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Great Cities of the World
WARSAW—THE CAPITAL OF POLAND

A large plain which possessed hardly any natural boundaries except the Baltic on the north and the Carpathians on the south—such was Poland in the days when she had her place among the nations of Europe. With these exceptions her only frontiers were mere imaginary lines drawn between her soil and that of strong and covetous enemies. This geographical disadvantage is perhaps one explanation why, after existing for eight hundred years as an independent country, she has lost her identity. In the final dismemberment, Germany, Austria and Russia each obtained a share of the ill-fated country.

The greed and cupidity of her nobles is another reason for Poland's downfall. To further their own private interests rather than the national cause, was one of their characteristics. For centuries they had the power to indulge their private likes and dislikes because they were allowed to maintain a large number of retainers. Disputes between different members of the nobility often led to miniature battles, and internal turmoil handicapped the king in his military expeditions.

Then the condition of the peasants was very miserable. They were ignorant and down-trodden, forced to labor for masters who accorded them no rights whatever. Under such conditions the spirit of patriotism could not be strongly developed. There was no real middle class to mediate between the nobles and the serfs and so improve the state of affairs.

But even if the blame can be laid at her own door, Poland claims our pity, for she has suffered much since her partition in 1793. Her language is the only bond of union which she can boast, and Russia has tried to wrest from the Poles within her boundaries even this distinguishing sign of their nationality, which they cling to fondly, and to force upon them an alien tongue. A proud and high-spirited people have been forced to bend their necks to the yoke of another nation, which is entirely dominant, giving the Poles no voice in their government whatever.

Warsaw, the largest city in Russian Poland, and, in fact, the third largest city in the whole of Russia, was the capital of the entire country. It is situated on the left bank of the Vistula, on a terrace 120 or 130 feet above the river, and descending by steep slopes to a flat at the base. Two bridges connect it with its suburb, Praga, on the opposite side of the Vistula, where many bloody battle scenes have been enacted. One is the Alexander bridge, in the centre of the town, 1,666 feet long; the other is the railway bridge that crosses the river under the guns of the Alexander citadel, which the Russians forced the Poles to build as a chastisement for the insurrection of 1830.

It was after this rebellion also that the liberal constitution which Alexander I of Russia had granted to the Poles was taken away from them. This had provided for a responsible government, a national army under a national flag, the freedom of the press, and the right to use the Polish language. But the feud between Russians and Poles was one of long standing, contrary to the constitution autonomy made itself felt, and the proud Poles chafed under its restrictions, until the discontent made itself evident in open revolution in 1830. Many of the Poles implicated in the insurrection were banished to Siberia, and the valuable library at Warsaw, one of her most cherished possessions, was carried to St. Petersburg, where its 300,000 volumes formed the foundation of the Imperial Library at the Russian capital. That all their chief art treasures should be torn from them and used to embellish the cities of their conquerors has been another drop of bitterness in the Polish cup of woe. Even the precious archives of the nation have been removed from the Church of St. Joseph where they belonged. In the Kremlin palace at Moscow are twenty-two busts of Pol-

ish kings and distinguished Poles, the Polish throne and the crown worn by the last king of Poland.

Another insurrection took place in 1863, a great deal of the trouble centre in Warsaw. When the people were again subdued, the leaders of the insurgents were executed or banished. Altogether 50,000 people were taken out of the country, and consigned to the salt works, mines or forts of Siberia. The privileges of those left behind were cut down still further, the use of the Russian language being insisted upon particularly, and the censorship of everything that was printed becoming very rigid. All teaching in the university at Warsaw was carried on in Russian, even the study of the history of the Polish language was to be conducted in the other tongue, and students might not even speak their native language in the corridors of the buildings. The same rule held good in the lower schools. A story is told of a boy of twelve who was shut up in a dark room for twenty-four hours because he said in Polish to a companion as he was leaving the school, "Let us go home together." Russia is the official language in Warsaw, and even signs and the names of streets are given in the two forms, Polish on the left and Russian on the right, or Russian above and Polish below.

As late as 1906 there was an outbreak in Warsaw which led to much rioting and bloodshed. At present the country round about her is once more a battlefield, but this time Poland is fighting with the country under whose rule she has been for the last hundred years, rather than against it. This struggle may be the beginning of happier days for Poland, for Russia has promised her autonomy as a reward for her loyalty, and Polish rule may again hold sway at Warsaw.

In spite of its tribulations the city has grown and become prosperous. The population is about 700,000, of which a third are Jews, who early in her history took advantage of Poland's religious toleration and fled there in times of persecution. It is situated on the banks of a great navigable river that flows through a broad, fertile plain, and besides this six important railway lines radiate from it, leading to Vienna, Kiev, Moscow, St. Petersburg, Danzig and Berlin. The conditions are very favorable for the development of trade, and Warsaw is now one of the most important commercial cities in Eastern Europe. Although industry has suffered from the wholesale deportation of artisans following the different insurrections, and from the fact that Russian rule militates against Polish art and science, the city is a great manufacturing centre, iron rails, plated silver, carriages, boots and shoes being some of the most important outputs of the factories. It is renowned throughout Western Russia for its wool and hop farms, to which the people throng.

The old part of the town makes one think of old Germany, on account of its narrow streets and antique buildings huddled together with little semblance of order. Here is the old city market in the same condition as it was four hundred years ago, not far from the royal palace—the Zamek as it is called. Warsaw's most notable church, the Cathedral of St. John is built on one of the mediaeval alleys, so that the spectator cannot get a proper view of its beautiful Gothic nave.

