19. REFORMS, REVOLUTION, REACTION

(Hungary's history from 1800 to the Freedom War of 1848-49)

The awakening

When Napoleon reached the Hungarian frontier during his Austrian campaign (1809) he called on the Hungarians to rise against Austria. Remembering Louis XIV and his promises to Rákóczi, the Hungarians did nothing — and for once that was the right thing to do. They even fulfilled their obligations by supplying troops to the Emperor, *Francis I* (1792-1832) against Napoleon, though with considerably less enthusiasm than their ancestors did to help Maria Theresa — but then Francis lacked the remarkable attributes of his grandmother.

After Napoleon's fall the Vienna Congress (1815) set up the Holy Alliance of the victorious powers with the aim of re-establishing the rule of absolutism in Europe. In Austria, which had become an Empire after the demise of the unlamented Holy Roman (German) Empire in 1804, Chancellor Metternich, the most forceful statesman of the time, ruled with an iron will on behalf of the feeble-minded Francis I.

It was during the years of this despotic government that, at long last, a number of young Hungarian nobles began to assess the condition of their nation. Slowly awakening after her "lost century", Hungary was a century behind the West and in need of urgent social, economic and constitutional reforms. The problems awaiting solution were immense:

(a) The language of the government, legislation and education was still either German or Latin.

(b) As a result of the Austrian resettlement policies the proportion of the non-Magyar nationalities rose to 50% of the total population of 12 million by 1820.

(c) Agricultural production — Hungary's allotted role in the Empire — suffered from old-fashioned methods, fluctuation of prices, inflation caused by the wars and neglect by absentee landlords.

(d) There were hardly any Magyar middle classes. The Austrian policy discouraged the creation of industry in Hungary and the rudimentary trade and commerce were almost exclusively in the hands of German-Austrian burghers and recent Jewish immigrants.

When the Diet was finally convoked in 1825, the rapidly increasing group of reformers was ready to suggest measures to solve these problems, but the Viennese Imperial Council, headed by Metternich and Count Kolowrat, an avowed enemy of the Hungarians, refused to respond to their demands.

The first of these reformers was Count ISTVÁN (STEPHEN) SZÉCHENYI (1791-1860), son of one of the few progressive Catholic aristocrats of Transdanubia. After a distinguished service with the imperial cavalry, young Széchenyi visited the western countries, (especially Great Britain), studying their democratic institutions, industry, economy, finances and agriculture. Returning to Hungary, he attended the 1825 Diet where he offered a large endowment toward the foundation of a National Academy of Sciences. Soon afterwards he summed up his suggestions in a book entitled "Hitel" (Credit) (1830). He advocated equality of opportunity for all members of the nation, including serfs and nationalities, and blamed the complacent and reactionary nobility for the nation's backwardness. He also advocated the solution of the social and economic problems before attacking the constitutional ones. A surprisingly large number of aristocrats and nobles welcomed his suggestions, however unpalatable they seemed to the conservatives.

At the Diet of 1832 another leading figure appeared, LAJOS (LOUIS) KOSSUTH (1802-1894). Scion of an old Protestant noble family of Upper Hungary, he was a lawyer by profession and possessed exceptional talents as an orator, writer and statesman. He immediately joined Széchenyi's reform circle. Though they eventually became political opponents,

Count István Széchenyi (1791-1860)

"Either the Magyar words
Shall have new senses,
Or Magyar life will stay sad,
Ever changeless . . . "

(Ady)

Kossuth always maintained great respect for Széchenyi, whom he called "the greatest of Hungarians." Kossuth considered the nation's political freedom and the constitutional reform as his prime target, while Széchenyi insisted that the nation must main-

tain its traditional ties with the dynasty and Austria and should carry out internal social and economic reforms first. During the subsequent Diets this difference in priorities separated Kossuth's "Liberals" from Széchenyi's "Moderates". The Vienna Council looked at Kossuth's activities with increased suspicion and had him imprisoned for a while for breaches of the censorship laws (for having published a handwritten record of the Parliamentary proceedings).

After his release from prison, Kossuth became the political leader of the reformers while Széchenyi concentrated on promoting in a practical and unspectacular way the *economic and cultural reforms* he had suggested. He spent most of his considerable income in financing or initiating such projects as the development of steamship navigation, river regulation and flood mitigation schemes, the building the the first suspension bridge between Pest and Buda over the Danube river and the publication of further works expounding his ideas.

The new Emperor-King, *Ferdinand V* (1835-1848) was an imbecile and had no say in the affairs of the Empire. The incessant demands of the Diet had finally some effect upon the Imperial Council and so the 1842 Diet was able to codify the use of Hungarian as the official language of the country. After 300 years the nation was allowed to use its own language in its own country . . .

The peaceful "Revolution"

The Diet of 1847-48 was opened by the Emperor-King — in Hungarian. The first Habsburg in 300 years to use the language of his "loyal subjects" caused immense enthusiasm (and some merriment) among the assembled deputies. The Liberals, led by Kossuth in the Lower House and by Count Lajos Batthányi in the Upper House, had practically unanimous support in both Houses. The Viennese Council began to show a more lenient attitude, especially after the fall of the French monarchy which was followed by uprisings in several cities of the Empire — though not in Hungary (February 1848). Metternich resigned and a deputation of the Hungarian Parliament was received in Vienna by the Emperor (or rather by the Imperial Council, nicknamed "The Kamarilla"). The deputation submitted the demands of the nation and these demands were accepted by a much mellowed Council. A *responsible government* was ap-

The first Hungarian Government of 1848
and the Parliament (built in 1885).

pointed with Count Lajos Batthányi as its Prime Minister and the other leaders, such as Kossuth and Széchenyi, as Ministers.

Dissatisfied with the progress of the Diet (which was meeting in Pozsony, on the Austrian border) and not knowing of the Vienna development, the youth of Pest and Buda decided to go into action on the *15th March, 1848*. The poet Petőfi wrote a stirring poem "Rise Hungarians" and read it to the assembled demonstrators. A crowd moved in a disciplined procession to the Buda Chancellery (the Office of the Governor-General) and presented their demands — the famous "12 Points" — printed, for the first time, without the censor's permission. These points were almost word for word identical with the Liberal platform which had just been accepted in Vienna. The military watched the demonstration with sympathy — not a shot was fired on this day.

Thus the people of the nation's capital expressed, without bloodshed, its unanimous decision to abolish serfdom and accept sweeping reforms — an achievement which had cost the French nation hundreds of thousands of lives half a century before.

March the fifteenth, with its symbolic gesture has since remained the Hungarians' greatest national day, the one day of the year when Hungarians all over the world forget their differences and discover what unites them: their love of freedom.

In April 1848 royal sanction was given to Hungary's *new constitution*. The main innovations of this constitution were:

1. Establishment of a responsible government. The King's decrees were only valid when countersigned by the government.
2. Re-establishment of the union with Transylvania.
3. Abolition of serfdom and equality for all before the law and equality of tax burdens.
4. Freedom of religion and of the press.
5. The establishment of a national guard (the "Honvéd" army).
6. Parliamentary elections by popular vote.

The relations with Austria remained unchanged: Hungary became an "independent kingdom" within the framework of the dual monarchy under the Habsburg ruler.

Though the feudal privileges were abolished overnight and no compensation was ever paid to the landlords for the loss of

their serfs, there was no hostile reaction from the Hungarian nobility. It was obvious that the nobility's much criticised "feudal attitude" had been motivated by lassitude and passivity rather than anti-social ideology.

Austrian intervention

The new Austrian Chancellor, Kolowrat, decided to neutralise the effects of the new constitution, "extorted, under revolutionary threats, from the feeble-minded Emperor" (as he put it). The Council roused the nationalities against the Magyars. The Magyar-hating Governor of Croatia, Colonel Jellasich, claimed that the new constitution endangered the traditional Croat freedom. So he demanded the restoration of centralised Viennese administration. The Serbs began to demand an independent Serbian state in the southern districts of Hungary. The Rumanians of Transylvania became the most willing weapons of the Viennese interference. They and the Serbs set out on a cruel and senseless campaign of pillage and murder against the defenceless Magyar population (which had no Magyar defence forces yet), while the Austrian garrisons stood by passively. In the north the Slovaks and the Ruthenes did not follow the example of the southern minorities. In fact thousands of them later joined the Hungarian "Honvéds" in fighting the Austrians.

In June 1848 the murderous rampage of the Rumanians and Serbs moved the Hungarian Parliament to set up the National Defence Force. A National Defence Committee was formed with Kossuth as its chairman to co-ordinate the defence of the nation. By the end of September, the Imperial Council had practically repudiated the April constitution and ordered the Austrian and Croat troops to crush the Hungarian "rebellion". As a result of an unfortunate misunderstanding, the Austrian general Lamberg was killed in Pest. This inexcusable violence had far-reaching consequences: Prime Minister Batthányi resigned and so did Széchenyi. This great man, horrified by the vision of a civil war, suffered a nervous breakdown and was taken to a Vienna asylum where he died by his own hand in 1860.

Kossuth, as head of the *National Defence Committee*, became virtually the Prime Minister. He remained, in fact, the actual leader of the nation during the ensuing struggle. In October the Emperor-King was made to sign a decree dissolving the Parliament and dismissing the government. As this decree was

not countersigned by the government, it was not legal, of course.

Austrian and Croat troops crossed into Transdanubia under Jellasich in September but this well-equipped regular army was defeated by a small force of hastily mobilised national guards under two young officers, Arthur Görgey and Mór Perczel. The news of the defeat caused a short-lived uprising in Vienna (during which the hated war-minister, Latour, was lynched by the Austrian rebels). So, in retaliation, the imperial commander, Windischgrätz, launched a full-scale campaign against Hungary.

In December the Council forced the old Emperor, Ferdinand, to resign and his 18 year-old nephew *Francis Joseph* was declared Emperor. He was not even next in line of succession, the Hungarian government was not consulted and Francis Joseph was not crowned King of Hungary.

Thus Hungary was facing what amounted to external aggression by a nominal ruler imposed illegally by a coup d'etat.

The war of self-defence

The subsequent war has been called "War of Independence" or "Freedom War", even "Revolutionary War". At this stage it was none of these. Hungary did have her independence, guaranteed in the April constitution, similarly the freedom of a modern democratic society. No Hungarian leader wanted more in December 1848. Thus the subsequent armed conflict can be termed nothing but the defensive war of an attacked nation and its legal government against an external aggressor and its internal allies, the insurgent nationalities. For the same reason, many imperial officers — Austrians and Germans — joined the newly organised "Honvéd" army.

The Diet, on Kossuth's advice, appointed *Arthur Görgey* commander-in-chief of the National Army. Görgey, a former guards officer, a man with a cool scientific approach to military strategy, but also with great personal courage, was an excellent choice. On learning of Windischgrätz' attack he withdrew his untrained troops to the northern mountains. In Transylvania Kossuth appointed the brilliant Polish general, *Joseph Bem,* to restore order, which this admirable old man did, against overwhelming forces (Austrians and Rumanian irregulars). He was equipped with little more than the admiration of his soldiers, a strategic intuition and determination.

The northern army of Görgey, trained, hardened and rested, launched the victorious *"Spring campaign"* in March 1849 and soon reached the Danube-bend, north of Budapest. It then turned to the north, defeating and outmanoeuving Windischgrätz' well-equipped regulars repeatedly. At the end of this whirlwind campaign, the imperials held only the fort of Buda and the frontier city of Pozsony. Windischgrätz was dismissed in disgrace. In the meantime, the south of Hungary was pacified by Mór Perczel, a gifted civilian-general and the Serbian-born John Damjanich who, disgusted with the atrocities committed by his fellow nationals, joined the Hungarians and became one of their most successful generals. Bem was holding Transylvania: Hungary seemed to have defended herself successfully.

Independence, Russian intervention, defeat

On the 4th of March, 1849, Francis Joseph proclaimed the abolition of Hungary's self-government. Kossuth decided to end Hungary's constitutional vacuum and convened the Diet in Debrecen. On the 14th of April, 1849, the Diet declared Hungary's *complete independence,* dethroned the Habsburg dynasty and elected Kossuth Regent. A new ministry was formed with Bertalan Szemere as the Prime Minister.

Whilst legally justified, this action came at the wrong time. The revolutions and uprisings of Europe had by then been defeated, except in Hungary. Moreover, unknown to the Hungarians, Austria had already asked for the Russians' help to crush the Hungarian "rebellion". The Tsar obliged and dispatched 200,000 elite troops against Hungary.

On the government's instructions Görgey undertook the wasteful siege of Buda and took the strong fort in May. By that time, however, a newly organised Austrian army and fresh Russian troops were preparing for a new assault — a total force of 450,000 with 1,700 cannon, against the exhausted, under-equipped Honvéd army of 170,000 (with 450 cannon). Görgey made several bold attempts at defeating the Austrians before the arrival of the Russians, once he led a cavalry charge himself and was gravely wounded. Eventually he had to withdraw before the joint Russian-Austrian forces. In August Kossuth realised that the war was lost and transferred all his powers to Görgey, then left the country.

On the 13th of August, 1849 Görgey, at the head of the remaining Honvéd troops, *capitulated* before the Russian com-

mander. The fortress of Komárom under the brilliant young general Klapka, held out for another six weeks.

The sadistic Austrian general Haynau (nicknamed "the Hyena" for his cruelty in Italy), was made Hungary's military dictator to vent his wrath upon a defenceless people. He had 160 soldiers and civilians executed, among them 13 generals and ex-Prime Minister Batthányi, and sentenced thousands to long prison terms. At the Tsar's special request Görgey was pardoned and interned in Austria.

20. ROMANTIC RENAISSANCE

(Literature, art and music in the first half of the XIXth century)

Classical literature and culture have always had their attraction for the Hungarians. Thus, at the end of the XVIIIth century, the first writers attempting to arouse the somnolent nation used the inspiration of the great Greek and Roman poets.

The "Horatian" odes of *Dániel Berzsenyi* (1176-1836) expressed his thoughts in rhythmic, classic metre and rather old-fashioned Hungarian language. He was a pessimist — but then he had so much to be pessimistic about: the attitudes of the Hungarian nobles at the turn of the century gave him little hope for national revival. So he found consolation in the memories of the glorious past and, eventually, in the placid haven of stoicism in the true Roman fashion.[1]

MIHÁLY CSOKONAI-VITÉZ (1773-1805), the restless minstrel of Debrecen, a lyricist with a pleasant blend of classic-humanistic and Magyar folk inspiration, wrote love poetry in fresh, folkish language with just a touch of melancholy and eroticism. This, and his volatile way of life, made him unpopular with his hypocritical contemporaries. The lyric cycle "Lilla's Songs" (published, like most of his work, after his death) is a collection of sincere, often sensuous love songs, sometimes under the disguise of the fashionable flower imagery of his age ("To the Rosebud")[2]. His comic epic, "Dorothy", a satire of the "high society" of his time, with its gently erotic fantasies became one of the most popular works young ladies were not supposed to read. He also wrote lyrics for many songs of contemporary Hungarian composers. These, being intended for

use in "good society", limit themselves to romantic meditations of the type young ladies were allowed to swoon about. ("To Hope")[3].

Though his classic-humanistic education was coloured by considerable French influence, *Sándor (Alexander) Kisfaludy* (1772-1844), deserves mention here for his pleasant lyric cycle, "Himfy's Loves", divided into two parts. The first, "Lamenting Love", was written after his return from French captivity, which seemed to have been made more than bearable by the charitable attentions of the French ladies. No wonder that the young hussar, none the worse for his "French leave", received a rather cool reception from the lady of his heart (the Hungarian one, that is). In the rhythmic, rhyming stanzas (a verse form of his own creation), Kisfaludy used a smooth, pleasant flow of rather old-fashioned but rich and colourful phrases to describe mankind's oldest sentiment. His colourful nature descriptions show the inspiration of French Romanticism (the result of his extended study-tour in France), without any of the popular German sentimentality of the period.[4] His obvious sincerity and veiled threats to take up military service again caused his Rosa to forget and forgive. She married him and Sándor wrote the second part of his cycle, "Happy Love", which turned out to be considerably shorter than the first part. Then they lived happily ever after — for forty more years — without the help of poetry.

The Renewal of the Language

The Magyar language which had already demonstrated its suitability for literature during the XVIth and XVIIth centuries, became practically obsolete during the XVIIIth century with its German and Latin culture. Reading Hungarian books was just "not the thing to do". Thus the young intellectuals of the "Reform generation" at the beginning of the XIXth century realised that the Magyar language needed rejuvenation. The leader of the "language renewal" was *Ferenc (Francis) Kazinczy*, a great linguist, man of letters and poet. He and his circle of language reformers enriched the language with many new words made up by linguistic methods of derivation.

Kazinczy's disciple, *Ferenc Köicsey* (1790-1838) is remembered as the author of Hungary's national anthem, the "Himnusz"[5], a great but rather melancholic patriotic elegy. His

calm stoicism tended to turn into despondent pessimism toward the end of his life. His last poem, "Zrinyi's Second Song", the saddest voice in Magyar literature, conjures up the harrowing vision of the self-destruction of the Hungarian nation, its place *"taken by another nation on the banks of the four rivers. . ."*

The independent Romantic poet, KÁROLY (CHARLES) KISFALUDY (1788-1830), Sándor's brother, broke with the conservative traditions of his family and began his artistic career as an itinerant painter. His first literary creations were romantic tragedies, followed by more successful comedies. The basic concept in both was the conflict between conservatism and progress, often presented as the "generation gap". In his search for fresh vocabulary, he turned to the people and adopted many folk poetry phrases and even wrote folkish song texts, some of which are still popular Magyar songs. His patriotic poetry ("Mohács") expresses hope in the future instead of lamenting over the past as was the fashion in his days.

