of the great Russian tribes. Moscow's propaganda is forced to recall more and more often the past history of the Russian nation. In this case, too, the truly Russian nation defending itself against the invader has proved to be a real force, in contrast to the imposed unity of ideology which was supposed to unite various nations and tribes.

private and public life and did not care for luxury. The only objects of display, dear to the hearts of the Polish gentry, were good horses and costly armour.

Contrary to the view voiced by certain exponents of "enlightened absolutism" and by a number of philosophers of the eighteenth century, including Voltaire and Diderot, who declared that Poland was "clerical" and "intolerant," Moltke proves very clearly that the Poles were extremely tolerant in religious matters. He shows that not only dissenters from the Catholic Faith, like Calvinists, Lutherans, Orthodox and Mahomedans, but even members of small sects enjoyed complete freedom of conscience and full protection of the law in the performance of their religious obligations. Poland took no part in the religious wars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Moreover, she induced her rulers and statesmen to observe the principles of absolute religious tolerance with regard to heretics, whenever this was necessary.

Dealing with the situation of the peasantry, Moltke admits that the system of "soccage" in force in Poland was far less onerous than that applied in Russia and Prussia which, actually, differed only in name from slavery. The Polish peasant did not belong to his master, he could not be sold. Whenever the estate passed into the hands of a new owner, the peasant was not obliged to leave his farm, from which he could not be removed by the former owner. Very often the peasant possessed a small holding of his own on which he could raise money, and some peasants were comparatively well off. Besides, Polish peasants enjoyed certain rights and privileges, quite inaccessible to their fellows in other European countries.

Moltke denies that there is any truth in the assertion that Poland was backward from a cultural, administrative or economic point of view. On this point he is quite emphatic, and expresses this in the

It is also significant that in spite of Hitler's colossal triumphs the spirit of victory is diminishing more and more in the German nation. War operations are becoming more abstract and all constructive German attempts in the occupied territories are ending in failure. Brute force and slavery cannot conquer, the brutal force of matter is not victory in itself and cannot be lasting.

Only the nations which give up brute force as the only instrument in their policy, which discard wars aiming at the enslavement and humiliation of mankind, have a chance of a real and lasting victory in this deadly struggle.

JÓZEF PIETRZYCKI

A PAGE FROM MY DIARY

THE FINAL STAGE OF THE SEPTEMBER 1939 campaign brought me into South-Eastern Poland. I knew this part of Poland very well from the last war. Then I marched far and wide through these lovely provinces. Every town there was familiar to me.

Later it happened that I did not visit this country for twenty years. Everywhere surprises were sprung on me, and all of them were pleasant and inspiring. During these twenty years of independence everything there had changed, so that it could hardly be recognized. The famous old Polish castles in this country, such as Podhorce, the seat of Queen Marie Sobieska, Olesko, Podkamien, Zbaraz, and so on, were still there as of old, but the surrounding villages and towns seemed to have been reborn. Places which used to be dirty had become tidy, prosperity had replaced wretched poverty, and fine roads had come in the place of muddy and impassable tracks. When I compared this state of affairs with the recent past I could not fail to see progress everywhere. From the immense work done within two decades only it could be seen that this country was no Cinderella for us, that we loved it just as much as the central provinces of the Republic.

It was not only the physical appearance of this province that was heartening. The same could be said of the attitude of its inhabitants. The Ruthenian soldiers remained true to the colours of the Republic to the very end. They fought splendidly up to the last moment. Many of them were not conscripted at all, but joined as volunteers. Cases of treason were few and far between.

Here are a few more examples of what I saw of the loyalty of the majority of the population of these eastern marches.

Following sentence: "Already in the fifteenth century Poland was the most civilized country in Europe." Nevertheless, he tries to explain that in view of the rapid rise to power of other European States—they were all autocracies—developments in Poland were too tardy to allow her to become a strong power simultaneously with the others. In his view, Poland lacked the necessary internal organization without which no nation is able to endure for any length of time. He adds, however, that not the defects of Poland's constitutional system, but the difficulties inherent in her geographical position and the ambitions of her militaristic neighbours were the real cause of her downfall.

Such, in general outlines, are the views on Poland set forth by Moltke in this unique treatise of his. It may well be asked why Moltke took this particular stand with regard to a nation which was already being cruelly oppressed by the Prussian government whose service he had entered, only a short while before, as a young officer, after having previously held a commission in the Danish army.

In the first place, he wanted to prove the superiority of the Prussian autocratic system over Poland's democratic form of government, and he thought that, in this respect, recent events would testify to the soundness of his arguments: Prussia, which proclaimed the absolute supremacy of the State and its aims over the citizens, had emerged victoriously from the Napoleonic wars, whilst Poland collapsed under the pressure of stronger and more efficiently organized powers.

But there are besides other motives, too, of a purely psychological nature, which explain Moltke's interest in Poland. He had English connections. His sister, Augusta, married an Englishman, Mr. John Burt, who had settled in Germany and whose daughter by an earlier marriage, Mary, later became Moltke's wife. He also maintained close social relations with

numerous Polish families, especially in the province of Poznań, when he was detailed there to survey the country. In his memoirs he often mentions a Polish lady, Madame Obraczewska, the widow of a former "Starosta" (district governor), in whose country house near Krotoszyn he frequently stayed as a guest. In a letter to his mother, written in 1825, he refers to the Poles in the following terms: "Nothing can give greater pleasure than intercourse with Poles. A visitor immediately feels at home amongst them, is treated as one of the family and surrounded by an atmosphere of cordiality and friendship which is really refreshing. They are open-hearted and vie with one another in their attentions to the visitor, so that he soon forgets he is a stranger. The Poles are well educated, gifted, they have a natural sense of humour, are gay and entertaining and the best friends in the world. . . ." In one of his letters Moltke confides to his mother that he is learning the "Mazurka," the Polish national dance, in order to astonish his Polish acquaintances.

But as Moltke grew older and rose higher and higher in the ranks of the Prussian army his whole mentality changed. Despite his former truthfulness, his attachment to his Polish friends, his own testimony to the baselessness of current accusations levelled at Poland, the Prussian spirit, hostile to everything Polish, gained mastery over his soul. In 1873, when questioned by Professor Caro, lecturer on Polish history at Wrocław (Breslau) University, whether he really was the author of the aforesaid treatise he replied with a touch of bitterness that it was with deep regret that he had to admit his authorship of this publication which, today, he considered devoid of all value and only fit to be forgotten for ever.

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