There are over a hundred Roman Catholic churches in the city, and many synagogues. In decided contrast to these is the solitary typically Russian building, the Greek Orthodox Church of Alexander Nevsky, which in its characteristic blue and buff seems like a gaudy stranger that has strayed among them. The finest view of the whole city is to be obtained from the Lutheran Church, which has a dome 300 feet high.

The city, of course, has its open spaces, of which the Saxon Garden is the most beautiful. Among the monuments which decorate the public squares is a bronze statue of Sigismund III., also one of Copernicus by the Swedish sculptor, Thorwaldsen. In a book which appeared during the last year which he lived the world-famous astronomer set forth the theory that the sun was the centre around which the earth and the other planets revolved. There is another monument that is abhorred by the Poles. It is an iron obelisk commemorating the names of Poles who informed on their countrymen during the insurrection of 1830, and who were shot as traitors. Needless to say it was erected by Russian order, and the inscription reads, "The Poles who fell for fidelity to their sovereign."

The Fisheries

It may justly be claimed that no fishing grounds in the world are so favorably situated or so well adapted for the maintenance of the most valuable varieties of commercial fishes as those adjacent to the shores of Nova Scotia. In 1911 the total value of Nova Scotian fisheries was \$10,119,242, i. e., 34 per cent of the Canadian production. About 28,368 men are employed in this industry. It is stated that the fisheries at the present time are apparently inexhaustible in resources and in a flourishing condition. Yet it is well to note that little progress has been made in the total production during the past 25 years. A more intensive study shows that there are infinite commercial possibilities by the introduction of improved methods of preparing the fish and by the opening of new outlets.

In order to get a definite idea of the possible development of Nova Scotian commerce in fish it is well to take each of the most important branches by itself. And first to deal with the cod fishery which is the leading industry on the Atlantic coast. The catches of both inshore and offshore fishermen are almost all split and salted for drying purposes. But cod salted at sea is heavily so and does not make good dried fish for shipping to hot climates because it gets slimy. This is not so with inshore fish, which comes to land daily and is dried in the open, the curing being due to the action of sun and air. This can be safely taken to hot climates. The chief markets for dried products are found in Italy, Spain, Portugal, Brazil, the West Indies and the United States. Recently a large and widening outlet has been found for boneless cod, a dried article in small packages. Now a considerable quantity of fish is consumed fresh in the inland Canadian market and with improved transportation facilities this can be increased.

In light of the extreme abundance of herring it is to be regretted that this branch of the fisheries is as yet practically undeveloped. Of the comparatively small proportion of the catch that is smoked and cured in pickle, part is consumed in Canada and part exported to the United States and the West Indies, but owing to careless packing and badly made barrels, the price obtained has not been such as to induce an increased output. In the preparing of salted herring there are opportunities for greatly increasing the trade by raising the standard of curing and packing. The same statement applies to the mackerel fishery.

Along the shores of Nova Scotia are perhaps the most remarkable grounds for lobster fishing in the world. The total money value of this industry is nearly \$3,000,000. Not many years ago, however, this fishery was of no account. About 1870 a few people became impressed with the industrial possibilities of preserving the meat of the lobster in tins. Under license of the Department of Marine and Fisheries the products are invariably of high quality. The United States, Great Britain, France and Germany are the chief markets and the supply is not equal to the demand. In addition there is a flourishing business in the export of live lobsters to the United States for consumption in fresh condition. This trade is largely confined to the west and south counties of Nova Scotia as far as Halifax. The geographical position of that part of the province together with good steamship service makes such a business a profitable one and the lucrative trade could be extended with advantage to the counties lying eastward of Halifax. Care must be exercised in this industry as the enormous annual draining of the lobster production areas, if recklessly continued will result in the extinction of the industry. This, however, is being successfully guarded against by the government.

The proper cultivation of the shellfish business also holds out most

promising inducements. Some of the finest natural beds of oysters in the world are to be found in the Nova Scotia coast. The present yield is about 4,000 bushels yearly, nevertheless it is claimed that there is a greater cultivable area for oyster beds in Nova Scotia than in even the State of Maryland, which has produced in one year 10,559,012 bushels.

For 25 years there has not been much increase in the value of Nova Scotian fisheries, but it seems clear an era of development is about to commence. This stagnation was due to the fact that the fish trade of the Atlantic coast has remained largely a salt fish one, which in spite of recent improvements in packing, practically reached its limit long ago. The greatest commercial possibilities lie in the change now taking place in the character of the industry. More and more fish is being disposed of in the home markets in a fresh or smoked condition. One great hindrance to the commercial development of the fresh fish trade is the slow transportation over the long distances separating the centres of population in Canada from the sea. This has been largely removed by the government's action in 1907 in assisting shippers of Canadian fresh fish to take advantage of fast railway services by paying part of the heavy express charges on their shipments, thus enabling them to compete successfully with the United States shippers, who before had practically supplied the larger towns and cities of Central Canada, owing to the much shorter railway route from Gloucester and Boston. Since the inauguration of this system the quantity of fresh fish annually brought in to Canada from United States ports has been much reduced, while that shipped inland from the Canadian Atlantic ports has been correspondingly increased. Indeed there can be no doubt that the energy and enterprise of fishermen and fish merchants will soon enable them to supply the present home demand entirely from Canadian sources.

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