The humorous ballad "The Sorrowing Husband"[6] gave the Magyar language a proverb — the last line of the poem.

Kisfaludy's literary review "Aurora" became the rallying point of critics and poets.

The Romantic Drama and Prose

József (Joseph) Katona (1791-1830), author of the great drama "Bánk Bán", remained practically unknown during his lifetime. The drama, written in 1815, is a historical tragedy in five acts in blank verse. The plot is based on a doubtful historic incident of the XIIIth century: the Palatin, Bánk, in the absence of the King is drawn into a violent clash with the Queen and her foreign advisors and eventually kills her. Katona's characterisation is excellent. Following the example of the French drama, he uses several strong personalities whose violent confrontation causes almost unbearable tension. The drama was later made into a great opera by the composer, Ferenc Erkel.

The historical novel "Abafi", written by the Transylvanian Baron *Miklós Jósika* in 1836, was the first successful Hungarian novel.

Baron József Eötvös (1813-1871), a man with many talents, was a well-known political figure, a moderate reformer, before

and after the War of 1848-49, a pioneer of the social novel, a lyric and epic poet and an important and respected literary critic. His first novel, "The Carthusian", was a typical product of the epidemic melancholy called "mal du siecle" which became the fad of the mid-XIXth century. "The Village Notary" is an excellent satire of backward country nobility.

Mihály (Michael) Vörösmarty

Born in 1800 of a poor, Catholic noble family of Transdanubia, and educated in Pest, Vörösmarty spent most of his life in the Hungarian capital as Director of the Academy of Sciences and leading literary critic. During the War of 1848-49 he was a member of the Parliament and had to hide after the capitulation. Amnestied, he spent the last years of his life in Pest. He died in 1855.

He established his poetic fame in 1825 with the *epic* "Zalan's Flight", based on the legends of the conquest of Hungary in the IXth century. This work revived the art of the epic, silent in Hungary since the XVIIth century but very popular in western Europe during the Romantic period. The colourful style and the imaginative beauty of the descriptive passages lend an almost lyric character to this youthful work. The smoothly flowing classical hexametres blend remarkably with the flexible Magyar language of which Vörösmarty became the accomplished master.

In addition to several heroic epics, he also wrote pleasant *narrative poems* of a lighter nature, of which "Fair Helen" is the best example. The romantic love story of King Matthias and the beautiful Ilonka comes to the inevitable melancholic ending so dear to the hearts of the readers of the age.[7]

Vörösmarty established his fame with his epic poems but he really excelled in an original type of contemplative *lyric poetry*, of which he was the greatest master in Hungarian literature. The most characteristic of these philosophical poems is his wedding gift to his bride: "To the Daydreamer"[8]. A few years later, Petőfi wrote his most beautiful poem to his wife. Being inspired by their own wives, a rare occurrence in world literature, seems to be another of those "Hungarian inventions".

Many lyric poems are elegies or odes with ballad-like elements in a meditative mood, often ending in melancholic messages. Stoic reflections on the futility of human progress inspire Vörös-

Mihály Vörösmarty (1800-1855).

marty's deep "Thoughts in a Library"[9], a pessimistic vision of the value of human knowledge. His great patriotic hymn, "Appeal" ("Szózat"), though pessimistic in its tone, became the nation's second anthem.[10] His greeting to Ferenc Liszt received a gratifying echo from the great composer in the form of the symphonic poem "Hungaria".

Vörösmarty's last poem; "The Old Gypsy", conjures an apocalyptic vision of the nation's destruction but ends in a glimmer of hope.[11] It was written at the height of Austrian oppression after the Independence War.

His most durable *drama* is the fairy-tale fantasy "Csongor and Tünde", based on a medieval romance with some Magyar folk-tale elements.

Vörösmarty's poetry is romantic and objective — classical — at the same time. It expresses the temperament of a typical Magyar of Transdanubia, the "western Magyar", like his great ideal, Széchenyi. His deep Catholicism is devoid of dry puritanism, his sincere emotions lack the fiery passion of the "eastern Magyar" poets (Csokonai), his rich vocabulary describes his themes with classical precision and clarity, his wit is anodyne and his patriotism, though melancholic, is never despondent.

* * *

The search for a national art form

By the turn of the century, the Hungarian writers had found their Romantic-Classical-Magyar style but the artists had grave problems. There were no art schools in Hungary; they had to go to the West in order to study. Many did — and some never returned to Hungary. Those who did return found it hard to receive commissions from the Hungarian magnates, who preferred foreign artists.

The pressing need for new churches, public buildings and ornate homes called for increasing activity in the field of *architecture*. The Hungarian-born architects chose neo-classicism as their favourite style in silent protest against Vienna's Rococo and Baroque. Neo-classicism, congenial to the Magyar taste, gained special national characteristics by the addition of certain provincial elements, especially in the smaller country buildings.

The first monumental building of the neo-classic style was the Debrecen Reformed Church built by M. Péchy, who also

"Portrait of Mrs. Bittó" by M. Barabás.

built the Reformed College in the same town. The most eminent neo-classic architect was *Mihály Pollack,* who worked in Pest. His chief achievement is the Hungarian National Museum (1837). József Hild took part in the building of the Esztergom cathedral (the largest in Hungary) and built the Eger cathedral.

The first noteworthy Hungarian *sculptor* of the era was *István Ferenczy* (1792-1856), who received no support from the rich magnates and prelates who preferred foreign sculptors. His first

success, a bust of the poet Csokonai, was his gift to the town of Debrecen. His masterpiece, "The Shepherdess", is the best example of Hungarian sculpture since the Renaissance. He was acclaimed — but remained poor. In his later years he conducted an art school which eventually produced the greatest Hungarian sculptor of the century, M. Izsó.

The *painters* suffered less from lack of financial support as their art did not need much capital. Still, many talented painters remained abroad as their country did not seem to need their talent.

Károly Markó, the romantic landscape painter, worked abroad most of the time, but on his short visits to Hungary he painted impressive landscapes ("Visegrád"). Károly Kisfaludy, the poet, was also an imaginative painter of stormy landscapes.

The eighteen-forties witnessed the beginning of the career of the greatest Hungarian romantic painter, *Miklós Barabás* (1810-1898). He lived and achieved success in Hungary. His specific style, a synthesis of Romantic and Classic elements and Magyar temperament appealed to the aristocracy as well as the middle classes. The great majority of his works were portraits with just a degree of romantic idealisation but without sentimentality or eccentricity ("Mrs. Bittó").

Károly Brocky studied and worked abroad. He acquired fame in London with his romantic mythological themes and portraits.

The *applied arts* suffered similarly from financial problems. The Herend porcelain factory was founded during this period and began to produce its world-famous figurines.

*

Romantic and patriotic music

Interest in the *music of the people* added impulse to the revival of Magyar music at the beginning of the XIXth century. Collections of folk songs began to appear. Poets and musicians began to discover the rich treasures of folk music and poetry.

When the Germanisation policies of Joseph II finally aroused the Magyars' national pride, the so-called "toborzó" ("verbunk") became the fiery symbol of Magyar spirit, especially through the interpretation of the gypsy bands.

The popular composers of the early XIXth century found inspiration in the "toborzó"-folkmusic type melodies; they included János Lavotta, the famous violin virtuoso, Antal Csermák, the first Hungarian composer of chamber music, and Mark Rózsavölgyi, composer of ballroom music and opera.

The folk and "toborzó" melodies served as inspiration for the melodic themes of the emerging new music form, the *opera.* József Ruzicska's "Béla's Flight" was the first noteworthy Hungarian opera.

Ferenc Erkel (1810-1893) was the real creator of Hungarian opera and its greatest master. A native of the Great Plain, he went to the capital where he became the conductor of the National Theatre and later the Director of the Academy of Music (under its president, Ferenc Liszt). Erkel found the harmonious synthesis of western operatic structures, techniques and styles and genuine national themes, taking his inspiration from the popular music of his time. His romantic interpretation of the spirit of Hungarian history suited the mood of the national revival.

His first opera was performed in 1840. His first great success was "László Hunyadi" (1844), a true expression of the romantic-patriotic mood of the forties projected into the XVth century atmosphere of the plot: the tragic story of János Hunyadi's elder son, László, destroyed by the king's perfidious counsellors. The music and the plot presented a strikingly accurate picture of the nation's emotions in the forties: the impatience and frustration caused by the Viennese king's counsellors' delaying and repressive tactics.

Erkel's greatest opera, "Bánk Bán", was performed long after the failure of the struggle for independence, a few years before the "Compromise". Based on Katona's drama with a slightly modified libretto, the story and the melodies expressed the nation's will to survive in spite of the Austrian oppression.

In his later years Erkel composed several operas which came increasingly under Wagnerian inspiration and lost some of their characteristically Hungarian flavour.

Mihály Mosonyi, Erkel's contemporary, aimed to find a national music form in the field of instrumental music. His more memorable works were composed for single instruments or orchestra and choir. The best known of these is his "Funeral

Music", commemorating the death of István Széchenyi. His romantic-mythological oratorio, "Feast of Purification", deserves to be better known.

Some performing artists of the period became world famous. Apart from Ferenc Liszt and János Lavotta, Ede Reményi and Jozsef Joachim violin virtuosos made Hungarian popular music known all over the world.

Imre Madách (1823-1864)
(Cf. Ch. 23)

21. "SHEPHERDS AND KINGS. . ."

(The Christian inspiration of Hungarian folk poetry)

The old religion of the pre-Settlement Magyars presented remarkable similarities to Christianity. Its moral and theological structure was basically that of a monotheistic, animistic faith, based on the adoration of one God ("Isten") and respect and veneration for many spirits, such as the spirits of their departed ancestors and angel-like super-beings. These were respected in much the same way that Christianity respects its saints, angels and the memory of departed souls. Thus *the ancient Magyar religion* cannot be called "paganism" in the polytheistic sense of the Greco-Roman or Assyrian-Babylonian religions.

Christianity has often accepted and used the framework of certain pagan myths and festivals, replacing them with its own liturgic content. Thus the Magyars found it congenial to celebrate the mysteries of Christianity, such as Christmas, Easter, Whitsun and the feasts of some saints (especially those of the Blessed Virgin), by providing them with the colour and warmth of their own millenia-old poetic myths and rites. Folk poems, ballads, legends, anecdotes and dramatic presentations connected with Christian festivals abound among the Magyar people of all denominations. This folk poetry of Christian inspiration offers a fascinating field of folklore study, hitherto not sufficiently explored.

The *language* of Christian liturgy has provided the people with a rich store of religious phraseology. The colourful imagery of Christian liturgy has always appealed to the anonymous poets of the people who adopted this inspiration with their characteristic emotional-religious nationalism.

The richest treasure of religious folk poetry is found in plays and songs connected with *Christmas*. Many *Christmas carols* are sung in connection with the Church service, others form part of the Bethlehem plays.

This time of the year, the winter solstice — the resurrection of the sun after the shortest day of the year December 22 — used to herald the increase of life-giving sunshine in pagan liturgy. Thus from time immemorial this has been the season of festivities. The pagans used to celebrate the Sun-God, the Christians the birth of Christ, their "Life-giving Sun". Ancient rites have been Christianised, but memories of old festivities of the Sun still linger in Hungarian folk hymns, such as the refrain of a popular carol: *"Oh life, oh sunshine — Oh dear little Jesus . . ."*

The role of the humble herdsmen in the Bethlehem story has always appealed to the Magyar peasant. Some carols present a cheerful, dance rhythm, such as the "Shepherds' Dance" from Central Hungary.[1] Some carols of a more solemn nature begin with the Latin words of the Catholic liturgy[2]. The angels' call to the herdsmen of Bethlehem on Christmas night inspired many folk carols. The best-known of these: "Herdsmen . . ."[3], first recorded in a XVIIth century hymn book, is found in many varieties in all Magyar-speaking areas.

One of the most popular carols, known in Transylvania and the Great Plain, begins with the Greek words of the Catholic liturgy (slightly Magyarised): "Kirje, kirje . . ."[4]. The naive charm of the text and the purity of the ancient tune leave no doubt that we hear one of the genuine creations of the people, probably the Székelys of eastern Transylvania from where it must have spread to the other regions. Here the majestic Christ of the liturgy becomes a sweet little baby surrounded by His mother and simple shepherds, worried about the cold and wishing they could give the Divine Child the comfort which, according to the gospel, had been denied to Him in Bethlehem.

Another shepherd-carol, "Shepherds . . ."[5] is known in many regions. Both the text and the melody are folk creations and show no scholarly influence. This simple folk hymn has become a standard part of the Christmas Midnight Masses in Hungary.

The commemoration of Jesus Christ's birth in Bethlehem has been the subject of festival plays and puppet-shows presented

A "Bethlehem" play.

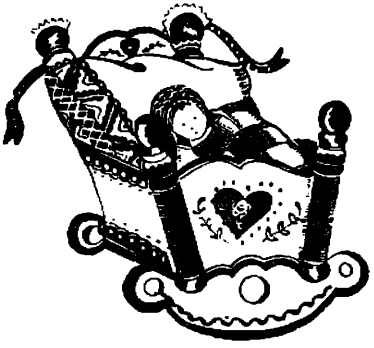
at Christmas time in all Christian countries since the Middle Ages. These *Bethlehem-plays,* impromptu dramatic performances, have become part of the Hungarian peasants' Christmas celebrations too. Performed by troupes of children or adults, these plays are often combined with presentations of puppets, accompanied by songs and musical instruments, and sometimes even dancing. The scene is usually the stable with Mary and Joseph standing at the manger in which the child Jesus — a doll or sometimes a live baby — is lying. The herdsmen arrive during the play or stand at the manger when the play starts. Angels and other symbolic characters — representing the good and bad principles — often take part in the play. In some regions the child-actors may even take the manger to church and perform there a shorter version of the play.

The songs and texts have many variations and the costumes are sometimes quite elaborate. In the Catholic regions the texts are serious and conform more or less with the church texts and traditions. In the Protestant regions (where the Bethlehem plays are just as popular), the actors often improvise and add a touch of comedy to the play. Their principal actor may be a sleepy old shepherd on whom the younger boys play various tricks. Throughout the play improvisations — humorous or earnest — mingle with beautiful old folk hymns. In many songs the peasants' naive, nostalgic devotion is presented in the form of a wish: "If Jesus had been born in Hungary, things would have been different. He would certainly have received a warmer welcome from his Magyar shepherds"[6]. In the Appendix we quote extracts from a Bethlehem play recorded in western Hungary[7].

In some Bethlehem plays, *marionettes* are made to dance before the manger. They represent symbolic characters: Death, the devil, angels, shepherds, peasants, Herod, soldiers. Candles decorate the elaborate puppet stage and they flicker in the cold, snowy night of the village as the children move from one house to the next.

The deeply emotional carol "A Beautiful Rose" sums up the spirit of these Bethlehem plays as it paints a picture of the Holy Virgin bending over the manger where her Son, the "Beautiful Flower" sleeps: Jesus, who brought sunshine and life to the Earth. Thus Christian and ancient thoughts meet in harmony in the humble, rustic image of the candle-lit scene of Bethlehem.

On the *6th of January (Epiphany),* the Three Wise Men (the Magi or Three Kings) are remembered by the re-enactment of the scene described in the gospels. Three children — often girls — dressed in white robes with mitres, and holding long stocks (sceptres), represent the three Kings. They are often preceded by an "angel" holding a "star" on a pole. They enter each house, calling on the people to "seek the Star over Bethlehem . . ." Their play is connected with the Bethlehem plays and contains carols of a similar nature.



"If I were your cradle I would rock you gently,
I would serve you, Little Jesus." (Folksong)

The customs connected with Easter show, curiously enough, little Christian inspiration. The same is the case with Saint Ivan's Day (Midsummer Day, June 22), as mentioned in the previous chapters. The Whitsun customs, such as the Whitsun-Queen procession, mingle Christian and pagan elements. (cf. Chapter 11).

Of the saints, Saint Stephen, the first king of Hungary, is often remembered in songs. As is the case with the other saints' days, the people who bear the saint's name celebrate their "name's day" and are congratulated, often in flowery verse.

The Magyars accepted Christianity during the XIth century with some reluctance, directed not against the faith but against the foreigners brought to Hungary to propagate it. Once, however, the Christian faith, and with it western civilisation, had been

accepted, it became the nation's own heritage, jealously defended through centuries of wars. The new faith became a Hungarian religion, and Christian devotion and Magyar patriotism became synonymous notions. The Magyars began to regard themselves as soldier-knights of Christ and of the *Holy Virgin, the "Patron of Hungary"*. They have an almost romantic veneration for the Virgin Mary, the "Great Queen of Hungary". (By a strange turn of fate, Hungary never had a Hungarian-born queen). Since the XVIIIth century, Catholics have often referred to Hungary as "Regnum Marianum" (Mary's Kingdom").

This emotional cult of Christianity's loveliest saint found deep echoes in the hearts of the Magyars. There are many hymns devoted to the Holy Virgin, some folk creations, others written and composed by unknown artists. The best-known of these is the rather melancholic hymn "Our Mother, Lady of Hungary"[8], probably composed by an unknown scholar of the XVIIth century.

22. GLORY WITHOUT POWER

(Hungarian history from 1849 to 1914)

Passive resistance and compromise

Though Hungary's dictator, general Haynau, was dismissed in 1850, after a year of his reign of terror, the Viennese administration proceeded with its plans for a total absorption of Hungary into the Austrian empire. The entire country was divided into districts administered directly from Vienna. This arrangement, aimed at the forced assimilation of the Magyars, angered the nationalities as well, as they lost even the limited cultural freedom they had enjoyed under Hungarian rule, against which they had so enthusiastically helped the Austrians.

