

ASKS WOMEN TO AID POLAND.

Laurence Alma Tadema Wants Them to Help Sienkiewicz's Plan.

To the Editor of The New York Times:

There is one aspect of happiness which we are not allowed to overlook, that which depends upon our neighbor's well-being, and which must therefore be another's happiness before it may become our own.

All human destinies are closely intertwined; what concerns you concerns me, and what concerns us concerns the world; if we sometimes forget this, it is because our powers of perception and of imagination are limited. When two sit side by side and the one weeps the other cannot laugh; when two walk hand in hand and the one falls, the other will sustain him; none of us could dance beside a death bed, or eat his fill while a child starved before his eyes. Yet the very calamities which touch us to the quick when we stand close to them, move us little when they happen beyond our range of vision, outside the radius of our habitual sympathies.

If we realized that our own welfare was affected by our neighbors' miseries we should perhaps force ourselves to be less ignorant of what may be taking place around us. That law which interlinks the lives of individuals works also upon the destinies of nations.

None worthy of humanity could live in peace were a tragedy being enacted in the house opposite his own. Let us imagine that some one down the street, profiting by a neighbor's momentary misfortune, had seized his home and made it forfeit, saying, "You may still remain here, but the house henceforth is mine, and you must follow my orders; you may still work, but the profit is now for me; you may still speak, but your thoughts must be uttered in my language."

Would you live at ease, knowing of that neighbor's wrongs?

Suppose that one morning you saw his little children flogged without mercy because they would not pray to God in a foreign tongue? Suppose that a day came when you saw him finally evicted from the house of his fathers? Would you bear the knowledge of all this without protest? I think not. Yet this very iniquity is taking place across the street, and you who live in your own country, free of person, of language, and of conscience, are inevitably called upon to listen to the wrongs of a neighbor.

Henry Sienkiewicz, the great Polish author, has issued an appeal to all whose names stand for something in literature, science, and art, asking for an expression of sympathy on behalf of the Poles, now threatened by the Prussian Government with compulsory dispossession. He believes that such evidence of sympathy from all who believe in the rights of man will not merely bring solace to the hearts of the afflicted, but may eventually influence the policy of Prussia.

As an humble friend of Poland, and one to whom its noble language and literature are not totally unknown, I take this opportunity of suggesting that all American women who feel inclined to consider this appeal, and more especially my fellow-workers, the women of letters, should give me their names that a long and weighty list may be sent to Henryk Sienkiewicz, not in any way suggesting that the women of the United States desire to interfere in European politics, but in order to make it evident that, breathing the free air of this mighty country, they feel their own liberty attacked, their own happiness indefinitely affected by the wrongs of those whose sufferings, however distant, can be ignored by none whose conscience perceives and observes the infrangible laws of human solidarity.

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