

## SOME PROGNOSTICATIONS AND A PREFACE

a deeper horror. But this is almost the only hope I can permit myself of a century that has seen this occur with no effective protest. Might is recognized as the rule of life, Christianity has been deposed even from the lips of Governments. It rarely was anywhere else; but our century has grown too self-conscious to be able to leave it even this last resting-place.

"In this degeneration of the human conscience Germany has played perhaps the leading rôle. After the brutal Germanification of the French provinces, I cannot see why you should be so astonished at the same treatment being extended to the Polish districts. Europe offered no protest against the iron hand remoulding Alsace and Lorraine as a sculptor remodels his wax faces; why should you expect Europe to interfere on behalf of the Poles? Whence, *cher maître*, come your optimism, your generous belief in the power of 'the pillars of civilization and intellectual culture?' You and I should know that a people that has lost its power of military resistance is the doomed prey of the nations with teeth and claws; though by another law of nature teeth and claws never suffice to destroy it utterly. It develops cunning to match the claws, and finds ways of lying low. The only force that can utterly dissolve a people is love. The wax face, which, however moulded, will retain some trace of its original lineaments, can be entirely melted by the heat of love—by liberty, equality and fraternity.<sup>1</sup> But this recipe for assimilating races is rarely tried, and even when it is begun, mankind is rarely patient enough to carry it through. This new persecution of the Poles will therefore only serve to accentuate the Polish nationality.

"Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, under the inspiration of the generous policy of the Sigismunds, Poland was the chief land of refuge for the Jews, and it is a thousand pities that hosts and guests should now alike be swamped by the forces of barbarism. The Germany of Goethe and Schiller, of Kant and Beethoven, to which humanity turned in reverence, has been replaced by a Germany of blood and iron, a Germany

<sup>1</sup> A captain in the Austrian Polish Legion said he was fighting for the Austrians because of Austria's good treatment of the Poles.