Only a few of the 1848-49 political leaders dared to remain active in Hungary. The most eminent of these was the moderate and wise *Francis Deák,* minister in the first 1848 government. Helped by the leading writers and intellectuals of the nation, Deák urged the Magyars to fight for their freedom by peaceful, passive resistance.

Thus the Viennese regime had to face the mounting dissatisfaction of the nationalities, the passive resistance of the Magyars and soon also the impact of disastrous military and political events in other parts of the empire. The successful uprising led by Garibaldi lost Italy for the Habsburgs. In order to appease the Hungarians, Vienna offered some concessions, but Deák and the other leaders insisted on complete acceptance of the 1848 April constitution (cf. chapter 20). When the short Austrian-Prussian war ended in disaster for Austria (1866), Vienna realised that the empire could not survive without the Hungarians' co-operation. In 1867 the Emperor, Francis Joseph, accepted the entire 1848 April constitution and appointed a

second responsible ministry under count Gyula Andrássy. Francis Joseph I and the Empress, Elizabeth were then solemnly crowned in Buda as King and Queen of Hungary.

The 1867 agreement of reconciliation between Austria and Hungary, called *Compromise* ("Kiegyezés"), re-established the dual state structure (cf. chapter 20). The sovereign states, Austria and Hungary, ruled by one hereditary Habsburg monarch, were to share three "common" departments: Foreign Affairs, Finance and Defence, but both states had their own defence forces (national guard) as well as a "common" army.

Lajos Kossuth and the emigration

After the collapse of the freedom struggle, Kossuth sought refuge abroad, accompanied by several political and military leaders. After a short stay in Turkey, he was invited to the United States by the government of that country. An American warship brought Kossuth and his fellow-refugees first to Britain, where he captivated his listeners with his English oratory. (He had learnt English in his Austrian prison). After a triumphal welcome in New York, the Hungarian statesman was invited to address a session of the U.S. House of Representatives (an honour only granted to one other foreign statesman, Winston Churchill). During his stay in America as the "nation's guest" he delivered several hundred speeches in English. Thus he managed to make the fate of his nation known to the western world.[1]

Returning from the U.S., Kossuth lived in England, watching the European political scene and hoping that an opportunity would arise to launch another campaign for his country's freedom. During these years he managed to gain world-wide sympathy for the oppressed Hungarian nation. General Klapka organised "Hungarian Legions" in Italy and during the Prussian-Austrian war a Hungarian legion was actively engaged against the Austrians. Though there were no real prospects of a revolution in Hungary or of an armed intervention, the constant pressure of European and American public opinion maintained against Austrian oppression, and fomented by Kossuth's activities, remained a real threat to Francis Joseph's shaky empire and became a deciding factor in hastening the Austrian acquiescence.

After the Compromise — which he refused to accept — Kossuth withdrew from international politics. He objected to

the Compromise because he believed that Hungary, tied to a doomed Austria which was led by ultra-conservative politicians, would eventually suffer the same fate: annihilation. This prophecy turned out to be tragically true. It was Austria's bumbling diplomacy which brought forth the War of 1914, causing Austria's — and with it Hungary's — downfall.

Kossuth in America.

The elderly Kossuth retired in Torino, Italy. In his writings he advocated the formation of a *"Danubian Federation"*, a confederation of Central European nations from Poland to Greece,

forming a block of united states between Russia and Germany. These suggestions of the great political philosopher are wishfully remembered today as the only solution that could have prevented the horrors of two world wars.

Kossuth died in Torino, Italy, in 1894. Only then was he allowed to return to the country of his birth. His remains were brought to Budapest and laid to rest there.

The Liberal governments

Prime Minister Andrássy resigned in 1871 to become the Monarchy's Foreign Minister. Eventually, count *Kálmán Tisza* formed the so-called "Liberal Party" which was to govern Hungary for the next 40 years. Tisza himself remained Prime Minister from 1875 to 1890.

The shortcomings of the Compromise all but nullified the concept of equality between Austria and Hungary. The important "common" portfolios of Foreign Affairs, Finance and Defence were managed almost entirely by the Emperor's Austrian advisors and the ministers were Austrians most of the time. Soon, under Kossuth's influence a number of Hungarian politicians began to feel dissatisfied with the 1867 Compromise. The representatives opposed to the spirit of 1867 called their group the "Independence Party". The members of this Parliamentary opposition presented a more or less emotional attitude toward the Compromise but their views on social and cultural matters differed little from those of the government. There was no party with a radical social program in the Hungarian Parliament during the last decades of the XIXth century.

The subsequent Liberal governments were headed by such Prime Ministers as the able economist *Sándor Wekerle* (1892-1895), the efficient administrator *Kálmán Széll* (1899-1903) and the energetic count *István Tisza* (1903-1905).

It was during this period, in 1896, that the nation celebrated the millenary of the occupation of the Carpathian basin by the Magyars of Árpád. The Hungarians celebrated their *"Millenium"* with great pomp and flourish, contemplating their glorious history, cultural, artistic and technical achievements with justifiable pride, but in their complacent euphoria they ignored the signs of the gathering storm which was to destroy their thousand-year-old kingdom in little more than two decades.

The problems of the "millenary" era

Three factors had contributed to the *social problems* of these decades in Hungary: the general European social atmosphere which caused upheavals in almost every country, the conservatism and complacency of the Hungarian ruling classes and the deficiencies of the Compromise.

The Compromise had allotted to Hungary the role of agricultural provider, while Austria, with her industries (well established during Hungary's "lost" XVIIIth century), was to be the prosperous, industrial partner. As there were no tariff frontiers between the two states, Austrian industry had first claim on the cheap Hungarian produce, including Hungary's considerable mineral wealth. The fledgling Hungarian secondary industry had the unenviable task of competing against the efficient Austrian factories. The ineptly managed, often foreign owned, unprofitable Hungarian industries could not assure decent living standards to their workers and soon created discontent among the urban proletariat. Besides, the raw materials and power sources were situated in the mountainous areas of Hungary, which were inhabited mainly by the national minorities. Thus the modest benefits of mining and industrial exploitation affected mostly the non-Magyar population. The Hungarian landed aristocracy made matters worse by preferring the gentlemanly comforts of their old-fashioned estates to the challenges of modern industrial ventures. Similarly, the poor Magyar peasants preferred the poverty of their ancestral villages to the uncertain prospects offered by the slowly developing urban industrial centres. The small landowners — the former lower nobility — were practically ruined by the cheap food prices and their inefficient production methods. So they flocked to the cities to increase the rapidly growing army of public servants — the only occupation worthy of a gentleman. Trade, commerce and the free professions were left to the Germans and Jews.

The ruined peasants and the urban workers dissatisfied with their conditions found the solution for their problems in emigration. Between 1890 and 1914 more than a million Magyars and other nationalities left Hungary for the haven of America.

Like these social problems, the problems of the *national minorities* were largely ignored by the governments and leaders of the "millenary era". At the 1910 census, Hungary proper

(without Croatia) had a population of about 18 million. 60% of these — about 11 million — were Magyars, the rest — 7 million — "minorities": Slovaks, Serbs, Rumanians, Germans and others. The *"Nationalities Law" of 1868* granted equal rights to all citizens of Hungary, irrespective of nationality or religion. The official language of the central administration was Hungarian but the lower echelons (counties, municipalities, shires) accepted the use of the language of the national minorities of that area. Denominational schools were allowed to use the language of the supporting nationality. This meant practically unlimited primary and secondary education in the minority languages as in 1868 almost all such schools were denominational.

No European country gave more rights to its minorities at that time. Neither were the social conditions of the minorities harsher than those of the Magyars. In fact the number of landless Hungarian peasants was equal to the *total* number of the Rumanian and Serbian minorities.

Thus the disagreements between Hungarians and the nationalities were not caused by legal, social or economic discrimination but solely by external political interference. After gaining their independence from the Turkish empire, Serbia (independent since 1844) and Rumania (independent since 1866) embarked upon an imperialistic policy of their own: both states made every effort to acquire the territories of Hungary inhabited (partly) by their fellow nationals who had migrated there in the previous centuries. To promote their aspirations, both states incited their brothers in Hungary to fight for their independence. On external instigation, the Serbs and Rumanians of Hungary protested against the dual Austrian-Magyar state-structure, demanded equal participation, rejected the equitable 1868 Nationalities Law and refused to co-operate with the Hungarian government in every way. Soon the Czechs — who were then still Austrian subjects without territorial autonomy — began to instigate the Slovaks of Northern Hungary in preparation of their planned "Czecho-Slovak" state.

The Hungarian leadership failed to see the master design behind this discontent and attributed it to the impetuosity of individual extremists. Sporadic emotional reactions by Magyar politicians were of no help: they only provided more ammunition for the well-planned Rumanian-Serb-Czech campaigns.

The heir to the Habsburg throne, Archduke Francis Ferdinand (successor to Crown Prince Rudolf, who died in 1889) took an active part in internal and external politics. He disapproved of the Hungarians' "equal" role in the Monarchy and planned to re-establish a XVIIth century type of absolutistic, centralistic empire. In order to neutralise the Magyar influence he favoured the Slavs, especially the Czechs.

When in 1905 the Hungarian opposition, led by Kossuth's son, Ferenc, toppled the Budapest government, Francis Joseph refused to appoint a Kossuth government. After a period of internal wrangling a coalition government was eventually formed under the former Liberal Premier, Sándor Wekerle. This coalition government was unable to carry out the promised reforms in the face of stiff Viennese resistance, inspired by the Magyar-hating Crown Prince. The government resigned and at the 1910 election the Liberal Party regained its absolute majority and formed a new government. At this election smaller opposition parties with radical social and cultural programmes began to appear on the Hungarian political scene. Some of these were the Catholic People's Party (Christian Democrats), the Social Democrats, the Peasant Party and the Radical Party.

The foreign policy of the Monarchy was influenced by heavy-handed Austrian politicians and generals who ignored the signs of the Monarchy's decline and kept dreaming about a great Austrian Empire. In 1908 they decided to annex the provinces of Bosnia and Herczegovina, freed from the Turks. The Budapest Parliament protested against the annexation of the entirely Slav-populated territories.

The Balkan wars of 1912-1913 seemed to foreshadow the end of the long period of peace in the area, but only count *István Tisza*, Prime Minister (for the second time) since 1913, heeded the warning. He wrested from the Parliament a much-needed defence-appropriation and used stern methods to end the sterile obstruction of the opposition in order to introduce progressive legislation. It was too late: the modernisation of the antiquated Hungarian defence forces and of the archaic electoral laws had hardly begun when the storm broke . . .

On June 28, 1914, the Crown Prince, Francis Ferdinand and his wife were assassinated in the capital of recently annexed Bosnia by a member of a Serbian secret society.

The balance of the "millenary" era

The unsolved social and minority questions were the main items on the *debit side*. Austrian pressure and foreign agitation, though real, do not entirely excuse the Hungarian leaders' indifference to these problems. Their complacent self-deception made them avoid unpleasant questions — an attitude which, incidentally, complied entirely with the European code of behaviour in the Victorian era.

To this splendid indifference the Hungarians added their own brand of *"patriotic isolationism."* Not having any influence on the foreign policy of the Monarchy, the Magyars practically ceased to be interested in the important events outside their frontiers. The false adage: "Extra Hungarian non est vita. . ." ("Outside Hungary there is no life. . . ") became the motto of the conceited leadership of this apparently prosperous nation. No wonder that the rest of the world ignored the real Hungary. The image of the Magyar — a mixture of a Gypsy and a Hussar — with his fateful penchant for wine, women and song, was spread by globetrotting, free-spending aristocrats, operetta-composers and prodigal noblemen of the Budapest cafés.

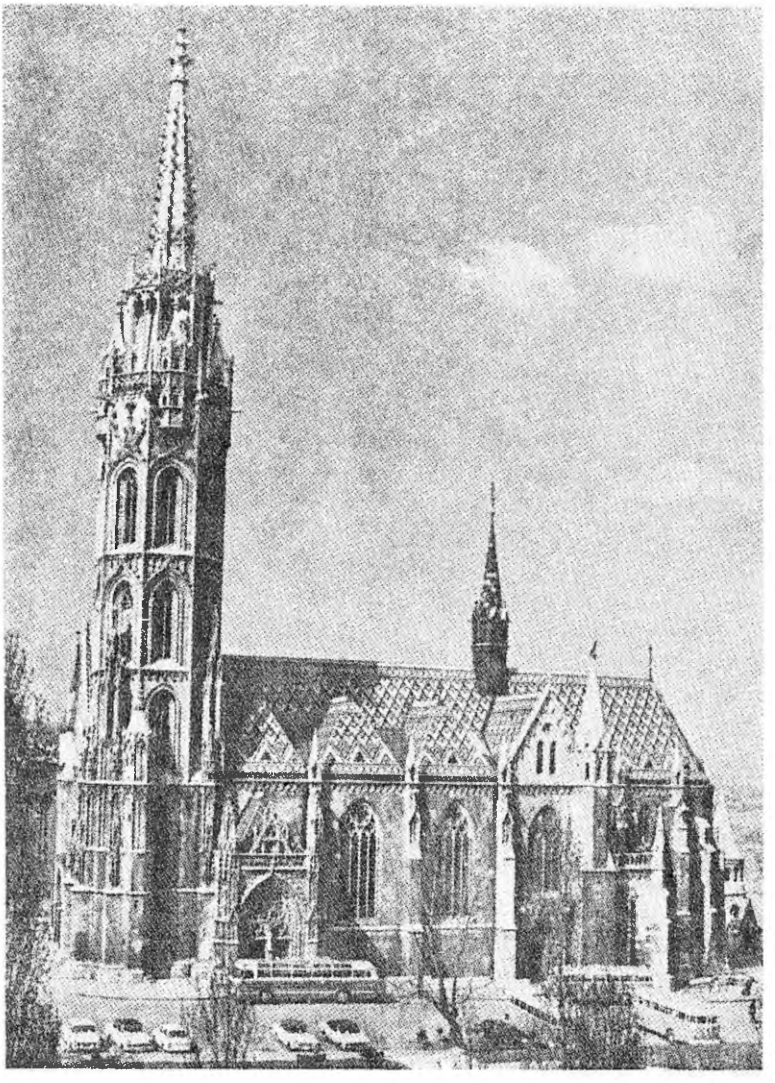
Yet there was a *credit side* too: the cumulative achievements of the many talented, industrious and inconspicuous creators among the day-dreamers. In spite of the difficulties and indifference, national culture, economy and technology were enriched to an unbelievable extent even though the casual observer rarely noticed real progress behind the ostentatious glamour of Budapest.

The progressive Minister of Education, József Eötvös, introduced the *1868 Education Law* which made schooling compulsory for all children to the age of 12. Only several years later did England and France introduce similar laws. Five universities, many colleges and countless secondary and primary schools were established. Opera houses, theatres, great public buildings were built in cities and towns.

The first underground *railway* system on the Continent was opened in Budapest in 1896. The country's railway network was enlarged sixfold in fifty years, with several lines electrified.

By 1896 Budapest and the larger towns had complete sewerage, water, electricity, gas and public transport systems.

Around 1905 Austrian opposition to Hungarian *industry* weakened and secondary industries experienced a rather belated pros-



Our Lady's cathedral in Buda.
(The scene of the crowning of the last Hungarian Kings).

P. Szinyei-Merse: Lovers (Cf. p. 209)

perity. Electricity became the main power-source. Industries connected with agriculture (milling, sugar-refining etc.) developed by leaps and bounds.

Science and technology, though handicapped by the depressed conditions of manufacturing industry in the XVIIIth and XIXth centuries, produced such eminent scientists as the two *Bolyais: Farkas* (1775-1856) and his son, *János* (1802-1860), remembered for their contributions to the theory of integral calculus and absolute geometry respectively. Loránd Eötvös enriched Physics and Geology with several inventions, such as the torsion pendulum used in gravity measurements.

Technological inventions were more difficult to test, manufacture and market during these two centuries. Thus János Irinyi, a student of chemistry, made the first phosphorus match in 1836 but sold it to a manufacturer for a pittance. *Ányos Jedlik* constructed the world's first electro-magnetic motor in 1828 (long before Siemens) but he had neither the money nor the ambition to patent it (he was a Benedictine monk).

The obstetric physician, Ignac *Semmelweis* (1818-1865) discovered — years before Pasteur — bacterial infection, the cause of puerperal fever.

At the end of the century, the sudden upsurge in industry helped to create a number of useful inventions, such as the phase-alternating electric locomotive of Kálmán Kandó and the petrol carburettor invented by D. Bánki and J. Csonka. Tivadar Puskás developed the principle of telephone exchange and invented an interesting predecessor to radio broadcasting, called the telephonograph.

The "Jewish question"

This sudden economic growth caused certain intrinsic problems. The Magyar middle-classes were neither willing nor prepared to participate in industrial and commercial activities. Their place was taken, in many instances, by newcomers, mainly Jewish immigrants. Hungarian hospitality had welcomed refugee Jews ever since the Middle Ages. These early immigrants had adapted themselves to the Hungarian civilisation and way of life and had become well-integrated citizens of the country. Jews took an active and loyal part in Hungarian freedom struggles, especially during the 1848-49 war.

Now however, a large number of Jewish refugees began to flee from Russia through the Austrian province of Galicia to Hungary. In little more than a century their numbers in Hungary increased twelvefold: in 1910 Jews represented 5% of the total population (1 million). These recent arrivals, speaking a tongue foreign to everybody in Hungary (Jiddish), and preserving their unusual eastern mode of living, rituals and ghetto-born secretiveness, constituted a homogeneous ethnic group unwilling and unable to assimilate.

