

**YANKO: THE
MUSICIAN AND
OTHER STORIES**

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Yanko: The Musician and Other Stories by Henryk Sienkiewicz & Jeremiah Curtin & Edmund H. Carrett

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HENRYK SIENKIEWICZ & JEREMIAH CURTIN & EDMUND H. CARRETT

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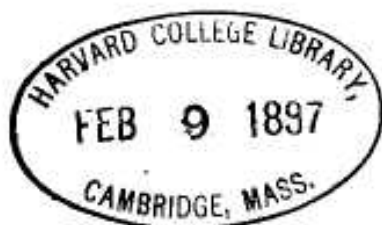
YANKO · THE
MUSICIAN
AND · OTHER
STORIES · 

BY · HENRYK · SIENKIEWICZ
AUTHOR · OF · "WITH · FIRE
AND · SWORD" · ETC · ~ · TRANS
LATED · FROM · THE · POLISH · BY
JEREMIAH · CVRTIN
WITH · DRAWINGS · BY
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Dr A. C. Burdette

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PREFACE.

OF the five stories in the present volume, three are of such character that remarks concerning them are not needed,—at least they are not needed here. Readers will prefer to be left to themselves, I think, and might resent comments on Yanko, or Mihás, or the old lighthouse keeper, unless indeed comments coming from other readers whom they meet in social intercourse, or whose impressions are given to the world through the public press.

In two of the stories, however, there are characters not familiar to Americans,

and to these I beg to call attention in this place.

The first of these is the schoolmaster; the other is the officer or general, the man who directs the physical force of the country. The German schoolmaster among the Poles takes the place of the missionary of old times. In past centuries, the reason put forward by Germans for invading Slav lands was, that the people were pagans, that it was necessary to convert them and save their souls. As the conversion was made not by missionaries alone, who worked for the love of God simply, and received their pay in eternal salvation, but by force of arms and the wiles of diplomacy, the missionary was an assistant called in to make the conquest permanent by assimilating the Slavs to the Germans in religion.

This progress of Christianizing was slow, exceedingly bloody and painful, but thorough; and when it was finished the Slavs were exterminated in part, in part converted into the substratum of North German society, excepting only those of them, mainly princes and chiefs, who had succeeded in becoming associated with the conquerors. This historical process took place in the lands between Poznan and the Elbe. In Poznan (Posen) itself modern agencies are in use, because the problem has been modified by time; civilization is the watchword now, not religion. Hence Sienkiewicz presents to us the teachers who brought little Mihas to his death and Bartek the Victor to prison and financial ruin. In Steinmetz we have the higher intelligence with its wiles, — the general who gives the simple-minded Poles at Gravelotte their own music, and

who in leading them against Austria urges them to conquer the *Niemtsi* (Germans), he being the quintessence of the German principle himself. The officers with gold-rimmed glasses, and the Landrath (p. 267), give a vivid idea of the realities which meet a Polish peasant, and of the tragedy of a people who accomplish the will of their enemy to the harm of their own flesh and blood.

JEREMIAH CURTIN.

VALENTIA ISLAND, IRELAND,

August, 1893.



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