

to promote German colonization in Polish districts. The commissioners paid high prices, encouraged Poles to sell their land, and subjected those who were unwilling to do so to all kinds of disabilities. But they met with little success ; and in the year 1908 an Expropriation Act was passed, in open violation of the German Imperial Constitution, and as another shining example of Prussian civilization. In the Polish provinces, where the interests of *Deutschtum* require it, the Settlement Commission could effect the expropriation of the landowner in order to make room for German colonists. The first case under this enactment was that of a Polish widow with two children. The land had been owned by her husband's ancestors for an exceedingly long time ; but the tenant was ruthlessly evicted to make way for the grasping Prussian.

The Expropriation Act can be employed for many purposes. It was primarily intended to enable the Commission to acquire land, since the Poles refused to sell a 'satisfactory' quantity of it. It was also intended to ruin as many Polish landowners as possible ; and therefore the compensation given is assessed according to a semi-official estimate—much lower, of course, than the actual value of the land. When the proprietors sold voluntarily, they could ask only a sacrifice price, for they knew that the Commission might at any moment step in and offer even less. Conversely, if a Pole wishes to buy land, he is unable to offer a price as high as would be asked of and could be paid by German purchasers, for his tenure is never secure from the Commissioners, and he is always liable to be called on to sell at a loss.

I should add that the Government spares no pains to make the methods of its officials as vexatious as possible