For the first time in history, the Hungarians felt antagonistic to the Jews, especially when they noted that the newcomers were taking over finance, commerce and the free professions (medicine, journalism). The expressions of this antagonism — though only verbal — angered the young Jewish intelligentsia, which reacted by seeking satisfaction in radical and revolutionary activities, especially toward the end of the War years, while avoiding military service or finding secure employment behind the lines. The leaders of the Marxist-Communist movements at the end of the War (1919) were almost exclusively Jewish.

23. LOVE, LIFE AND LIBERTY

(Hungarian literature between 1848 and 1910)

Sándor Petőfi

He was born in 1823 in a village of the Great Plain of peasant parents. A talented but restless student, he did not complete his studies. Instead he led a rather bohemian existence for a while. Finally he found his true vocation in writing and settled in Pest, working as the contributor and editor of various publications. On the 15th of March 1848 he became the leader of the bloodless uprising in Pest and his poem, "Arise Magyars!"[1] became the battle hymn of the freedom struggle. At the outbreak of the hostilities he joined the national army and became the aide of general Bem whom he worshipped. He married Julia Szendrey, the inspiration of his love poems. At the end of the freedom war, Petőfi died on the battlefield at the age of 26, in 1849.

His poem, *"At the End of September"*, written to his young bride on their honeymoon, quoted in chapter 7 and in the Appendix, illustrates Petőfi's art which, for lack of a better term, we call classical. His language is characterised by its beautiful simplicity and the ability to say the right word at the right place. He expresses his thoughts in meaningful, short sentences and pictures of nature without any romantic symbolism. He manages to maintain a disciplined harmony between his soaring, romantic imagination and strict, classic rhythm, rhyme and metre. The picture of the autumn landscape evokes thoughts about the passing of time, described in the first line of the second strophe in one of the most beautiful sentences in Hungarian literature. The poet's reflections on death and love in the second strophe are devoid of sentimentality and his own protestations

of eternal love in the third strophe are not marred by unnecessary pathos.

His *love poetry,* inspired by his wife, reveals his sincere, almost puritanistic morality: deep sensitivity without needless sentimentality.[2]

A true son of the people, he speaks their simple language without affectation. He describes village and peasant life in his *idyllic poems* with their sad and humorous episodes in the manner of the folk poet. His smooth rhythm and language could easily be set to music and many of his poems became popular songs.[3]

He loves his Great Plain, his native soil, its unlimited horizons and thoughtful silences. His elegiac praises of the land are intertwined with thoughts of love and patriotism.[4]

His dominant emotion was his love of *freedom.* His moving credo has been translated into more than one hundred languages:

"Liberty and love
These two I must have.
For my love I'll sacrifice
My life.
For liberty I'll sacrifice
My love."

(transl. by G. F. Cushing)

He identifies his personal freedom with the nation's struggle for its freedom and beyond it he dreams of a romantic-humanistic freedom for all mankind. Love for his nation carries him to the extremes of exuberance and dejection. In one of his last poems he describes, in a sombre vision, his own manner of heroic death.[5]

Even his *narrative poetry* shows his lyric qualities. His descriptions of the fairy-tale adventures of "John the Hero", an epic folktale, have the quality of the popular tale told on winter evenings in the village spinnery.

It may be interesting to know that a word-count made of Petőfi's vocabulary shows that his most frequently used noun was "man" and that his favourite adjective was "good". This good, great humanist rightfully occupies a place of honour in the hearts of all Magyars.

Sándor Petőfi (1823-1849)

János Arany

The son of an impoverished noble, Arany was born in 1817 in a little town of the Great Plain. His father taught him Hungarian and Latin writing and the elements of their Protestant faith. Eventually, the talented boy completed his education at the Debrecen Reformed College and returned to his birthplace, where he worked as the village teacher until the 1848 war. He served in the national army (as a simple soldier) and had to hide for a while after 1849. Amnestied, he became a secondary teacher in another Great Plain town, then settled in Budapest where he became the Secretary of the Academy and the foremost man of letters of his time. He died in 1882.

He knew the soul, the language and the folklore of his peasant people. He collected folksongs and tales and even wrote poems in the vein of a folk song. He also studied foreign literature of folkish inspiration, reading and translating widely.

His inspiration stemmed from his understanding of the Magyar people and his epic style suggests the calm wisdom of the Plain and the millenia-old humanistic realism of its hardy people.

His first masterpiece, *"Toldi"* (1846), an epic of classical popular realism, earned him national recognition and Petőfi's friendship. This folk-tale in verse is based on local legends and medieval chronicles and tells the adventures of a popular Magyar hero in the XIVth century. Arany's hero is a typical Magyar with all the characteristics of the people. This work of great human value has never been translated: its rich Magyar language defies translation. The second and third parts of the epic ("Toldi's Love" and "Toldi's Eve") are reminiscent of a medieval romance and had less attraction for Arany's readers.

After 1849 Arany found the form of expression of which he eventually became the greatest representative in the Hungarian language: *the ballad.* He was first inspired by the Transylvanian and Scottish ballads — and he was the first to note the remarkable affinity between these two. Each ballad is a little drama written in concise style and with a deep understanding of the workings of the human mind. There is little background description, the action is told in a dialogue. Most of the ballads are tales of crime and punishment. The crime is instigated by the powerful human passions of hate or love, and the punishment is meted out by the criminal's own conscience: it is usually madness.

János Arany (1817-1882)

Of Arany's early ballads, the gothic horror-tale "Bor the Hero"[6] deserves closer attention. Its universal theme makes it fairly translatable. The allegoric ballad *"The Bards of Wales"*[7] was written in 1857. Francis Joseph, the Emperor, was visiting defeated Hungary and Hungarian poets were asked to write an ode in his praise. Arany answered with this symbolic ballad, based on a dubious historical event, the revenge of King Edward I against the bards of Wales who refused to sing his praise. In Arany's ballad the cruel king receives the usual punishment: the song of the martyred bards drives him to madness.

Arany's later ballads are based on themes from Magyar peasant and urban life, such as the "Corn-husking" and "Red Rébék", most of them untranslatable because of their compact, racy language. Many short descriptive poems share the fate of the ballads: the "Family Circle", an idyllic description of a peasant family evening has not yet found its translator.

Toward the end of the oppression period, Arany turned to Hungarian history for his own and his readers' inspiration. The *"Death of Buda"*, a magnificent epic, is the first part of a trilogy which was to contain a cycle of Magyar legends and myths.[8] In it, Arany tells the popular myth of the Hungarians' and Huns' common origin in the tone of a medieval minstrel. Unfortunately, he never completed the trilogy.

Whilst essentially an epic poet, Arany did create in his old age *meditative lyric poetry* of considerable charm. These poems are mostly reminiscences and melancholic reflections interspersed with wisdom, humour and often resignation, as in the elegy "I lay the Lute down"[9]. Arany was very reticent about his patriotism: his deep love of his people and country remained hidden in his allegories and tales most of the time.

Arany, still a favourite of Hungarians, deserves to be better known abroad.

Some poets of the oppression period

Imre Madách (1823-1864) found ample emotional inspiration for his great drama in his own, tragic life. Born and educated in northern Hungary, he suffered persecution and prison for his participation in the freedom struggle. During his imprisonment his wife became unfaithful to him. Madách divorced her, but never ceased to love her: she was the only woman in

his life. He lived under tragic family circumstances and died soon after the completion of his great opus: the drama *"Tragedy of Man"* (1860).

In this Faustian tableau of the fate of mankind Adam and Eve are guided by Lucifer through various phases of human history. The Devil shows the successive frustrations of their descendants to the ancestors of mankind. The final scene, however, ends with a message of hope: God's last words to Adam are: *"Man — strive and have faith, unfaltering faith. . ."* The message of the drama is Madách's "pessimistic idealism": though often futile, human endeavours are rewarded by the very satisfaction of one's own courage and faith. Madách presents the main characters with perfect modern psychology. Adam is the naive idealist who is easily discouraged and Eve is the "eternal woman" who lifts his spirits with her inflexible faith and love.[10]

Mihály Tompa's poetry (1817-1868) is characterised by emotional melancholy and an interest in folk poetry. His elegies, written in his upper-Hungarian village (he was a Protestant pastor), reflect the pessimism and moral preoccupations of his times but they present some pleasing tableaus of rustic landscape and stoic philosophy.

János Vajda[11] (1827-1897), the lonely, sad poet of memories and forest tableaus, and *Gyula Reviczky* (1855-1889), the gentle bard of the lonely city-dwellers, illustrate the mood of the Hungarian poets after the Compromise. They did not share the optimism of the politicians and their dissonant melancholy made them unpopular in the prevailing atmosphere of self-deluding happiness.

Mór Jókai

The most popular novelist of the era, Jókai was a Transdanubian by birth (in 1825) and temperament. Though connected with Petőfi's circle in 1848, he became more moderate during 1849 and so received an amnesty after the failure of the freedom struggle. Soon he began to publish his novels and short stories and in 56 years of literary activity had over one-hundred volumes published. He died in 1904. He is still the most popular novelist in Hungary and is well-known abroad in many translations.

Jókai's first *historical novels*, written during the oppression, describe imaginary events in Hungary during the Turkish occupation. He disregards the historical truth and changes the Turks and Hungarians into heroes and villains (the villains are often Hungarians, the heroes often Turks), painting a fantasy world of "Goodies" and "Baddies" whose main concern is personal pride and honour, not the country's plight. After the Compromise he turned to the more recent period of the Freedom War with his "The Baron's Sons". One of the finest prose epics of Hungarian literature, this novel of romance and realism describes the great war through the fate of one aristocratic family. Jókai's historical-social novels of the Reform Age (early XIXth century) present well-documented and accurate pictures of the Magyar society of that era. The "New Landowner" is a thoughtful work describing, with surprisingly deep psychology, the assimilation of an Austrian estate owner settled in Hungary after 1849.

Jókai's most popular *social novel*, the "Dark Diamonds", suggests easy solutions to the social problems of the working class (miners) who are redeemed by the joint efforts of the patriotic scientist-hero (the owner of the mine) and the beautiful, chaste and brilliant daughter of a miner. The two transform a mining village into a Utopian community where everybody lives happily ever after — including the two heroes. A commendable solution to labour-management disputes.[12]

"The Man with the Golden Touch" is a more realistic picture of the cruel world of finance, which is conquered by a hero with the Midas touch and the Magyar peasant's common sense.

The hundreds of *short stories and novelettes* written by Jókai were the favourite intellectual diet of the Sunday-paper reading bourgeoisie, offering relaxing, uncomplicated, pleasant entertainment without any cumbersome messages.

Jókai's *topics* include the complete range of human experience (and a few inhuman ones), all possible periods of history (and some impossible ones), all known corners of the world (and a few known to Jókai only), but only two emotions: love and hate. He describes history not as it was but as it should have been, human relationships as they might have been and science as it could have been.

He has to be read with a grain of salt and a liking of the unlikely, a wish to get away from it all. . . He has tales to

tell — hundreds of them — and he tells them with humour and a twinkle in his eye. He must have enjoyed writing them just as we enjoy reading them today. He does not preach, does not teach — he entertains.

They call him the "greatest Hungarian teller of tales." In a nation in which every second man is a politician, this is real praise.

Kálmán Mikszáth

In many respects Mikszáth was the opposite of Jókai. Born (in 1847) of a poor bourgeois family of northern Hungary, he moved in the circles of the lower middle-class country folk. Eventually he settled in Budapest as a writer (and part-time politician, like Jókai, but then who was not a politician in those days?) He died in 1910.

Mikszáth is a realist. His humour always has the touch of cynicism and his view of society is usually expressed in the form of a satire. His characters are not heroes, but complex personalities with virtues as well as vices. He began his literary career as a writer of *short stories*, such as the collections "Slovak Kinfolk" and the "Good Palóc", in which he describes the simple peasants of the North: Hungarians and Slovaks and their peaceful co-existence. Mikszáth also discovered the world of children — whom Jókai ignored. From his children's stories arose his popular novel "The Two Mendicant Students", one of the all-time favourites of Hungarian youngsters.

Mikszáth tackled the problems of simple people in his *novels and novelettes*. "Saint Peter's Umbrella" is a delightful mixture of legend, fairy tale and social satire: the story of a successful search for happiness. The short novel, "Magic Kaftan", describes with historical and psychological accuracy the life of a Magyar town under Turkish rule. "The Case of the Noszty Boy" is a social satire, a fine and instructive picture of early XXth century Hungarian society: it concerns the conflict of a conceited but penniless nobleman who wants to marry the daughter of a rich bourgeois. The historical-psychological novel, "The Black City", is based on a true incident of the XVIIth century: the tragic conflict between an aristocratic county sheriff and a bourgeois town mayor, ending in the death of the one and the unhappiness of the other. Both sides are represented by personalities who possess an equal number of virtues and weaknesses.

Mikszáth looks at his characters with compassion and understanding, though he criticises their actions, as in the short story "Gentry" in which he describes the hypocritical vanity of the impoverished country-nobility of northern Hungary.[13]

His narrow choices of local Hungarian themes and his witty, racy language, made it very hard to translate his works.

The novelist and playwright *Ferenc Herczeg* (1863-1954), a defender of aristocratic values, was the favourite author of the upper middle-class urban society of Hungary before and after World War 1. He depicted the Hungarian "high society" in pleasant, flattering tableaus with just a touch of satirical humour without serious criticism.

His many *dramas and comedies* have pleased thousands of theatre-goers with their ingenious plots, humour and technical perfection. His historic dramas revolve around conflicts of well-defined personalities. ("Byzantium", "Ladislas the Orphan King" and "The Bridge"). His comedies do not analyse, criticise or satirise: their sole aim is to entertain (The "Gyurkovics Family" cycle). His *social novels* and short stories were the best-sellers of the "happy years" before the War and they brought back nostalgic memories to the readers of the difficult post-war years. His *historic novels* ("Pagans", "The Gate of Life") present clear, credible characterisations and colourful background tableaus, sometimes at the expense of the historic truth.

24. HUNGARIAN RHAPSODY

(Hungarian music from Liszt to Kodály)

Ferenc (Franz) Liszt

The life of this eccentric genius was as colourful as his music. Born in western Hungary (1811), he studied in Vienna and Paris. He became a concert pianist at the age of nine and in his teens became known in most European countries as an exceptional prodigy, the "Paganini of the piano". He then spent five years in Switzerland with his first mistress, a French countess, who bore him three children (one of them, Cosima, married Wagner).

During his frequent visits to the country of his birth Liszt became acquainted with the gypsy interpretation of Hungarian folk music. These popular melodies inspired his well-known "Hungarian Rhapsodies". He lived in the art-loving German principality, Weimar, for 15 years with his second mistress, a German princess. He became the official conductor of the court, the supreme musical authority, arbiter and critic, and the musical promoter of such young composers as Wagner, Berlioz and Weber.

In 1861 Liszt broke with his previous life style and had himself admitted to the Franciscan order. Ordained a Catholic priest, he gave up all worldly interests, except his music. Dividing his time between Budapest and Weimar, he helped to promote musical education in Hungary by founding the Academy of Music in Budapest of which he became the first president and professor. He died in 1886.

Liszt began his career as a *piano virtuoso*. His first compositions were little more than piano-arrangements of well-known

works. He began to produce *original compositions* during his travels in the forties: his "Preludes" and "Symphonic Poems" (a musical form of his own creation) show romantic inspiration but he soon began to experiment with novel harmonies. His 15 "Hungarian Rhapsodies" also present a romantic interpretation of his country's music. Though he failed to separate the genuine folk-music elements from the gypsy and urban ornamentation, the technical perfection, vivacity and flexibility of these compositions made them the most popular expression of "folkish" Hungarian music (especially the "Second Rhapsody" — probably the best known Hungarian composition abroad).

The last period of his activity — his musical maturity — produced novel harmonic and thematic structures, free from romantic influence. Many creations of this period herald a musical approach akin to twentieth-century modern music (Bartók). Liszt's *Hungarian themes* — frequent in this period — discover the true folk-music interpretation, free from gypsy ornamentation or ballroom impressions. His great symphonic poem "*Hungaria*", composed in 1856 expresses Liszt's own visionary interpretation of true Magyar music, his Magyar patriotism and European humanism. The cycles called "Years of Pilgrimage" (especially the "Faust" and "Dante" symphonies) represent harmonies and musical concepts far ahead of his period — they are probably his greatest creations.

Liszt composed his "Coronation Mass" for the coronation of Francis Joseph and Elizabeth in Buda in 1867. Its somewhat melancholic, modern Hungarian music was little appreciated by Liszt's contemporaries. His "Oratoria" show his *religious inspiration:* best known are the "Legend of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary" and the "Christus" oratorium. The "Csardas Macabre" — one of his last compositions — is a hauntingly beautiful mixture of Magyar tunes inspired by Liszt's preoccupation with death.

Romantic and popular music

The Hungarian composers of the period after the Compromise (1867) represented, with a few exceptions, neo-romantic, popular music trends, dominated by the demands of the unassuming middle-class tastes and Viennese bourgeois mediocrity. They did use Hungarian folkish melodic inspiration — the gypsy-ornamented operetta variety.

Károly Goldmark (1830-1915) who was of Jewish extraction, studied in Vienna. His first works show marked Wagnerian inspiration, such as the opera "Queen of Sheba." His orchestral compositions, such as the "Rustic Wedding Symphony" show the inspiration of Magyar folk music and remarkably modern orchestration.

Similarly, *Ede Poldini's* light opera, "Carnival Wedding", uses many Hungarian folk motifs in a rather Wagnerian frame.

