

THE LAND OF MAZEPPA



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Published by
Ukrainian Federation of U. S. A.
New York, N. Y.

1916.



From the Collection
of the late

JOHN LUCZKIW

ЗБІРКА

ІВАНА ЛУЧКОВА

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The establishment at the University of London of a new School, under the able supervision of Prof. Thomas G. Masaryk, for the study of the history, language, and literature of the Slav races once more emphasizes the fact that one of the beneficial results of the war will be an increase in our knowledge of peoples whose very names were hitherto unknown to the ordinary layman. Englishmen, individually, have never been behind the representatives of other nations in opening up paths in little-known countries, and their efforts have led to results which compare very favourably with

* Published in "The Athenaeum", Journal of English and Foreign Literature, Science, the Fine Arts, Music and the Drama, No. 4602. London, February, 1916.

those of other pioneers; but as a nation we have so far shown little disposition to try to fathom the psychology of foreign races, or to master those of other pioneers, but as rival nations — as we are now beginning to perceive — have long been patiently studying. Whether we are now entering on a new phase of our national existence, when ethnological studies and world-politics will receive as much attention as they do on the Continent, remains to be seen. Certainly there was never a more propitious time than the present for increasing our knowledge of some of the races with whom—perhaps at no very distant date—we shall be called upon to enter into closer relations.

Among the races whose history, folk-lore, literature, and political aspirations merit the attention of students is a nation which is receiving considerable

notice just now in Continental political circles, and even a certain amount of attention long due in our own publications. For the Ukrainians and their country Ukraine—a name which should be familiar to readers of Byron—have long since made good their claim to be a great nation, with a population of over thirty-four millions—four in Galicia and thirty in Russia, besides those who have emigrated to the United States and Canada—and a territory stretching from Przemyśl to the Caucasus, and from the marshes of Prypet to the Black Sea. To omit them from the list of the nations who have been encouraged by the Allies to persevere in efforts towards autonomy, on the ground that the major part of their population inhabits the Muscovite Empire and the minor part Galicia, would be to close one's eyes to an ethnological question and a national

movement of the first importance.

The history of this country, as shown by Baron Boris Nolde's illuminating pamphlet 'L'Ukraine sous le Protectorat Russe'—also, indirectly, in the pages of Prof. W. A. Phillips's concise account of the past and present glories of Poland, Lithuania, and Ukraine—has been one long heroic struggle for liberty. United to Poland, it separated from it, in part at least, after the famous revolt of the Hetman Bohdan Chmielnicki, and, by the Treaty of Pereiaslaw, in 1654 became a vassal of Russia. Under Petro Doroszenko it came for a short time under Turkish rule, but once more returned to Russia. The provinces of the right bank of the Dnieper did not pass to Russia until the reign of Catherine II., in 1793, at the time of the partition of Poland, when Galicia became Austrian terri-

tory. The city of Kiev had already been abandoned to Russia in 1681 by John Sobieski for the sum of 200,000 roubles.

On coming under Russian domination, Ukraine retained, until the end of the eighteenth century, an almost complete autonomy, superior to that of Finland since 1809, or that of Poland between 1815 and 1831. Thus the Hetmans, elected by the people, but confirmed by the Tsar, had the right of receiving foreign ambassadors and granting charters to cities and the nobility, and were supreme judges in the country and leaders of the army. This autonomy, notwithstanding the centralizing measures of Peter the Great, was not abolished until Catherine II. issued her manifesto to the "Little Russian nation," which provoked unanimous protests in 1767. The Hetmanat was suppressed in 1764; the national army—the

Sich—in 1775; and civil institutions in 1781—all of these measures foreshadowing the introduction, two years later, of serfdom.

Already, under Peter the Great, the affairs of the so-called "Little Russia" had been withdrawn from the Ministry, or College, of Foreign Affairs, and placed under a specially created Ministry of Little Russia. The prohibition against Russians acquiring lands in Ukraine had been abrogated and the customs abolished. These measures, contrary to the liberties granted by the Tsar to the Ukrainian nation in 1654, provoked several revolts, the most celebrated of which was the rising headed by Mazepa. Several Hetmans, such as Samoilowicz, Polubotok, and Doroszenko, ended their days in exile.

