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[ARTICLE]

## RUSSIA AND THE POLES.

The Polish citizens of San Francisco recently held a meeting to protest against the atrocities perpetrated upon their countrymen by Russia during the present war. Among the best authenticated cases of the kind is the murder of four Polish physicians who were found in attendance upon the Turkish hospitals in Roumelia when the Russian troops crossed the Balkans. Three of these victims were Austrian subjects. None of them had ever been residents of Russian Poland. Yet they were taken out and shot, apparently for no other reason than that they were Poles, and the only one of the number arrested who escaped death was a surgeon who had been wise enough to secure British protection. The British flag saved this man, notwithstanding that there is no love lost between Russia and England. And though Austria has been more than complacent to the Czar throughout the war, his officers did not hesitate to butcher her subjects even in the teeth of the protests of her diplomatic representatives. There appears to be no room for doubt as to the facts in

the case. They have been made the subject of indignant comment in the German, Austrian and English Parliaments, and they have formed the basis of remonstrances addressed to the Russian Government. This, however, is alleged to be but one example of a long list of outrages committed by the Russians upon the Poles. It is said that not fewer than one hundred and fifty peaceable Poles have been brutally slaughtered in Bulgaria alone, and that in none of these cases was there any other cause for the atrocities than the nationality of the victims. There is no doubt that

Russia hates the name of Pole, and she has reason to do so, for that name embodies a national disgrace which she can never efface. It is the ambition of the Czar to have Russia regarded as a great civilized Power, but the conduct of this war has convinced the world that she is a barbarous Power, and that she has no higher claim to be regarded as civilized than her Turkish foe. The Russians are savages, and their Government is a savage Government. Their hatred of Poland springs from their sense of the injuries they have inflicted upon that unhappy country; that country whose downfall and sufferings must always reflect the deepest shame upon the civilized European Powers that permitted it. Russia has used Poland with a systematic and relentless brutality hardly equaled, and not surpassed, by the treatment of the Netherlands under the bloody Duke of Alva. She has crushed her victim and strangled

has crushed her victim and strangled her alternately. She has not been content with destroying her nationality, attempting even to blot out her native tongue, and stifling her every attempt at recovery ; she has pursued individual Poles with sleuth-hound tenacity all over the world, and has even had the audacity to compass their destruction when under the shelter of free Governments. Russia hates the Poles because she knows that she has deserved undying detestation at their hands ; because she knows that every Pole has the best and bitterest cause to hate every Russian. And because she is strong only with the strength of the bully, and because her Oriental barbarism is too strong for the thin veneer of her sham civilization, she resorts to the coward's relief of assassination, when the opportunity occurs. In the case of the Polish surgeons, moreover, this barbarous Power openly violated every principle recognized in civilized warfare. By the Convention of Geneva the lives of physicians and surgeons were solemnly guaranteed protection, and therefore the murder of these men constitutes an unparalleled outrage. Russia undertook this war ostensibly for the protection of Christians, but it is evident that she does not reckon Polish citizens as co-religionists, or, what perhaps is more probable, that she herself has no real apprehension of what Christianity is. In fact the religion of Russia is not Christian. It is a degraded system of coarse mythology and superstition, supported and taught by the

most ignorant and debauched clergy in the world. Her religion is not to be compared for dignity and nobility to Mohammedanism, which stands as far above it, in a philosophical sense, as Christianity itself stands above African Fetishism. The Russians in truth are neither civilized nor Christians. They are semi-barbarians, and their advance in Europe is a menace to civilization and to the cause of human freedom and progress.

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