The light-hearted *operetta* became the most popular form of musical entertainment of this era. Vienna, the "capital of the operetta", influenced the Hungarian composers of this genre at the beginning of their careers.

Imre Kálmán (1882-1953) composed in Vienna, Paris and then, at the end of his life, in the U.S. He always emphasised his Hungarian roots and wished to be known as Hungarian. The Magyar popular tunes are noticeable in his most popular operettas, such as the "Gypsy Princess", "Countess Marica" and the "Circus Princess".

Ferenc Lehár (1870-1948), the best known of the Hungarian operetta composers, freed himself from Viennese influence at an early stage and created an individual type of operetta of a rather philosophical style, often melancholic, with themes ranging well beyond that of the popular operetta of the period. Lehár placed the plot of each operetta in a different country and attempted — with success in most cases — to recreate the musical atmosphere of that country. "Gypsy Love" was a gift to his native Hungary. The action of "The Merry Widow", "the most successful operetta of all times", is placed in the tiny principality of Montenegro, "Frasquita" in Spain, "Paganini" in Italy, "Frederica" in Germany etc. The Hungarian public's favourite, "The Land of Smiles", places its romantic-melancholic plot in China.

Jenő Huszka (1875-1960), popular operetta and film-music composer, used many folk-inspired tunes in his compositions. His mellow, sweet, uncomplicated operettas, such as "Prince Bob" and "Baroness Lily", became very popular with the urban audiences in Hungary.

Pongrác Kacsóh (1873-1923) made his fame by composing the most popular operetta of Hungary: "John the Hero", based on Petőfi's folk-tale epic of the same title. Entirely unknown abroad, the operetta uses popular "Magyar song" inspiration in its pleasant, sentimentally-patriotic songs, the favourites of two generations.

Ákos Buttykay and *Pál Ábrahám* represent more international styles. Ábrahám's "Victoria and her Hussar" is better known in Germany than in Hungary.

The prosperous middle classes of Hungary at the turning of the century expected unpretentious, sentimental musical entertainment of a romantic-patriotic nature. This soothing, mellow music was presented to them by the popular operettas and by the so-called *"Magyar song"* of the period: gay or sad melodies usually presented by popular singers, accompanied by the ubiquitous gypsy orchestras. The combination of mellow song and gypsy music provided the urban audience with suitable moods to fall in or out of love, to forget or remember, to feel despondent or exuberant by. The moods created were flexible and the gypsy orchestras could easily be induced (for a slight consideration) to change the mood, rhythm and atmosphere at the whim of the audience. The melodies and texts of these popular "Magyar songs" were written and composed by urban song-writers (Pista Dankó, Lóránt Fráter, Árpád Balázs and many others).

The search for a true Hungarian musical expression

Some XXth century composers demonstrated a more genuine and critical approach to a new Hungarian musical style. Their understanding and interpretation of Magyar music was deeper and their contribution to the development of an independent, folk-music inspired Hungarian music complemented and supported Kodály's and Bartók's efforts.

Leo Weiner (1885-1960) presented Magyar folk music in its true nature ("Hungarian Folk Dances"). His not too numerous compositions bear witness to a refined musical culture and romantic charm ("Csongor and Tünde": inspired by Vörösmarty's epic).

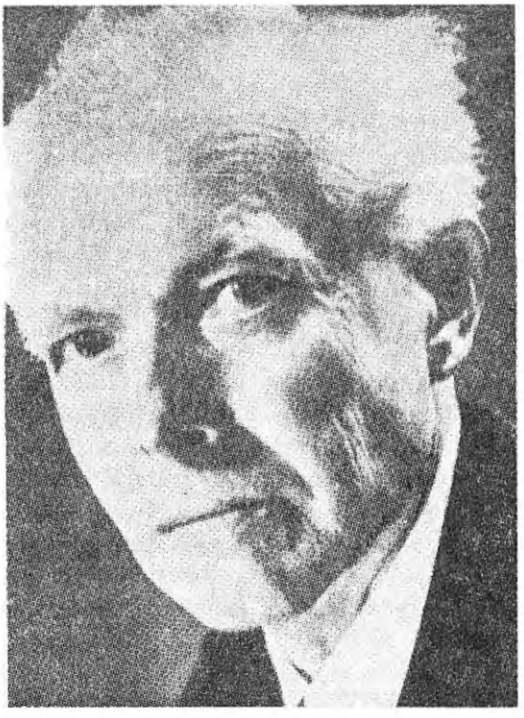
Jenő Hubay (1858-1937) was a violin virtuoso who became a professor, then director, of the Budapest Academy of Music. He had a great impact on Hungarian musical education between the Wars. He was a prolific composer with a refined taste and the ability to interpret Hungarian folk music themes in a pleasing, unpretentious style ("Csárda Scenes", "Lavotta's Love"). Some of his operas and symphonies show Italian inspiration ("The Violin Maker of Cremona", "Dante").

Ernő Dohnányi (1877-1960), composer, piano virtuoso, professor and director of the Academy of Music, presents elegant, romantic themes in modern orchestration and melodic structures with a marked Magyar folk-music inspiration ("Ruralia Hungarica"). His ballet-pantomime, "Pierette's Veil", and his "Variations on a Nursery Song" are still popular concert pieces.

Béla Bartók

He was born in Transylvania in 1881. While studying at the Budapest Academy of Music, Bartók became acquainted with Zoltán Kodály and the two began studying and collecting Magyar folk music by travelling to remote Hungarian villages. Later Bartók extended his folk-music studies to other nations. For a while he was professor at the Academy, then gave up his chair in order to concentrate on composing and performing as a concert pianist. In the 1930s he and Kodály were commissioned to collect, transcribe and edit the nation's folk music. He went to the U.S. in 1940 and remained there during the war. He died in 1945 without returning to his homeland.

Bartók and Kodály published their first Magyar folk-song collection in 1906. Bartók's preoccupation in researching and evaluating his nation's folk music has left its mark on his compositions: Magyar inspiration remained at the root of his otherwise original and unique creations. He wrote many *arrangements,* transcriptions and variations of folk themes. In many cases he rearranged the original melody and extended it into an original art form, at times by projecting the new style folk song back into an original, old type (pentatonic) structure. He also created music which was both his original composition and indistinguishable from folk music: the result of complete assimilation of folk culture, similar to Petőfi's "folk poetry".



Béla Bartók (1881-1945)

This fusion of folk inspiration and his original genius created music which struck the audiences as harsh, even raw, ultra-modern and certainly original. His simple basic themes were accompanied by disharmonic decoration. The result was a unique, hard-to-understand philosophical music.

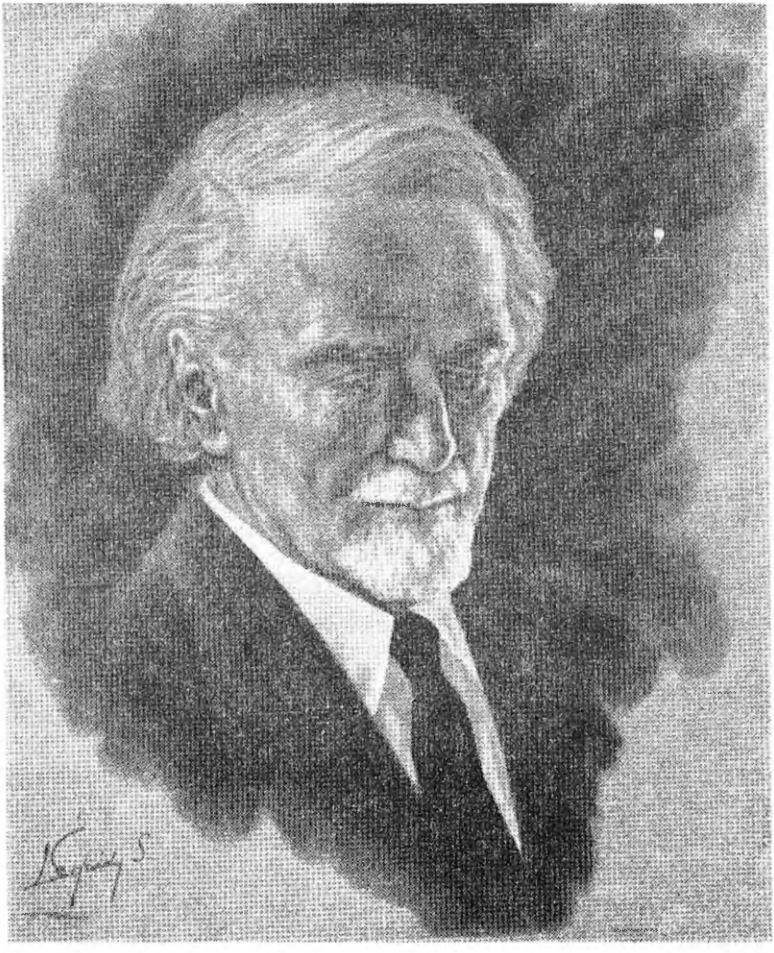
His *compositions* include a great number of piano solos and duos ("Mikrokosmos", "Allegro Barbaro"), several piano concertos and piano sonatas. His string quartets are said to be "the most important contribution to chamber music since Beethoven" (Sir Malcolm Sargent). Orchestral compositions, such as "Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta" and "Divertimento" are among his most often performed works.

Bartók's only opera, "Prince Bluebeard's Castle" is based practically on two solos and is therefore very difficult to perform. The two ballets, "The Wooden Prince" and "The Miraculous Mandarin", are more often seen.

Bartók was a true Hungarian humanist: his love for his nation blended with his love for all his fellow humans. He appreciated the art of people everywhere and he gained his inspiration from the folk music of the neighbouring Central European peoples as well as from folk cultures of other continents. His musical expression, built on themes of eastern inspiration used western harmonies in a classic synthesis of East and West.

Zoltán Kodály

Kodály was born at Kecskemét, in the heart of the Great Plain (1882). During his student years at the Budapest Academy of Music he began studying and collecting Magyar folksongs with Béla Bartók. His career as a composer began in 1906 with a work of Hungarian folk inspiration. He was professor of the Academy for a long time but continued his folk-music research. After World War I he became interested in choral compositions and noticed the educational possibilities of vocal music. He found that choral singing was a practical and inexpensive vehicle of musical culture, capable of reaching even the poorest and remotest villages. In his role as the nation's foremost *musical educator*, Kodály realised the cultural importance of the study, identification and evaluation of true Magyar folk music. The Hungarian Academy of Sciences has co-ordinated and financed the task of folk-music collection since the 1930s. Thus



Zoltán Kodály (1882-1967)

today the "Folk Music Research Institute" of the Academy possesses the recordings of some 100,000 folk melodies.

Kodály expounded his educational principles and folk music evaluations in scores of articles and books. He died in Budapest in 1967.

His rich collection of choral works includes the "Székely Spinnery", a colourful operatic tableau of Székely songs and ballads (1932), the various collections of regional and children's songs and dances with or without orchestral accompaniment ("Mátra Pictures", "Kálló Double Dance" etc.) and the numerous religious folk songs, along with his original choral compositions to classic Hungarian poetry.

In his *orchestral compositions* Kodáiy retains the traditional melodic elements, such as the popular "toborzó" ("verbunk") type motifs. His "Dances" are collections of orchestral variations of regional dances ("Galánta", "Marosszék"). The "Peacock Variations" present an orchestral paraphrase of an old folk song.

Among his more original and individual creations, the "Psalmus Hungaricus" (1923), a choral oratorio based on a XVIth century Hungarian psalm, established his reputation in Hungary, while *"Háry János"*, a comic opera based on the tales of a village story-teller (1926), became the favourite of national and international concert programmes, especially the "Háry János Suite", with its pleasing, emotional rhythms and folk-music inspired melodies. The "Concerto for Orchestra" (1939) is, in its more abstract form, a modern symphonic treatment of Magyar folk tunes. Kodály's last orchestral creation, "Symphony" (1961) constitutes practically an apotheosis of the Magyar folk song.

Kodály treated many *religious themes,* often connected with Hungarian historical events, such as the "Budavár Te Deum" (1936) on the anniversary of Buda's liberation from the Turks and the "Missa Brevis", composed during the capital's siege by the Russians in 1944.

The so-called *Kodály method* (Kodály concept), is the basic philosophy of musical education which aims at the developing of the very young (pre-primary) child's musical ability by using singing as the first activity with solmization (solfege) as the vehicle of vocal music teaching. This musical "alphabet" (solfege) is impressed into the child's memory by hand signals and then by visual notation. The content of the first exercises is the

Magyar folksong (this "classical music par excellence", as Kodály put it). This awakens the child's musical imagination and enables him to distinguish the separate tones of the pentatonic and, later, the western scales.

Kodály's emphasis on early musical education reaches back to the classic Greek concept of the educational importance of music. Thus the "Kodály concept" becomes a universal, classic-humanistic educational principle, easily adapted to any national education system, as is the case in many advanced countries today.

25. "ECCE HOMO"

(The Fine Arts in Hungary after 1849)

Popular Romanticism

Architecture sought neo-gothic, oriental and exotic forms in protest against the Viennese Biedermeier-Baroque. The search for new Hungarian forms resulted in such interesting examples as the Budapest "Vigadó" (Casino and Concert Hall), designed by F. Feszl. This exotic mixture of Byzantine, Moorish and Magyar inspiration reminded an onlooker of a "csárdás carved in stone". The new building programme after the Compromise produced some fine examples of eclectic styles, such as the Parliament House (I. Steindl) with its neo-gothic exterior and strangely harmonious Baroque-Renaissance interior. The Opera House (M. Yhl) was built in a more uniform Italian neo-Renaissance style with interior decorations and murals by the best painters of the period. The "Fisherman's Bastion" (F. Schulek) is a historic recreation of the walls of Buda castle and one of the best-known landmarks of Budapest.

The *sculptors* turned to the inspiration and dynamism of folk art or to the symbolism of historic figures. *Miklós Izsó* (1831-1875) continued Ferenczy's search for a national style. Most of his work remained largely experimental. The symbolic "Sorrowing Shepherd" is a poignant expression of the Magyar people's sorrow. His source of inspiration, the art of the people, resulted in such fine genre figures as the "Dancing Shepherd".*János Fadrusz* created remarkable historical bronze statues (King Matthias at Kolozsvár).

The *painters* replaced the carefree serenity of French Romanticism with a rather sombre patriotic symbolism. Hungarian

"Dancing Shepherd" by M. Izsó

realism and folk-inspiration blend in the popular, spectacular historical compositions of the era. *Mihály Zichy* is known for his romantic-patriotic illustrations to great literary works of the era. *Victor Madarász* found his inspiration in the tragic-heroic events of Hungarian history. The compositions "Ilona Zrinyi Before her Judges", "Zrinyi and Frangepán", "Zrinyi's Last Sally" and his masterpiece, "The Mourning of László Hunyadi" clearly convey the spirit of defiance against Austrian oppression.

Bertalan Székely (1835-1910) had a remarkable sense of composition. He, too, expressed his strong feelings for his nation through historical tableaus with an intense message of defiance. His great composition, "The Finding of the Body of King Louis II", links symbolically the Mohács disaster with the defeat of the 1848-49 war. Romantic pathos and vivid use of colours characterise "Dobozi" and the "Women of Eger". Needless to say, neither Madarász nor Székely received official recognition, let alone support in Hungary under Austrian oppression. (p. 99)

Károly Lotz on the other hand soon became the favourite of the "official" critics with his pleasing, serene, allegoric (and unpolitical) scenes, murals, tableaus and neo-classic figures ("Girl in Bath", etc.). *Gyula Benczur* (1844-1920), Professor at the Academy of Munich, shows a belated Rubens influence in his academic compositions, such as the "Baptism of Vajk" and the "Recapture of Buda". His brilliant portraiture and harmonious, precise composition without any dangerous defiant message received official approval in Vienna and Budapest. (p. 106)

Mihály (Michael) Munkácsy

Born in Munkács (eastern Hungary) in 1844, the son of a freedom fighter in the 1848-49 war, he was orphaned in childhood and placed in a joinery as an apprentice. He soon made himself independent and began painting without any formal education. His talent was soon discovered and he was sent to Vienna to an art school. Here he sold his first paintings: tableaus inspired by his childhood memories of the Freedom War and the landscapes of his country. Thus he was able to finance his further studies in Munich then in Düsseldorf, Germany. His genre paintings and Hungarian landscapes attracted consider-

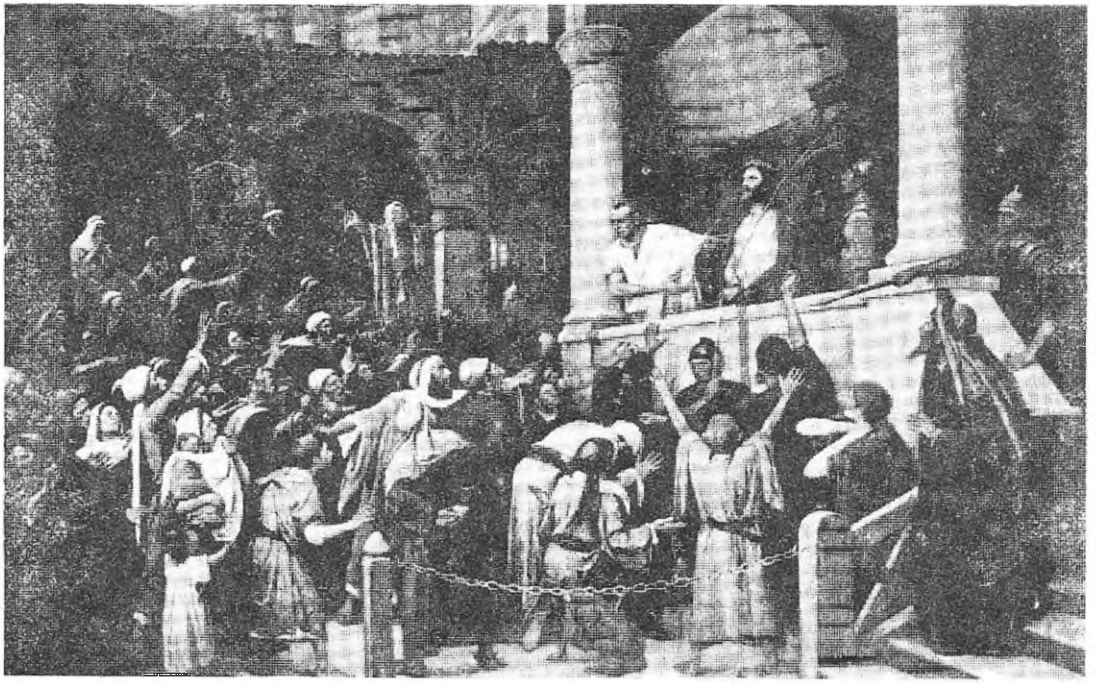
able attention. The fine study "The Yawning Apprentice", inspired by memories of his childhood, shows early realist-naturalist influences.