Ukrainian patriots turned their eyes towards Sweden,

Turkey, Poland, and even Prussia, in 1791, the year in which Count Wasyl Kapnist, the Marshal of the nobility of Kiev, presented a secret memoir to the minister Herzberg on the violation of the constitution of Ukraine by the Russian Government. At the same time the French Government gave instructions to its agents to profit by the separatist movement in the disaffected provinces.

To the abolition of the political autonomy of Ukraine was added that of the Orthodox independent Ukrainian Church, which, during the closing years of the seventeenth century, under the Metropolitan Gedeon, passed under the domination of the Patriarchs of Moscow and the official Russian Orthodox Church. However, the union with the Church of Rome, which dates from the Council of Florence, at which Isidore, the Metropolitan of Kiev, was

present in 1439, and which was renewed in 1596 by the Metropolitans Michel Rahoza and Hipace Potey—abolished in 1836 by Nicholas I., but protected by Austria—has undoubtedly left a deep mark on the moral and intellectual development of the Ukrainians, by attaching the nation to Western civilization. This union, which was only openly professed by the Ruthenians, as the Ukrainians of Galicia are called, is gaining, owing to persecution, more and more sympathy in Russia, and the Uniat Church may truthfully be said to be assuming the character of a national religion.

Notwithstanding the statements of Signor Virginio Gayda in his 'La Crisi di un Impero'—of which an abridged English translation was published last year—and their repetition by the Earl of Cromer in **The Quarterly Review** for October, 1915, the Ukrainian nation and

language are distinct from the Russian. That has been made clear by many eminent Slavists, and even by a memoir of the Russian Imperial Academy of Jan. 30, 1905. Moreover, their rights were eloquently pleaded in 1849 at the Pan-Slavist Congress by the Czech patriots Rieger and Palatsky. Dal and Mickiewicz regard the Ukrainian tongue as more beautiful than the Russian, and Bandke states that it is the finest of the Slavonic languages, whilst Bodiensky admires its musical qualities, and places it on a level, in that respect, with Italian.

According to Prof. Janowski of the University of Cracow, Ukraine holds the third place among Slavonic literatures: after Polish and Russian literature, but before that of the Czechs, the Serbians, the Croats, and the Bulgars. It must be pointed out, however,

that the Ukrainian Szewczenko is one of the greatest Slav poets, and enjoys a popularity such as no other Polish or Russian poet has attained. As to fiction, Mychailo Kociubinsky (who died in 1913) may be compared to Tolstoy in his talent as a writer of short stories.

The political parties of Ukraine may be grouped as follows: (1) Separatists or "Mazepists"; (2) "Reformists," who hope that the realization of their national aspirations will come from reforms in Russia; and (3) "Russophiles" who generally have special personal reasons for upholding the Russian bureaucracy.

As regards the Ukraine Question (one of the political problems which will call for the earnest attention of the members of the Peace Congress at the conclusion of the war), the pamphlets in German by Dr. Wladimir Kuschnir and Dmy-

tro Donzow are extremely valuable. The former gives a good sketch of the history of the nation, which he frankly states was "robbed of its rights by Russia," and advocates, as a solution of the problem of the balance of power in the Near East, the formation of a great Ukraine State. The latter is also in favour of a separate Ukraine State, and sets forth "the ideal conditions" for the realization of the Hartmann-Bismarck project.

The national Ukrainian movement in Russia is represented specially in the co-operative societies and in the "Zemstvos." As a proof of its strength, it may be pointed out that, when the Russian Government permitted the erection of a statue of Szewczenko at Kiev, the committee charged to collect the necessary funds received 106,000 roubles in the first year largely due to the **kopek**s of the

peasants. Szewczenko, we may explain, was the most ardent representative of Ukrainian separatism. The poet's centenary in 1914, was the occasion for patriotic demonstrations in all the towns of Ukraine, and especially at Kiev and Lemberg, as in the case of the centenary of Kotlarewsky, which was celebrated at Poltawa in 1913 with great solemnity.

