

HORMAYR AND BOHEMIA: FROM HIS LETTERS TO PALACKÝ

Josef Hemmerle

The rebirth of the Czech nation was furthered at the beginning of the 19th century especially by the Bohemian nobility and a small group of intellectuals. Among these leaders of the national revival were such figures as Dobrovský and Jungmann and, above all, František Palacký, who became the historian of the Czech people. The present contribution attempts to show that the Czech national movement also received outside impulses from the historian and publicist Josef Freiherr von Hormayr, who was active at the time in Vienna and then later on in Munich. This Austrian — one of the most genial figures of the pre-1848 „Vormärz“ period in Austria — entered the service of the Bavarians in 1828 because of his strained personal relationship with Metternich. He is regarded as the most important connecting link between Czech romantic nationalism and German romantic historiography. Hormayr's letters to Dobrovský and Palacký are extant. Those to Palacký which are surveyed here reveal the intensity and degree of lively interest with which this Austrian historian influenced the historiography and scholarly efforts of the Czechs, via the person of Palacký. In his publication organs, especially the *Archiv für Geschichte* and the *Taschenbuch für die vaterländische Geschichte*, Hormayr gave continuing, energetic support to the national and cultural development of the Czech people, thus becoming a spiritual champion of their national aspirations. The letters to Palacký show how much Hormayr did to further understanding in the German-speaking areas for the autonomous national life of the Czech people.