The greatest creation of Munkácsy's Düsseldorf period *"Condemned Cell"* (1870), is a homage to a childhood idol, a "betyár" (highwayman-freedom-fighter). It represents the fierce spirit of defiance against the Austrian "establishment". The painting gained the coveted Gold Medal of the Paris Salon. This success encouraged Munkácsy to settle in Paris, where he was welcomed by the critics and patrons of the arts. After several successful genre compositions, he painted the striking "Woman carrying Faggots", capturing the contrasting impressions of the fresh vitality of the forest and the tiredness of the old peasant woman. There are many other examples of his dramatic and compassionate approach to poor and old people, such as the "Vagabonds of the Night", Woman Churning Butter" and "Parting".

Munkácsy's aristocratic French wife drove him to almost frantic activity. *"Milton Dictating his Paradise Lost"* became his most successful painting to that day. He painted the tragic genius, exiled, blind and deserted by his own family, creating his masterpiece in an atmosphere of loneliness and hate. Though successful, Munkácsy himself was an exile, a lonely man who received no real response from his selfish and snobbish wife; he was without children and without real friends: the French resented the fact that he refused to become a French citizen and the Hungarians disliked him for living in France. So — to some extent — he portrayed himself in Milton.

Munkácsy's gigantic masterpiece, *"Christ before Pilate"*, was completed in 1881. In it he expresses the contrast of Christ's dignified silence amid a shouting, hostile crowd with the pallid, hesitating Pilate in the background. After having tried many models for Christ, Munkácsy finally painted his own tormented, sad face. During intervals while working on the majestic tableau, he "relaxed" by painting still-lifes and portraits. Once in a sudden burst of bravado, he painted "Sitting Woman" using 572 shades of blue.

Three years later he completed the *"Golgotha"*: the moment after Christ's death on the cross and the crowd of spectators. The amazing range of colours includes several shades of white: the deathly pale of Christ's face, the living white of the



"Ecce Homo" by M. Munkácsy

mourning women, the pallor of fear on the soldier's face and many other shades.

Tortured by an old illness and certain of his approaching death, Munkácsy continued to work feverishly: he completed portraits of famous men (Liszt), a mural in Vienna (Mozart) and then a commission from the Hungarian Government to paint the "Conquest of Hungary" for the new Parliament House. His last great work was *"Ecce Homo"* ("Behold the Man": Pilate shows Christ scourged to the Jews). He painted it while mortally ill, concluding his "Christ Trilogy" — and his own life's work. He died in 1900.

Munkácsy, the toast of his time in Paris and the initiator of an entirely new style, is today hardly known abroad. His unpronounceable name and the fact that he insisted on remaining a "foreigner" in France have made the emotional French forget him quickly. He did not belong to any "school". Most of his masterpieces were snapped up by rich Americans and thus removed from Europe. His own countrymen failed to appreciate his talent. His delicate colours, shades of blue and brown especially, are very hard to reproduce, moreover, many of his original paintings have begun to fade.

Munkácsy's original style — we may call it *"compassionate realism"* — shows a deep insight into the suffering of the human soul (especially of the poor and old — his favourite models). His portraits and compositions are studies in human psychology: he always grasps a moment of eloquent silence: the principal character has just said something or is about to say something, whilst the secondary characters usually supply a disturbing background of sounds, shouts and abuse.

This great, lonely artist was another example of Hungarian Christian humanism.

Munkácsy's contemporaries

László Paál, Munkácsy's friend, spent his short, creative life in France (Barbizon) painting soft, melancholic landscapes. *Géza Mészöly* was basically a genre painter with a mixture of Munkácsy's realism and impressionist colouring ("Balaton Fishermen").

The members of the so-called "Szolnok Group" were influenced by Munkácsy's themes but added considerable originality to

their tableaus. *Lajos Deák-Ebner* and *Sándor Bihari* show the precision and vitality of early realism in their peasant scenes.

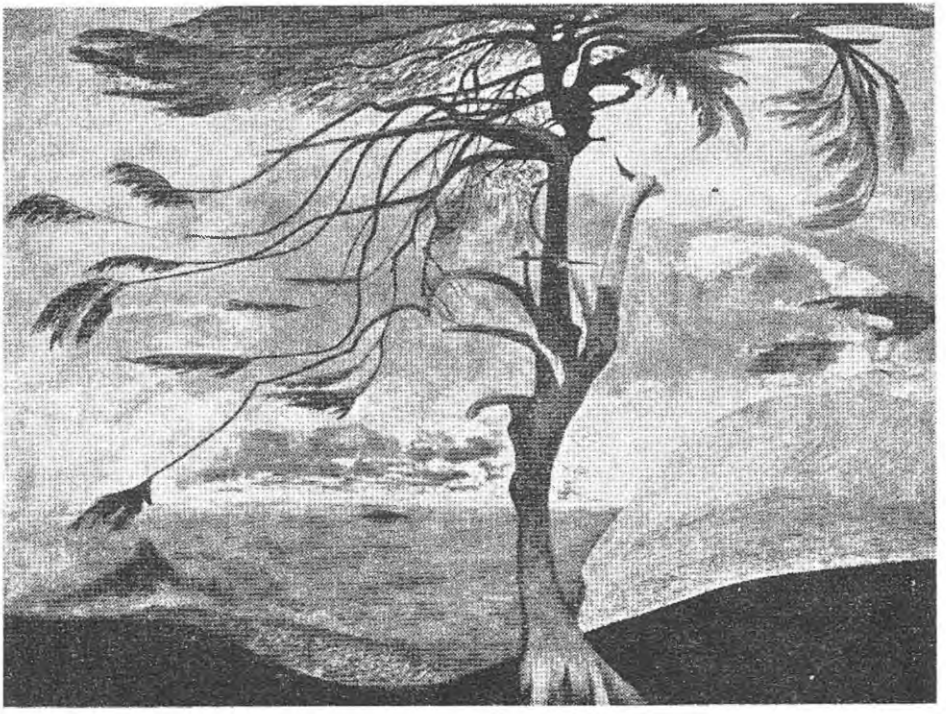
Pál Szinyei-Merse (1845-1920) was independent from Munkácsy's realism and the Munich Romanticism. His masterpiece, *"Picnic in May"* ("Majális"), painted in 1873, used vivid colour schemes reminiscent of French Impressionism — with which he had never been in contact. In fact the great French Impressionists created their masterpieces after Szinyei's "Picnic". The perfection of his "open air" ("plein air") tonalities is amazing. He seems to have gone a little further than the Impressionists: the effect of air vibration on his colouring is a concept found only in post-Impressionist painting (Cézanne) long after Szinyei's time.

He painted a few more landscapes and portraits, including the "Woman in Mauve Dress" which has an almost pre-Rafaelite landscape background. Szinyei's subsequent creations ("The Swing", "Lovers", "The Lark") represent the work of only a few years. He received hostile reception from the critics for his vivid colours and so, discouraged, stopped painting. His "Picnic" was belatedly "discovered" and appreciated three decades after its creation, but by that time Szinyei had lost his interest and initiative. Thus Hungary lost a genius who could have heralded a modern, XXth century Hungarian art — but the country's artists and critics preferred the comfortable conservatism of the XIXth century.

The period of the Millenium and World Wars

Szinyei's "Picnic" inspired a small group of avant-garde painters, called the "Nagybánya Group", around the turn of the century. Their founder, *Simon Hollósy,* was interested in a wide range of themes, from humorous peasant topics ("Corn Husking") to historic tableaus ("Zrinyi's Last Sally") with breezy, hazy colours and impressionist experimentation. *Károly Ferenczy,* another "Nagybánya" painter, perfected his artistry of light and shade contrasts ("October"). *Oscar Glatz'* outdoor tableaus are characterised by his preoccupation with the sun, his indoor compositions are idyllic peasant scenes ("Mother and Child").

The *sculptor Fülöp O. Beck* (1873-1945) turned away from the "approved" neo-Baroque styles and pioneered a modern



"Lonely Cedar" by T. Csontváry-Kosztka

Hungarian art style which was little appreciated by his contemporaries ("Fountain of Youth"). He was also a skilled silversmith and medallist and his plaquettes were more appreciated than his sculptures.

The *architect Ödön Lechner* applied the motifs of Magyar folk art to the decoration — and sometimes even to the forms — of such buildings as the Town Hall of Kecskemét and the Savings Bank of Budapest. He searched for new ways but rejected the reckless eclecticism of some of his contemporaries.

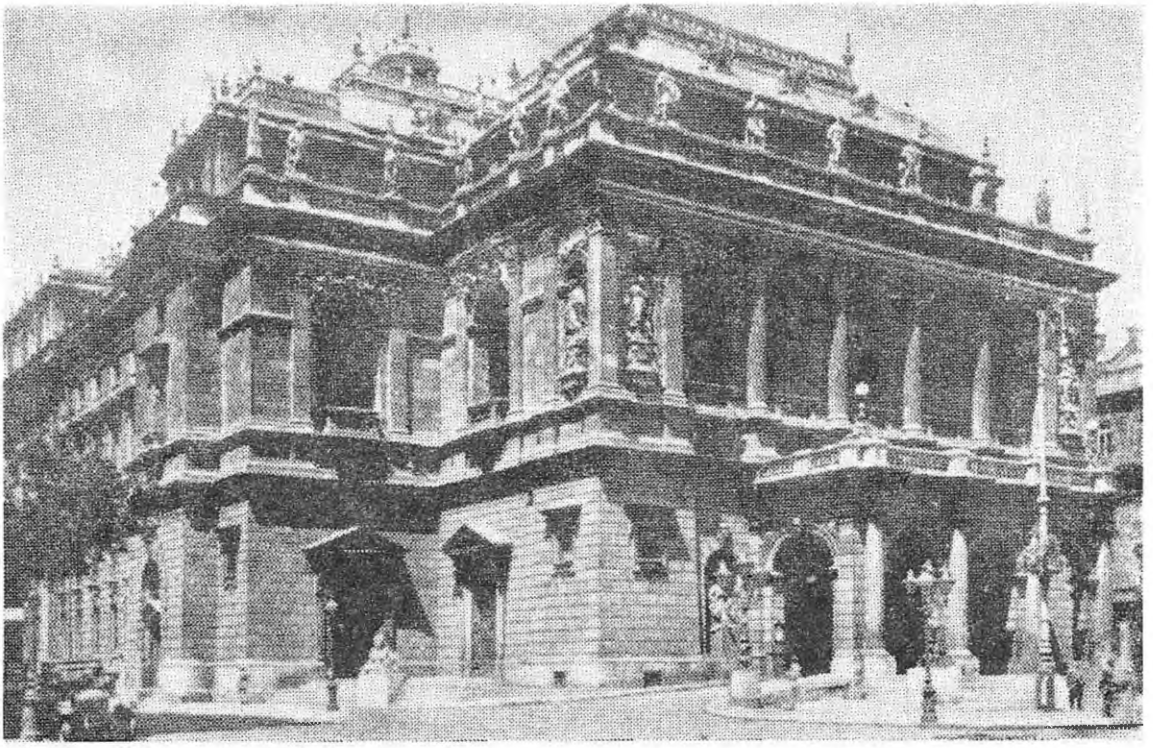
The independent painter, *László Mednyánszky* chose scenes of desolation and sadness for his landscapes and city tableaus.

Tivadar Csontváry-Kosztka (1853-1919), the most original genius of Hungarian painting, travelled extensively and began to paint only after his 40th year: his actual artistic career lasted only a decade, and was characterised by a feverish search for his own style: he became the forerunner of surrealism (long before Dali) and symbolism. His landscapes ("Hortobágy", "Tarpatak") are realistic, but in his later compositions he succeeded in creating a hauntingly beautiful, melancholic dream-world of his own, as in his masterpiece, *"Lonely Cedar"*, a defiant, tragic symbol of his own loneliness. The religious-pantheistic-mystic compositions inspired by his travels, "Pilgrimage", "Mary's Well", "Athens", are products of a visionary genius.

For a while, during the early decades of the XXth century, *French influence* characterised such popular painters as *József Rippl-Rónai*, the creator of serene, cheerful scenes and philosophical portraits ("Flox", "Memories", "My Father"). *István Csók* (1865-1961), the most successful painter between the wars, worked under the inspiration of French post-impressionism (Renoir). He sought the expression of beauty in children ("Zuzu") and in women fashionably dressed or undressed ("In the Studio", "Hony Soit").

The "Group of the Eight" sought a synthesis of German-inspired expressionism and French art-nouveau trends (Károly Kernstock). Other avant-garde representatives were the fresco-painter *Vilmos Aba-Novák* whose expressionist simple figure delineations were set off by glaring, contrasting colours, and the graphic artist *Pál C. Molnár. Jenő Paizs-Göbel* explored the

"Madonna" by P. Molnár C.



The Budapest Opera House (M. Ybl)

possibilities of surrealism. *Gyula Derkovics,* inspired by German expressionism, became interested in tableaus of the proletariat and brought Socialist tendencies into his expression.

Aurél Bernáth and *József Egry* used expressionist colouring in their landscapes. *István Szőnyi* chose more robust realism in his powerful landscapes and group tableaus.

"Princess Elizabeth"
(the future Queen Elizabeth II)
by Zs. Kisfaludy-Strobl

The conservative *sculptor Zsigmond Kisfaludy-Strobl* made his name with academic-style figures. *Ferenc Medgyesy,* the most remarkable talent of modern Hungarian sculpture, found a harmonious synthesis of classical, modern and Hungarian folk inspiration in his allegorical and sepulchral figures.

26. AUSTRIA'S WAR — HUNGARY'S DEFEAT

(Hungary's history from 1914 to 1930)

The beginning of World War I

The Austrian government made it clear that it intended to take stern measures against Serbia for fomenting Francis Ferdinand's assassination. At the Crown Council, Tisza, the Hungarian Prime Minister, desperately protested against any measures which might lead to war, but the joint Foreign Minister and the Chief of Staff (both Austrians) insisted on armed retaliation. In vain did Tisza point to the danger of Russian intervention: the Austrian militarists managed to sway the old Emperor, Francis Joseph, who had, in the meantime, received reassurances from Germany's bellicose emperor, William II.

The ultimatum expired and, as expected, Serbia refused to comply. On July 28, 1914, Francis Joseph *declared war on Serbia.* The reader will be familiar with the chain of events set off by this declaration: by August 3 most of Europe was engaged in the War.

The Budapest Parliament took a typically Magyar attitude. Before the declaration of war the entire Parliament had supported Tisza's efforts to avoid the war. Now, all parties, including the Social Democrats and Mihály Károlyi's Liberal dissidents, agreed to a political truce to enable Tisza's government to support the war effort — which Tisza did, against his own convictions. The Hungarians' quixotic code of honour demands absolute loyalty to the nation's commitments, however unpalatable. Political realism and expediency are unknown words in the Magyar language. For four years the Magyar soldiers and their

combat officers fought with dutiful courage on foreign soil mostly under foreign generals for an empire that was not theirs, in a senseless war to avenge the death of the man who had hated Hungarians. 3.8 million Hungarians served in the armed forces of the Monarchy. No Hungarian unit deserted, no factory sabotaged the war effort till the final collapse. Hungarian troops suffered very heavy losses : 660,000 dead and 750,000 wounded. The high command of the Monarchy was led by Austrian and Czech generals. There were no Hungarians in high positions on the General Staff and the highest position held by a Hungarian officer was that of a corps commander (General Szurmay, the able defender of the Eastern Carpathians). It is therefore pointless to revise the conduct of the war in which Hungarians had the subordinate role of providing the fighting troops. History books delight in listing examples of the muddled thinking and wasteful strategy of the archaic Austrian leadership.

The tragic role of the Magyar soldier is illustrated by the so-called "Limanova charge" in 1914. The Austrian commander sent Magyar hussars in a "foot charge by hussars" against the Russian trenches defended by barbed wire and machine-guns. The charge of this "light brigade" (ten times the size of the famous Balaclava brigade) must have been a magnificent sight: resplendent in their blue-red-white uniforms (ideal targets for the machine-guns), armed with nothing but sabres — they were a sight to gladden the heart of their proud general (who watched the charge from the proverbial hill). The charge was a success: the general was praised and the hussars received countless decorations — most of them posthumously . . .

