

POLES CHARGE EACH OTHER WITH INK SLINGING

Barbed Pens Bleed Alphabet For Strong Words And Long Words

ONE CLAIMS £200, THE OTHER £50

Stefan Polotynski, of Vulture-street, South Brisbane, professor of music, proceeded against Zygmunt Witold Romaszkiwicz, otherwise known as Sigismund Vitold Romashkevich, of Rossiter-street, Morningside, in the Magistrates' Court last week.

The professor of music went for the high note of £200 for defamation of character, and Romaszkiwicz countered with a claim for £50 for the same thing.

Enter "Dom Polski." It sounds like a grandee of Spain, but it is only a Polish publication, filled with crotchets, z's, y's, and w's, bristling like a barb wire fence. On or about December 15, 1930, "Dom Polski," the publication, contained writings which Polotynski considered defamed his fair name. This paper, Polotynski averred, was published by Romaszkiwicz, at Brisbane, and circulated elsewhere throughout Australia and abroad.

THIS is what "Dom Polski" contained, among other things, said Polotynski:—"The efforts to discredit the Polish Association of Queensland by a person styling himself Stefan-de-Polotynski, and who poses as a count, professor, composer, conductor, president, and organiser of the Polish people of Sydney and Brisbane, besides claiming to speak 14 languages and play 12 musical instruments. At present he is engaged in publishing "Polonia," and by way of glorifying his position, styles himself 'Chief Redactor,' editor, and administrator.

"Anyone not knowing this man, Polotynski, could easily be misguided into believing him to be genuinely trying to assist, and I unfortunately trusted him to write to Warsaw regarding my claims.

"I was not long in learning that he was an adventurer, trading on his professed loyalty to Poland, in order to exploit trusting Polish people in this country. The Polish government, and for that matter, no government will have any dealings with the self-ap-

pointed Count Polotynski.

"The paper 'Polonia' is written by Polotynski, and he employs no staff. It is only so much nonsense for him to sign himself Chief Redactor, etc. He is no more a redactor than I am a minister. It would be more to his credit if he would seek genuine employment instead of loafing around depending on subscriptions and the fruits of begging for a livelihood."

Polotynski averred that the above description of himself was such as to make him out as an impostor who falsely took the title of count.

The article, contended Polotynski, accused him of falsely assuming certain qualifications and offices and that he professed to have linguistic and musical knowledge, whereas he was an idler living by charitable gifts.

This was Polotynski's broadside hurled at his Polish foe in the court by Mr. Brian O'Sullivan, instructed by Fitzgerald and Walsh.

"Fair Comment."

Mr. E. H. Hutcheon, instructed by Messrs. Macnish, Macrossan, and Dowling, countered with abstracts from "Polonia," another Polish paper, in which it was alleged Polotynski had defamed Romaszkiwicz, and he claimed £50 damages.

The defence was that Romaszkiwicz did not admit publishing, but if he did it was done in good faith for the protection of the in-

COUNTERED



SUED by the professor, he got in with a counter claim. Zygmunt Witold Romaszewicz.

terests of the defendant and the Polish Association of Queensland, and it was published in order to refute defamatory matters published by Polotynski.

It was fair comment in respect of the public conduct of the plaintiff in public affairs.

Then came the counter claim.

Romaszkiewicz claimed that in August, September, October and November, 1930, at Brisbane and elsewhere, Polotynski falsely and maliciously wrote, printed and published in a periodical circulating in Brisbane and elsewhere throughout Australia the following:—

(1) 'Publicly lowering the dignity of the Polish name by publishing in the Press articles defamatory to Poland and by calling himself the delegate or creator of the Polish Army in Aus-

tralia.

(2) In consequence of my endeavors Mr. Z. Romaszewicz, member of the colony, had withdrawn from circulation his booklet in English called "War Memories," which contains unreasonable and pasquinade things under the name of Poland.

(3) Mr. Z. R., of Morningside: It would be absurd of you in future to demand payment to yourself for the position to which you elected yourself just to comply with the small group of easy-believing friends of yours.

(4) Not for dog is the sausage—

satire in honour of Mr. Z. Romaszewicz—it can be sung to the music of a Krakovaik, Lithuanian I am to you, etc.

Romaszkiewicz held that Polotynski meant to make him out as a person who had defamed his native land and who had falsely assumed a position to which he had no right and that he had written satirically about his beloved Poland. But worse still it made him appear as a man of no standing who had run away from the Russian Army.

Translation Puzzles.

The preliminaries took some time. The atmosphere of the court became decidedly Polish.

George Christie, of Quay-street, Brisbane, said he had seen in 'Dom Polski' the name of Polotynski.

Then "Polonia" was introduced to Mr. Hutcheon, and to decipher its contents Francis Frukacz was called.

He said he knew Polotynski, who for some time was president of the Polish Association.

He went on to say that in May, 1930, Polotynski was struck off the roll because he wrote untruths in the minute book and was opposed to the Polish population in Brisbane.

"He was not fit to be president," said the witness.

Continuing, Frukacz said that he read articles in "Polonia" and considered they were directed at Romaszewicz.

When Greek meets Greek then comes the tug of war, but when Pole meets Pole and they disagree over the translation of passages, bristling with terminal letters of the alphabet, who can

tion of passages, bristling with terminal letters of the alphabet, who can put them right?

Polotynski did not see eye to eye with a translation made in the court by Frukacz, and he said so.

Polonia contained a poem, and Frukacz was giving the translation, when he came to the word "tall." But Frukacz said it meant not "tall" at all, but a tall weed or something that was not good.

For the defendant Francis Offseck said that when he read certain things in "Polonia" concerning Romaszklewicz he considered they were not true. He went on to say that he was one of a committee of investigation that inquired into the affairs of Polotynski during his tenancy of the position of treasurer and president of the Polish Association, and Polotynski did not satisfy them on certain matters.

Polotynski was deposed from the presidency and intercepted correspondence that was addressed to the association.

At this stage Mr. O'Sullivan objected to the admission of this statement as evidence and the magistrate upheld the objection.

With honors still even, the Poles dispersed when the magistrate intimated that at this stage he would adjourn the case to a date to be fixed.