

but also acquired a European reputation by his Latin poems. Justus Lipsius styles him the Catullus of Poland. From his youth he enjoyed the patronage of the eminent John Sarius Zamoyiski, who attached him to his person, made him the tutor of his son, and provided liberally for his support. Martin Kromer was also the son of a peasant, but rose by his talents and erudition, to the dignity of a bishop. He produced an elaborate work on the origin and subsequent history of Poland, which has been many times reprinted, and is held in the highest estimation. In effect, the later histories of Herbut and Neugebauer are mere abridgments from the larger work of Kromer.

It may appear wonderful that time could be spared for compositions of this kind in a country where the din of war, the struggle for independence, was incessant and unrelaxing—Tartars, Cossacks, Muscovites, and Moslems; each followed the other as the quick-succeeding waves of a tempestuous sea. But they met an immovable rock. Had it been otherwise, what might not have been the fate of Christendom! After the great victories of John Sobieski, every church in Italy, Spain and England resounded with hymns of praise and thanksgiving. The Pope was overwhelmed with joy, and remained bathed in tears of gratitude, prostrate for hours before a crucifix. All hearts overflowed with rapture: Europe was saved from the bloody and iron yoke of the relentless Moslems.

The inspiration, therefore, of the great minds of Poland, lay not in external objects, in the pictured grandeur of rocks or torrents, or the commanding majesty of natural scenery; for Poland, save in such isolated spots as the vicinity of Cracow or the valley of Pieskowa-szcza is of level and monotonous aspect. They were inspired by something greater and mightier than this,—by the sublimity of moral sentiment. The innumerable holy battle grounds, the monuments of unparalleled deeds, the tattered Moslem banners that decay above the tomb of Sobieski, are these without their inspiration? To these peasants, war was a sacred and solemn calling. Therefore it is, that amid their most peaceful and domestic occupations, stern thoughts of warfare are ever intruding. But these things will appear more clearly manifest on a consideration of their household and popular songs; a few of which, from the collection of Kasimir Brodzinski, are here subjoined. They will speak for themselves.

THE LANCE AND THE BANNER.

Friend, take this banner and fasten it to thy lance. When thou goest into battle, I would that the breeze would always blow it towards me.

May the sound of its waving always remind thee of the misfortunes of our fathers, their chains, and our devastated fields; but, friend, at the moment of combat, think also of my tears.

This banner has two colors,—white and red: the white is the symbol of the innocence and holiness of our wars: the red is the symbol of the despair which results from blood. But under the white eagle thou must engrave my name and thy own.

In the midst of the battle, think of thy friend, as well as of glory: but if thou hast the misfortune to fall into the hands of the enemy, tear our cypher off quickly, that no proud conqueror may know to whom the banner belongs.

THE MOTHER.

Glory be to God! I have brought up my son. I am the happiest of mothers. He is blooming as a flower, and straight as a poplar.

How much care and anxiety did he cost me! each moment I had to tremble for the dangers his ardor and vivacity multiplied.

But I am now recompensed by his strength and duty. My son, thou owest no more to thy mother.

But thou owest everything to the land of thy birth.

Go, my son, go where duty calls thee. Take these arms, combat the invaders.

By fighting gloriously thou wilt dry my maternal tears. Put thy trust in God, and thou wilt return to thy cottage.

Do not delay: bid adieu to thy sister: quit thy home, the combat calls thee: thou wouldst dishonor thyself by staying.

THE BETROTHED.

When his father sent him to battle, and his friends assembled together to bid a last farewell, I stole his handkerchief, and steeped it in the running brook. I wished to keep him some moments longer.

But the handkerchief is dried, and now I water it with my tears.

He is gone: the marks of his footsteps are effaced, the neighing of his charger is not heard: I am deserted and alone.

But good auguries attended his departure. The stork was making her nest, and the ravens did not croak. We shall soon see him again. The pie will foreshow us the road he will take to regain us. He will save our land and our cottage. It is here that he learned to walk: it is here that he gained strength: and it is here that his fathers are buried.

When he is returning, I shall see his lance shine, and his banner wave from the top of you