Italy entered the war against the Monarchy in 1915. *Rumania,* promised Transylvania and adjoining regions by the Western Allies, attacked Hungary in August 1916. For a while the Rumanian armies made some progress in Transylvania, which was defended by village policemen and the autumn rains. A few weeks later the German general Falkenhayn with hastily collected German-Hungarian troops chased the Rumanians out of Transylvania, then, in two months captured Bucharest and annihilated the Rumanian army.

On November 21, 1916, emperor-king Francis Joseph died after a reign of 68 years.

The reign of Charles IV

On December 30, 1916, Hungary's last King and Queen were crowned in the historic cathedral of Our Lady in Buda. After the long, solemn ceremony (somewhat reminiscent of the ordination of a Catholic priest), the young king mounted his horse and rode up a man-made hillock built of the soil collected from the 73 counties of Hungary. There, with Saint Stephen's heavy crown swaying precariously on his head, Charles IV made four symbolic strokes with Saint Stephen's sword in the four wind directions, swearing to defend Hungary against all enemies.

At first glance, the position of the Monarchy seemed unassailable at the end of 1916: Rumania and Serbia were crushed, the Russian and Italian fronts securely held. But Charles IV was an intelligent man and he knew that the empire's war potential was exhausted. He also knew that the nationalities were preparing to destroy the Monarchy. On his initiative, the Central Powers (Germany, the Monarchy, Bulgaria and Turkey) sent the Allied (Entente) powers a detailed *peace offer* in December 1916, suggesting the restoration of the 1914 status quo. The Entente rejected the offer, insisting on the "liberation of the Slav and Rumanian minorities". This rejection (costing another two years of war and another ten million dead) was the result of the successful propaganda campaign conducted by Czech intellectuals (Masaryk, Benes) and their Rumanian, Serb and other emigré colleagues in France and Britain. They managed to convince the Western Allies that the creation of Slav and Rumanian national states would stop German and Russian expansion in Central Europe. Tisza pointed out to the U.S. Ambassador that the breaking up of the Monarchy would result in the creation of several weak, multi-national states unable to resist imperialist pressure. (We know today who was right. . .) After hearing Tisza's arguments, the British (on American advice) suggested new negotiations with Austria-Hungary but the joint foreign minister of the Monarchy (count Czernin — of Czech nationality) broke off the negotiations, claiming that it would be disloyal to negotiate without Germany.

The effects of the entry of the U.S. into the War against the Central Powers were temporarily offset by Russia's collapse and an offensive against Italy which was so successful that it took a considerable amount of bungling on the part of the Austrian generals to save the Italians.

In the *Hungarian Parliament,* count Mihály Károlyi, now leader of the opposition, harassed the government, demanding radical electoral and other reforms. In May 1917 Tisza resigned. His two successors, count M. Eszterházy and S. Wekerle, were unable to contain the opposition, the growing profiteering and increasing unrest at home. Still the frontline was holding everywhere, thanks mainly to the millions of hardy Magyar peasant soldiers. Russia and Rumania signed Peace Treaties in 1918 — but the impact of the American intervention was already felt and the total economic exhaustion of all the Central Powers had already decided the fate of the War. In September 1918 the Bulgarians collapsed and soon the Turks asked for an armistice.

In November 1918 the *Monarchy signed an armistice* with the Allied Powers in Padova, Italy. The terms of the agreement left the national frontiers untouched and directed the troops to return to their respective countries with their arms, under their officers.

The Monarchy soon ceased to be a federal structure: the various nationalities declared their autonomy and constituted National Councils. On Wekerle's resignation, Károlyi, emulating the nationalities, formed a Hungarian National Council (quite needlessly: Hungary had her own constitution and government) and on October 31, helped by the so-called "Military Councils" (composed mainly of deserters), took over the capital, Budapest. The coup was bloodless (and senseless) — but a commando of the "Military Council" assassinated Tisza, who lived in a Budapest suburb.

The King, after some hesitation, appointed Károlyi Prime Minister.

Károlyi and the Republic

On being appointed Prime Minister, Károlyi commenced a feverish activity as the virtual ruler of the country. As the troops were returning from the fronts — with their equipment and under their officers, as directed by the Padova armistice — Károlyi's government ordered the soldiers to lay down their arms and disperse: *"Never again do I want to see another soldier. . ."*, said the Defence Minister. Béla Linder. Károlyi and his government naively believed that a "pacifist" Hungary would be regarded as the "friend of the Entente". Then Károlyi decided to "improve" on the Padova armistice and led a delegation to

Belgrade, the headquarters of the southern Allied Forces. (This fateful pilgrimage had been suggested to Károlyi by one of his Czech friends. . .) The French commander, general Franchet d'Espérey, treated Károlyi and his deputation with utter contempt.[1] On finding out why he came (uninvited) and on learning that Károlyi had dispersed the Hungarian armed forces, d'Espérey consulted his Rumanian and Serbian liaison officers and handed Károlyi extremely harsh instructions, including the immediate cession of large territories demanded by the Rumanians and Serbs. As it turned out later, the French commander had neither the desire, nor the authority to conclude an armistice with Károlyi and he made up his instructions on the spur of the moment.

Károlyi's first fateful decision, the *disarmement* of the returning Hungarian troops. had far-reaching consequences. In November, 1918, no enemy soldier stood on Hungarian soil. The Hungarian units on the various fronts were well-disciplined, armed and in reasonably good spirits. They were willing and able to defend the Hungarian frontiers against the invaders whom they had either recently defeated (Serbs, Rumanians) or who had only makeshift units made up of deserters and ex-prisoners of war (Czechs).

On November 13, King Charles IV "withdrew from the direction of the affairs of the State". Károlyi interpreted this as the King's resignation and had the *Republic of Hungary* declared by the Parliament. The nation was now facing the fifth winter of the war. Rumanian, Czech and Serb troops moved into the undefended land, hundreds of thousands of refugees fled towards the centre of the country, the food, accommodation and fuel situation was catastrophic and the (Spanish) influenza killed thousands. The Károlyi government limited itself to promises of radical electoral and land-reforms and free welfare services — without doing anything. Disappointed, his former middle-class and moderate supporters left Károlyi and in January only the Socialists and Radicals supported him.

For more than two months the country had been without a head of State. Then in January 1919 Károlyi was elected President of the Hungarian Republic. By that time however, a new force was ready to fill the political vacuum created by Károlyi's paralysed government.

Béla Kun's "Council Republic" ("Soviet Republic")

There had been no Communist Party in Hungary before November 1918. During the War some Hungarian prisoners of war had joined the Soviet (Bolshevik) Communist Party in Russia and were trained to prepare a Communist revolution in Central Europe. In November 1918 a group of these trained agitators, led by Béla Kun, were sent to Budapest and founded there the "Hungarian Communist Party".

The Social Democrats and the workers of the Trade Unions resented the Russian-financed activities of the Communists and bloody clashes soon occurred between the Budapest workers and Kun's terrorist detachments (such as the "Lenin Boys"). Eventually even Károlyi's meek government had to arrest some Communist agitators (including Kun).

In the meantime the Paris Peace Conference was in session, making decisions without consulting the defeated nations. In February, 1919, the Budapest Allied Commission demanded the evacuation of about three-fourths of Hungary in favour of Czechoslovakia, Rumania and Serbia. Károlyi, who now realised the folly of his "pro-Entente" and "pacifist" policies, resigned in March, 1919, handing over the supreme authority to the "Proletariat of the Nation".[2]

The left-wing Social Democrats (the only active political group) promptly handed over the power to Kun and his fellow Communists. On the 21st of March, 1919, the *Hungarian Council Republic* was formed, governed by the Communists and some Social Democrats. Misnamed "Dictatorship of the Proletariat", Béla Kun's regime lacked the support of most of the city proletariat and certainly of the entire agrarian proletariat: in fact it lacked the support of all classes or established parties. Its ideological basis, "Bolshevik Communism", manifested itself by little more than parrot-like repetitions of Russian-Bolshevik terminology in the service of the self-preservation of a group of unscrupulous adventurers. The organisers and supporters of the regime were people whose mentality was foreign to Hungary's political, social and cultural atmosphere. Of the 45 "Commissars" (Ministers) 32 were unassimilated Galicians (cf. Chapter 22). Most of the urban workers and Trade Unions refused to co-operate with them or seceded from the "coalition". The peasants (the largest, most oppressed class) were not represented in the government. Neither were the middle

classes (let alone the upper classes) nor any politician with appreciable Parliamentary experience.

The regime was maintained by ruthless terror exercised by the "Soldiers' Councils" or other armed commandos, consisting of criminals, deserters, ex-prisoners of war and vagrants and led by sadists, such as the Commissar Tibor Szamuelly. This method of control was called the "Red Terror" by the Communists themselves.[3]

The administration of the country (or what was left of it) was left to the town and village "Councils" which held absolute legislative, executive and judiciary powers (including the power to impose capital punishment for "anti-revolutionary" activities). These Councils were staffed by "reliable" city Communists. The estates were nationalised, *not distributed to the peasants* but administered by "Farmers' Councils" (of reliable city Communists). Businesses and factories were similarly "socialised" (managed by reliable Communists). As a result, industrial and agricultural production practically ceased; the peasants refused to feed the "city scoundrels". Brutal requisitions evoked resistance, often in the form of sizable uprisings, which, in turn, were followed by the brutal retaliations of the terror gangs.

Kun recruited a "Red Army" to hold back the approaching Czech and Rumanian troops which threatened the existence of the Communist regime. The "Red Army", led by some able officers of the former Hungarian Army willing to defend their country under any circumstances, regained considerable territory from the Czechs in the north but was then ordered by the Allied Powers to withdraw. Thus the Rumanians could move toward Budapest practically unopposed. On learning this, Kun and his "government" fled from Budapest (July 31).

Rumanian occupation — national government

The Rumanians entered the undefended capital and began to loot and impose their own type of terror upon the much-suffering population.[4] Various moderates tried to form governments but they were unacceptable to the Allied Commission. The only hope of the nation was now the "Counter-Revolutionary Government" set up in the south of the country, but not yet officially acknowledged by the Allies. This government-in-exile had recruited a small "National Army", commanded by Admiral Miklós Horthy, which was however not allowed to

proceed to Budapest where the Rumanians were "absorbing" western civilisation at an alarming rate. After months of negotiations, the Rumanians were induced to leave Budapest and Horthy's "National Army" entered the capital in November 1919. A caretaker government was formed and in January 1920 elections were held under Allied supervision. As a result, a moderate rightist government was elected. As the Entente forbade the restoration of the Habsburg dynasty, the Hungarian throne was declared vacant and Admiral Horthy was elected Regent (March 1920).

Following the collapse of the Kun regime (July 1919) Hungary had practically no law-enforcing agencies — these (gendarmerie, police, courts) had all been abolished by the Communists. Between July and November 1919 there were isolated, individual acts of revenge against those held responsible for the sufferings of the preceding months. There were also outbursts of anti-Semitic (or rather anti-Galician) feelings, as the most hated of the Bolshevik leaders (Kun, Szamuelly, Korvin) were Jews. This was the much publicised *"White Terror"*: a series of regrettable, lawless acts, evoked by the "Red Terror" and made possible by the legal vacuum created by Kun and his regime.

The well-disciplined units of the National Army restored law and order and put an end to these excesses. Thus Admiral Horthy, whose name had been maliciously connected with the "White Terror", was, as commander of the National Army and then Head of State, the very person to stop these regrettable acts of revenge.[5]

The Trianon Treaty

The verdict of the Peace Treaty was given solely on the submissions of the Czech, Rumanian and Serb delegations. Neither the Hungarian submissions nor President Wilson's much vaunted 14 Points[6] were taken into consideration. Hungary was punished more severely than any other country: she lost 71.4% of her territory and 63.5% of her population; she was also ordered to pay reparations (in addition to the loot taken by the Rumanians) and to reduce her armed forces to 35,000, without heavy armement or national service. The country lost all her salt, iron, silver and gold mines and most of her timber

Map showing the former territory of Hungary and the area of that country as reduced by the Treaty of Trianon, with particulars of the partitions and allocation of the alienated territory to Czecho-Slovakia, Jugo-Slavia, Rumania and Austria.

.....pre-war boundary of Hungary.

present boundary of Hungary.

Hungary's partition by the Trianon Treaty (1920)

and coal production. One-third of all Magyars were transferred to a foreign country.[7]

The arguments against Hungary were basically the following: Hungary had started the War, she had oppressed her minorities and the country was a potential "trouble-maker", a source of Communist corruption (an observation made during the Kun regime). The reader should be able to evaluate the first two arguments, and the third was obviously not valid in Horthy's Hungary in 1920.

The treaty was signed at Versailles (Trianon Palace) on June 4, 1920. This day became a day of national mourning in a country where the days of mourning seemed always to have outnumbered the days of rejoicing.

Miklós Horthy and the Bethlen government

Admiral Miklós (Nicholas) Horthy, Hungary's Regent from 1920 to 1944, had been a military diplomat, an aid to Francis Joseph, the last commander-in-chief of the Austrian-Hungarian Navy, the Minister for Defence in the "Counter-Revolutionary Government" in southern Hungary and the commander of the National Army before his election as the country's Head of State. After his election he withdrew from active politics and left the tasks of government to his Prime Ministers and Ministers, becoming a dignified, aloof but respected constitutional monarch in all but name with very little interference in the country's internal or external politics until the outbreak of the Second World War. He was scrupulously honest and observed the Constitution meticulously. A warm-hearted humanist, he made his country a refuge for persecuted Jews and Poles during World War II. Knowingly or unknowingly he started an interesting social evolution: he had himself surrounded by non-aristocratic personalities (the aristocrats treated him rather coolly). Of his 14 Prime Ministers only one came from the rich, aristocratic land-owner class. Horthy provided this "new nobility" with honours and titles (such as the knighthood of the "Vitéz" awarded for outstanding war service) — somewhat similar to the British system of titles, honours and knighthoods (he was a great admirer of the British). Thus he gradually created a new, non-aristocratic, leading class of Hungary.

After the 1920 elections the Christian and Smallholder parties formed a coalition government. After the signing of the Trianon

Treaty, Horthy appointed count *Pál Teleki* Prime Minister (1920-1921). Teleki, scion of an historic Transylvanian family, was a world-renowned professor of Geography, an honest and wise statesman and a devout Catholic. He was an unusual politician in that his bluff sincerity, monosyllabic oratory and bespectacled, schoolmasterly figure clashed with the Renaissance decor and Baroque atmosphere of the Hungarian Parliament.

In 1921 *King Charles* attempted twice to reclaim his Hungarian throne. On the first occasion Horthy convinced him that his restoration — though welcome in Hungary — was against the stipulations of the Peace Treaty. On the second occasion, armed confrontation occurred between Hungarian troops loyal to Charles and those loyal to Horthy, while the Czechs and Rumanians mobilised threatening armed intervention if Hungary restored the Habsburg dynasty. In order to avoid further bloodshed and foreign intervention, Charles surrendered.

The Entente Powers exiled Charles to Madeira in the Atlantic where he died in 1922. It was one of the many ironies of Hungarian history that this pious, honest and humane man, with outstanding intellectual and moral qualities, loved and respected by all Hungarians, was not allowed to remain on the Hungarian throne — he was the first Habsburg who would have been welcome to it.

Teleki resigned and Horthy appointed *count István Bethlen* Prime Minister (1921-1931). This able politician, scion of another historic Transylvanian family, was an excellent choice. His first task was to re-establish some measure of *financial stability*. In 1922 Hungary was admitted to the League of Nations. After three years of strenuous negotiations Bethlen managed to secure a substantial loan through the League for Hungary. (Foreign aid freely given to "developing" countries did not exist in those days). Interestingly enough, the greatest obstacle was created by the Hungarian emigrés, led by Károlyi in Britain, who did everything to discredit Hungary and have the loan withheld from a country ruled by "Horthy's reactionaries". Finally the loan was granted and Bethlen could stop the crippling inflation by introducing a new stable currency based on gold (1927).

An *industrial prosperity* of some sort began: a fourfold increase in manufacturing output brought relative affluence to

the urban workers who also enjoyed progressive social and free health benefits.

The government was, however, unable to solve the *agrarian question:* 3 million peasants (more than one-third of the country's population) lived more or less on subsistence farms of their own or as landless agricultural workers. The succession states carried out their much-vaunted agrarian reforms through the inexpensive device of confiscating former Hungarian landholdings. Hungary had no ex-enemy loot to divide — the land to be given to the peasants had to be bought from the owners. The Hungarians' scrupulous respect for proprietary rights prevented them from confiscating even the huge estates of the Habsburg family (confiscated everywhere else).

In 1921 the government commenced an agrarian programme involving about one million acres (6% of the country's arable land) distributed among 400,000 landless peasants. There is no doubt that much more should have been done to hand back to the Magyar peasants the soil for which a million of them died in two world wars.

Education progressed rapidly: eight thousand new primary schools, many high schools and universities were built during the ten years of the Bethlen government — not a bad record for an impoverished nation of 8 million. The *electoral* policy of the government was rather conservative: limitations of age, sex, residence, education and family status reduced the number of electors to about two-thirds of the adult population. The Parliament consisted of a Lower House (elected by secret ballot in towns and open voting in the rural areas) and an Upper House with its hereditary or appointed members and representatives of professions (similar to the House of Lords). The Regent appointed or dismissed the Prime Minister who did not have to be a member of the Parliament, but had to be supported by the majority party. The Prime Minister chose his ministers (not necessarily from members of the Parliament).

Law and order were maintained by a well disciplined and educated police and gendarmerie force (all commissioned officers were law graduates) and by well-qualified judges who meted out justice based on solid Roman Law as revised by the Code Napoleon and the Hungarian Articles of Law ("Corpus Juris"). In the public service bribery, embezzling and fraud were practically unknown but nepotism was rampant. The working classes —

urban and agrarian — showed remarkable self-discipline and patriotism during the trying years of reconstruction, depression and second World War. Strikes and demonstrations were rare in the industrial centres and non-existent in the country where the Magyar peasant continued to carry his thousand-year-old burden with enduring loyalty.