Not all modern Russian statesmen have been like Waloniew and Stolypine, who were in favour of the repression, and even suppression, of the Ukrainian movement. Count Golovine, Minister of Public Instruction in 1876, and Governor-Generals Tschertkow, Doundoukow, and Dragomirow, have been among the objectors to that unwise proposal, and had the courage to oppose the attempted extermination of the Ukrainian language. The Russian Imperial Academy also pointed the

way to the Russian nationalists, but the lesson was lost.

The result of this has been that there is not a single Ukrainian school in Russia. On the other hand, there were in Galicia, at the beginning of the war, no fewer than 2,450 primary schools; 12 establishments for secondary education, of which 6 were maintained at the expense of the Austrian Government; 2 Lycees for girls, and 4 seminaries for teachers. In addition, 4 Lycees and 10 seminaries had parallel lectures in Ukrainian and Polish, whilst the University of Lemberg possessed 8 Ruthenians chairs.

It is claimed that the rights of Russia over Ukraine are similar to those of the German Empire over Belgium or Holland, and even, if the term "Little Russia" is employed, that these rights recall those of France over Franconia, of the Saxons over the Anglo-Saxons,

of Great Britain over Brittany, &c. It is true that numerous Slav or non-Slavonic tribes were momentarily united under the sceptre of the Princes of Kiev, who by the way, were Ruthenians; but that huge empire, like that of Charlemagne, was never an ethnological unity. There is, indeed, a wide gulf between the mind of the Muscovite and that of the Ukrainian: the one leans towards collectivism; the other, like the Lithuanian and the Pole, towards individualism. But even Stolypine, in his circular of Jan. 20, 1910, admitted that the Ukrainians were non-Russian; and since then both foe and friend alike—as M. Menschikof of the *Novoie Vremia* and Prince Mestchersky, writing in *Grajdanine*—have followed his example.

There is one more special reason why English students should be interested in the U-

krainians and their country. Even if we lay no stress on the interesting discoveries of a Ruthenian scholar, M. Vladimir Stepankovsky, whose writings are not under immediate notice—that once an English princess, Gytha, a daughter of King Harold, was united in wedlock to Vladimir II., King of Ukraine (1113-1125), and that at another time it looked as if it were possible for Ukraine to become a dominion of the British Crown*—there remains the fact that about a quarter of a million of the Ukrainians who have settled and become naturalized as citizens in Canada are subjects of the British Empire. The number of Ukrainians in the United States is probably about one

* When Peter the Great negotiated with the great Duke of Marlborough, with the view of enlisting the support of England for Russia, he promised the Duke, in return, the Principality of Ukraine.

million and a half, many of whom have intermarried with the descendants of the English, Scotch, and Irish.

Thus, as from a perennial fountain, the streams of human material have never ceased to pour from Ukraine, building up new nations and empires. The proud Empire of Rome fell under the blows received from peoples who issued forth from the Steppes of Ukraine. Did not the Anglo-Saxon and the Celt alike pass these grassy plains before they settled in their new homes? The kilt worn by the Scotch of the Highlands has to this day its prototype in the Ukrainian **plahta**. The Celts, the Scythians, the Goths, the Huns, and the Slavs—all can regard Ukraine, the fertile “Land of the Black Soil,” as their motherland. There, on the rugged banks of the Dnieper, where the immense struggle between the Russian and Ger-

man armies is going on at this very hour, was the centre of their many kindoms. The lofty lonely tumuli—the last resting-places of kings and warriors, which the traveller often encounters in Ukraine—are silent witnesses of the ancient deeds of the forbears of Europe.

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Copies of this pamphlet may be obtained by addressing The Ukrainian Federation of U. S. A., 611 Broadway, New York City.

