

**THE COSSACKS OF THE UKRAINE:
COMPRISING BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES OF THE
MOST CELEBRATED COSSACK CHIEFS OR
ATTAMANS, INCLUDING CHMIELNICKI,
STENKO RAZIN, MAZEPPA, SAVA, ZELEZNIAK,
GONTA, PUGATCHEF AND A DESCRIPTION OF
THE UKRAINE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649556625

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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HENRYK KRASINSKI

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*Jos. Jordiff.
Wigton*

186

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A DESCRIPTION OF THE UKRAINE.

WITH

A MEMOIR OF PRINCESS TARAKANOF,
AND SOME PARTICULARS RESPECTING CATHERINE II., OF RUSSIA,
AND HER FAVOURITES.

BY

COUNT HENRY KRASINSKI,

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CAPTAIN IN THE LATE POLISH ARMY;
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"Gonta, an Historical Drama," &c.

LONDON :

PARTRIDGE AND OAKEY, PATERNOSTER ROW.

MDCCCLXVIII.





TO HIS IMPERIAL MAJESTY,

ABDUL MEDJID,

Sultan of Turkey and Egypt.

SIRE,

The history of the Cossacks of the Ukraine has such a strong connexion with the history of Poland, and the history of the Ottoman empire, that it shows most clearly that both these countries had for ages, and have even now, but one common enemy;—an enemy which, under the plea of friendship, has never ceased to weaken indirectly the resources of Turkey, to undermine her vital strength, and to lay such artful snares for the taking of Constantinople, that had not all the movements of Russia been closely watched by your IMPERIAL MAJESTY'S illustrious father of glorious memory, SULTAN MAHMOUD, had she not been foiled in all her schemes on Turkey in 1840, by the great energy and extraordinary sagacity of the Right Honourable Viscount Palmerston, one of the greatest statesmen of his age, she might have inflicted the deepest injury on your IMPERIAL MAJESTY'S dominions.

For the above reasons, and considering that your IMPERIAL MAJESTY is animated with the best possible feelings towards her most gracious Majesty, Victoria I., Queen of Great Britain, whom I can now in my heart call my own sovereign; considering, moreover, that one of my ancestors, who belonged to the Confederation of Bar, was most hospitably received on the Turkish soil, and, that he recommended, on his death bed, his friends always to be grateful to the Turks; I therefore hope that it may please your IMPERIAL MAJESTY to accept the dedication of my work on the Cossacks, which I venture to lay at the foot of your IMPERIAL MAJESTY'S august throne, as a small token of my regard for your IMPERIAL MAJESTY'S qualities and virtues, and my ardent wishes for your IMPERIAL MAJESTY'S health, and the prosperity of the Turkish empire.

I have the honour to remain,

YOUR IMPERIAL MAJESTY'S

Most humble and devoted Servant,

HENRY KRASINSKI.

PREFACE.

THERE are two kind of authors, one who foster some predominating view with their pen, the other, who use it chiefly as an instrument for securing their personal advantages. I claim a place, however humble, in the former category.

Ever intent on the contemplation of the ancient glory of Poland, whose history and politics are familiar to me, because they have seldom ceased to be the special object of my researches and persevering study, I am always anxious to attract the reflecting readers attention to that which engrosses my own thoughts; namely, how it is possible to humble Russia, to restore Poland as a nation, and to increase the salutary influence abroad, and the prosperity at home, of Great Britain. Hence, all that I have ever written in Polish, French, or English, has been historical in character, anti-Russian in sentiment, and consequently exclusively favourable to Poland and England. Having spent some of my boyish years in the secluded regions of the Polish Ukraine; and having, at a later period, often

inhabited and visited, north and south, the most dreary parts of ancient Poland; having always been passionately fond of shooting, and lived occasionally for days, even in winter, in the open air, I naturally acquired (though I have never been in America), something of the habits of a North American hunter, and may be almost considered as a child of the desert. Indeed, though I lived for years at Warsaw and Paris, stayed often even in London, yet, however partial at times I might have been to polite society, I could never shake off completely my early recollections, nor forget the effect produced on my youthful and naturally enthusiastic mind, by the soaring of eagles, the neighing of the herds of wild horses, the howling of ravenous wolves, and the harmonious winds of the Steppes. To this may be attributed the facility with which I occasionally describe some of the fiercer passions of the human heart, and my partiality in fostering in my publications subjects, more connected with the history of my own country, than with other countries, and consequently more congenial with the branch of politics to which I devoted my attention. To the abovenamed early recollection may be also ascribed, that the outpourings of my pen bear rather an impress of romantic wildness than that of too refined civilization. But if I sacrifice elegance to energy in my writings, it will, I think, be admitted, that I have a noble object in view. Without being for an instant deceived by the artfully concealed aim of panslavism, which with all its fine

words, crafty sophisms, and childish arguments, intends nothing more than to dismember Turkey and Austria, to erase Poland from the map of nations, to disturb the balance of power, to check British commerce and British influence in the south-east of Europe, as well as in Egypt and Persia, and to endanger the British communications with India for ever in favour of Russia. Thoroughly convinced that nothing short of the complete independence of Poland, on a liberal scale, and the rigid preservation of the Ottoman empire, can save Europe from north-eastern invasion, and permanently guarantee the blessings of peace and progressive improvement all over the world. I have boldly pointed attention to what I deem the weakest, and therefore the most vulnerable, part of Russia.

1. To those who, having never exposed their heads to the Russian bullets, advised the Poles to submit blindly to Russia, as well as to those who, without the slightest knowledge of Polish history, past or present, became suddenly authors of political pamphlets, and from various motives (no doubt favourable to their private interests), now preach the same doctrine among the Poles, I beg to answer, that in proportion to the increasing danger with which Russia was occasionally threatened by numerous wars and political commotions in Europe, she always flattered Poland, and tried, with crafty and seasonable insinuations, to gain the confidence of the Poles. So did Catherine II. before the partition of Poland; so did the Emperor Paul I.; so did Alex-

ander in 1807, 1812, and 1815; so did the Emperor Nicholas in 1829, and does now—and while I admit that the hatred that exists between Russia and Poland for ages, is entirely of a political nature, and can cease under proper circumstances—I by no means admit blind submission to Russia as beneficial to the Poles, especially in the present unsettled state of Europe. If, however, Russia will give up part, at least, of her Polish provinces; if she will restore all the confiscated property of the Poles, recal from abroad and Siberia all the Polish political exiles, if she will withdraw her armies from Poland, re-establish the constitutional kingdom of Poland, proclaim either his Imperial Highness the Grand Duc Michel, or his Imperial Highness the Duke of Leichtenberg, or any other personage whom she may think proper, as the future king of Poland, and allow the formation of a purely national Polish army, under the command of Chlopicki, Skrzynecki, Uminski, Dwernicki, Bem, or Rozycki, as the safest guarantee of keeping her promise, then a permanent peace between Russia and Poland is possible, and Poland, though oppressed for ages, and who had, and still has such a strong claim to the gratitude of civilized Europe, may consider Russia as her sister, improve her morality, keep pace with the march of constitutional freedom, and drown in oblivion her Tartaro-Calmuck pranks: but without the fulfilment of a great part of the above-named guarantee, the friendly dispositions of Russia towards Poland is too great a mockery, and cannot