"Revisionism" and foreign policy

The idea that the Trianon frontiers needed a radical revision became the basic ideology in Hungarian politics as well as in education, art, literature and social life. The succession states and their protector, France, remained deaf to the Hungarian arguments for a peaceful revision of the frontiers (most Magyar-populated districts were contiguous to the Trianon frontier and their adjustment would have caused few demographic problems). The Hungarians reacted emotionally and the words "Nem, nem, soha!" ("No, no, never!"), rejecting the mutilation of the country became a national motto. Abroad, this propaganda, appealing to the heart rather than the mind, found a warm response in Italy, a somewhat amused acknowledgement in Britain and little success elsewhere.

The generations of young Hungarians brought up during these decades lived in the wishful dreamworld of the "restoration of Hungary's thousand-year-old frontiers". Though unattainable, this was a goal to strive for, to hope for, to struggle for and to demonstrate for. It was definitely a worthier cause to get excited about than some of today's causes. To the nation, the lofty ideal of revisionism gave a sense of dignity and self-respect, lifting the people's minds out of despair. On the other hand, this attitude certainly damaged the Hungarians' chances of establishing useful economic ties with their neighbours and it also proved harmful to the Magyar minorities in the succession states. Hungary's emotional (and ineffective) revisionism served as a pretext for the oppression of the Magyar minorities in Rumania, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. Moreover, in order to guard the results of their victory, these three states formed a strong military alliance (called the "Little Entente") with the sole aim of preventing Hungary from recovering her lost territories.

It had not occurred to a single Hungarian politician to *pretend* to accept the terms of the Treaty and thus ease the tension and the Magyar minorities' plight.

The relations between Hungary and *Austria* were rather strained at the beginning of the period, as the Hungarians resented the fact that Austria had also accepted a slice of Hungarian territory under the Peace Treaty. *France,* the protector of the "Little Entente", maintained a hostile attitude toward Hungary during the entire period. The *British* did cast occasional, supercilious glances toward Central Europe, but the business of the Empire kept the British politicians from trying to counterbalance France's influence there, though the Hungarians were eager to approach Britain.

The first state to turn a friendly hand toward Hungary was *Italy.* A friendship pact with this country was Bethlen's greatest diplomatic success (1927).

By 1930 Horthy and Bethlen had achieved the seemingly impossible: the nation was back on its feet, the social and economic conditions were improving, the currency was stable and unemployment was minimal. Then, in 1931, the full force of the world financial crisis and depression hit the country's economy (still very much dependent on foreign trade, especially wheat exports).

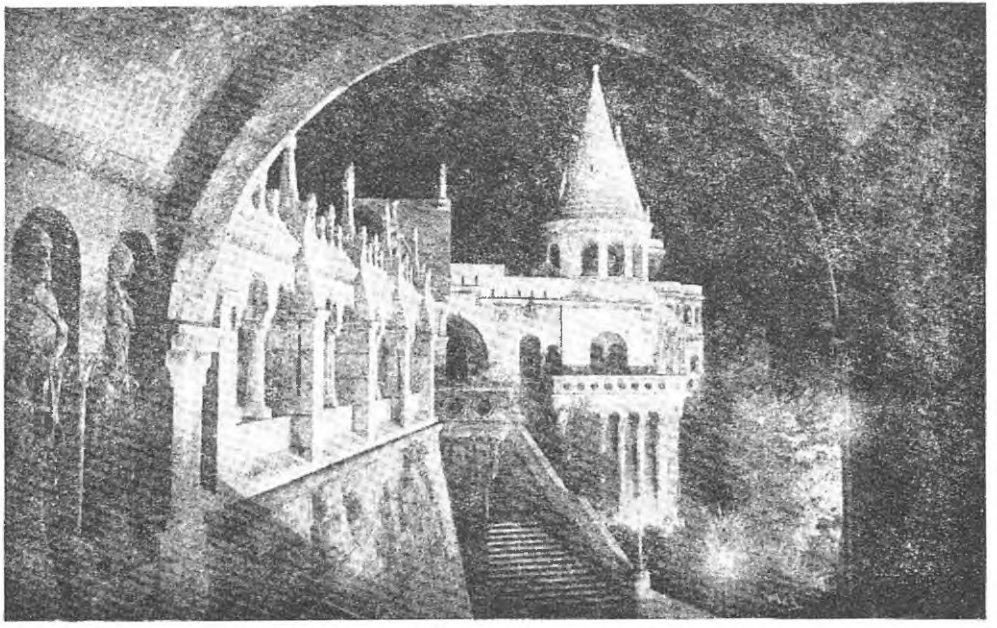
Unwilling to lead the country through another crisis, Bethlen resigned in August 1931.

27. THE HEART AND THE HEIGHTS

(The settlement, land, art, customs and way of life of the people of Budapest and Northern Hungary)

Budapest: the Heart of the Nation

Budapest (population 2 million) arose from the union of two towns, Buda and Pest, in 1873. *Buda,* the older town, situated on the western hills, has been Hungary's capital since the XIVth century. It was under Turkish occupation for 145 years. Often besieged, damaged, destroyed and rebuilt the royal castle of Buda preserves the memories of many periods since the XIIth century. Near the royal palace, the seven-centuries-old "Our Lady" cathedral ("Coronation" or "Matthias" Church) was the scene of the crowning of several Hungarian kings. To the south lies the "Gellért" hill — named after Bishop Saint Gerard (Gellért), who helped Saint Stephen to convert the Magyars to Christianity in the XIth century. Seven bridges span the Danube between the two cities: all were destroyed at the end of World War II and rebuilt afterwards. On the east bank *Pest,* the administrative, business and cultural centre of the country, possesses innumerable buildings and monuments of historical or cultural significance, among which we have already mentioned a few in other chapters. The Academy of Sciences, built in 1862 in Italian neo-Renaissance style, and the monumental Szent István (Saint Stephen) basilica (1851, neo- Renaissance) deserve particular mention. A remarkable monument, the "Millenium Monument", stands near the City Park: a tall, slender column topped by the figure of a flying angel; the base is surrounded by many statues representing the important historical figures of Hungary. The work was created by the sculptor Gy. Zala on the occasion of Hungary's millenary



Fishermen's Bastion. Buda

S. Hollósy: Corn husking (Cf. pp. 209 and 238)

celebrations (1896). The replica of the historic castle of Vajdahunyad in the City Park was built on the same occasion. The nearby Museum of Applied Arts is an interesting example of Ödön Lechner's "Magyar-Secessionist" style (1893).

Margaret Island, now a national recreation area, was named after Saint Margaret of the Arpáds (XIIIth century), who spent her life in prayer and work on this island.

Almost half of Hungary's industry is concentrated in and around Budapest, especially in some suburbs (Csepel, Újpest, Kispest etc.). An interesting fact is that several suburbs and townships nearby (Szentendre) are inhabited by Slovak, Serb, German and other nationalities which have preserved their ethnic culture and way of life for centuries in the heart of the country.

The loyal North

Northern Hungary, or the "Uplands" ("Felvidék"), is the region of historic Hungary bounded by the northern Carpathians, the Danube and the Great Plain in the south. This area has suffered less from the vicissitudes of Hungarian history than the others. Since 1920, most of the area has belonged to the newly created state of Czechoslovakia. Since 1945 the eastern district (Ruthenia) has belonged to the Soviet Union.

The *population* of the Uplands consists of Slovaks, Magyars, Germans and Ruthenians (Carpatho-Ukrainians). The *Slovaks*, the largest group (2 million), are the only non-Magyar indigenous group in the Carpathian basin. During the thousand years as citizens of the Hungarian state, the Slovaks have kept their language, culture, way of life and national identity. Their numbers have increased considerably, partly because of the sheltered nature of the region, partly through immigration of neighbouring Slav elements. Though many Slovaks rose to the ranks of the Hungarian leading classes through services to the Church or State, the Slovaks of the mountain villages did not assimilate (no one told them to). There had been no antagonism between Magyars and Slovaks before the XXth century when external political agitation stirred up "independence" and "liberation" movements among them, with limited success. Before that time, the Slovaks had always been the Magyars' loyal comrades-in-arms in their common struggle against oppression, especially

in Rákóczi's time. The Magyars have always found the mild-mannered, art-loving, industrious Slovaks close to their hearts. Thus it frequently happened that in villages with mixed Magyar and Slovak populations the Magyars integrated into the Slovak community. The opposite happened less frequently; in fact, large isolated Slovak settlements have maintained their ethnic identity in the south of the Great Hungarian Plain.

The *Ruthenians or Carpatho-Ukrainians* (about 500,000), who migrated to the eastern districts of the Uplands during the Middle Ages, have been peaceful, honest and loyal subjects of the Hungarian state. They, too, wholeheartedly supported the Hungarians in their freedom struggles and earned the epithet given to them by Rákóczi: "gens fidelissima" ("the most faithful people"). The *Germans,* called Saxons, settled during the XIIIth-XIVth centuries in the central northern towns and have similarly been loyal citizens of the country of their adoption. During the struggles against Austrian-German oppression these German-speaking Hungarians stood faithfully by their Magyar brothers.

The *Magyar* population is concentrated in the southern counties of the region, but there are pockets of rural settlements everywhere, while the urban population was largely Magyar before 1920. Certain Magyar groups show marked ethnic cultural characteristics, such as the Palóc, the Magyars called "Matyós" etc. Due mainly to the isolation caused by the mountains, the people of these districts have developed different customs and folk-art, in spite of their common Magyar origin.

Some towns of historic and cultural interest

Kassa (today Kosice, Czechoslovakia) is the largest city of the northern central area, with memories of various freedom struggles. Its cathedral, named after Saint Elizabeth of Hungary and built in 1360, is the finest remaining example of Hungarian Gothic architecture. The remains of Ferenc Rákóczi and his mother, Ilona Zrinyi, rest in the crypts of the cathedral. The interior of the church contains many outstanding examples of XIVth-XVth century Hungarian wood-carving, painting and decorative art.

Pozsony (today Bratislava, Czechoslovakia), near the western border, used to be the administrative capital of Hungary in

Turkish times. Several Habsburg kings were crowned here and it was the seat of what passed for a Hungarian "Parliament" during the XVIth-XVIIIth centuries (until 1848).

Nearby is Trencsén, the centre of *"Mátyusföld"*, a region named after Máté ("Mátyus") Csák, a rich feudal lord who was Palatin of Hungary in the XIVth century. Csák, a descendant of a Magyar tribal chieftain of the IXth century and Hungary's chief minister, would have been amused to learn that certain imaginative historians have identified his name with the word "Czech" and claimed Czech supremacy over "Mátyusföld" during Csák's feudal tenure. (This was one of the "proofs" submitted to the Trianon Peace Treaty Commission . . .)

The northern "Saxon" towns (Lőcse, Késmárk, Eperjes) present an interesting synthesis of Hungarian history and local German tradition.

The southern hilly fringe of the region belongs to Hungary. The largest city here is *Miskolc*, second largest city in Hungary. Near the industrial complex of Diósgyőr lies the historic castle built by the Anjou kings (XIVth century). Near the Tokaj vineyards lies Rákóczi's castle of Sárospatak, famous also for its old Protestant College. *Eger* is rich in historic relics, such as the fort which István Dobó defended successfully in 1552. This archiepiscopal see has many Baroque and Renaissance churches. *Visegrád* is situated at the bend of the Danube. Its gothic palace built in the XIIIth and XIVth centuries was the favourite residence of the Anjou kings and Matthias.

Magyar folk art and crafts in the Uplands

The Magyars of this forested area use wood to a great extent to make carved furniture, wooden vessels, musical instruments and buildings. Timber belltowers, carved wooden steeples and ornamental carvings abound in Catholic villages of the area.

The most characteristic aspect of the Magyar folk art in this area is the colourful *folkwear*, which shows many different styles. In the districts closer to the Plain, brighter colour schemes, shorter skirts and lighter footwear types are found. The Palóc of *Boldog* are particularly famous for their elaborate headdresses ("párta") worn by the young brides. *Bujak* is known for the vivid colours of the skirts worn over many petticoats.

Matyó folkwear

The rich peasants of *Martos* (now Czechoslovakia) wear golden and silver lace-decorated coifs and many silver chains.

The *Matyó* folkwear is world famous. These descendants of King Matthias' Magyar bodyguard live in a few villages around Mezőkövesd in Borsod county. Their characteristic folk art was inspired by the Gothic-Renaissance styles of Matthias' court. The magnificent costumes of the women, with lines of almost gothic delicacy, are richly embroidered. Though they use vivid colours as well, the aristocratic combination of white on black is their favourite. The women present a tall, slender figure in their ankle-length skirts, which flare out slightly at the bottom. The narrow apron is made of black or dark blue material with white embroidery. Men's articles are also multicoloured: their long, wide sleeves and shirt collars are embroidered, as are their aprons.

Embroidery is used — in addition to costume decoration — in ornamenting bedcovers, scarves and pillow-slips. *Home-weaving* is used for decorative material and recently there has been a marked revival in home-weaving and embroidery in the Palóc districts, where it is becoming part of a thriving rural industry.

Some folk customs of the Uplands

The *marriage customs* illustrate well the Palóc' strict moral code and colourful traditions.

When a boy has found a girl acceptable to his parents, he asks the girl's mother for the hand of the girl. If he is accepted, the girl gives him a token present (in Matyó villages: an apron). The boy announces his engagement by wearing a rosemary to church and the girl's gift, but does not disclose her name. They rarely meet in public. After a courtship of two to three months (carefully chaperoned) the wedding takes place usually in a day-long celebration. The groom sends his best man to fetch the bride. At the bride's home, the envoy performs the ceremony of "buying" the girl. This pantomime revives the memory of the pagan custom of kidnapping or buying the bride. (In Hungarian the groom is called: "vőlegény": the buyer). When they have concluded the "sale", the bride's trousseau is loaded on a cart and she is farewelled by her parents (cf. Chapter 18). After the church ceremony the banquet starts at the groom's house.

Paloc folkwear (Rimóc)

The bride and bridegroom often eat in a different room, accompanied by the bridesmaids. During the dance, following the banquet, the guests dance with the bride in turn and pay a token price for each dance (there are no other wedding presents given).

When the guests disperse, the young couple sleep in different rooms. Not until the bride opens the door of her own free will is the young husband allowed to join her.

The tedious task of *corn-husking,* the stripping of the leaves and shelling of the ears of corn (maize), provides a pleasant opportunity for social gatherings in Upland villages on winter evenings. Relatives and friends gather (with their children) at the farmer's house to help him. The entertainment includes tales told by old people, songs from the girls and boys and games. When someone finds an ear with red corn on it, the finder is entitled to kiss the person next to him (strangely enough, it is always a boy who finds the red corn and there is always a girl sitting next to him).

* * *

As a child I spent many magic winter evenings in these corn-husking gatherings, listening to ballads, songs, fairy tales and legends, sharing the warmth of belonging and love with those gay, simple artists of life. As the village of my birth had a mixed Magyar-Slovak population, the gatherings and games were often mixed, too. In fact at a very early period of my life I thought that the (rather delightfully) "different" children (i.e. girls) were Slovaks. Somehow I have liked "Slovaks" ever since . . .

I sincerely wish that no greater misunderstanding should ever come between Magyars and Slovaks. . .

28. "NEW MELODIES OF NEWER YEARS. . ."

(Hungarian literature during the first decades of the XXth century)

Endre (Andrew) Ady

Born of a Protestant family of ancient nobility in northern Transylvania (1877), he received a good education and chose the career of a journalist in the eastern Hungarian town of Nagyvárad. Here he met and fell in love with a married woman who became his great love, inspiring muse and tragic destiny, the "Leda" of his sensuous love poems. On Leda's invitation Ady went to Paris, where the modern trends of French art and poetry changed his outlook on life. On his return he settled in Budapest and published "New Verses" (1906). The collection had a shattering effect on the stagnating Hungarian literary life of this complacent era.

The violent attacks of the critics of the "establishment" only enhanced Ady's popularity with the young. He published several collections in the following years, each causing a storm of praise and attack for its prophetic, scolding patriotism, sensuous, sinful longing for love and for the poet's imaginative but obscure symbolism. The excesses of his stormy youth gradually destroyed Ady's health. He broke with Leda and found pure, youthful, true love in a girl much younger than himself whom he married. He was deeply shocked by the Great War, its senseless horrors and its destruction of human values. He died during the tragic month of January, 1919.

Ady created a *symbolic language* of his own to interpret his dynamic message. His exceptionally rich language uses pic-

turesque, half-forgotten archaic words, racy folk-dialect, city slang and colourful composite words of his own creation. Frequently a sequence of allegoric images becomes the vehicle for his thoughts. This symbolism may take the form of a gothic image of his own captive soul in "an old, fearful castle" where "the lone, forsaken rooms ring hollow" — the prison of his frustrations — from where "rarely at the hour of midnight. . . my large eyes begin to flare. . ." ("The White Lady").[1] He often creates symmetrical structures of opposites or choices, as in the prophetic appeal to his nation presented in the form of a paraphrase of an old Magyar folk song: "Peacock"[2] where he challenges his somnolent nation to accept the "new Magyar miracles. . . new flames, new faith. . ." The nation must accept the demands of the new times because "either the Magyar words — shall have new senses, or Magyar life will stay sad. . ." The very titles of his collections carry symbolic messages: "Blood and Gold", "In Eliah's Chariot", "Craving for Affection", "This fleeing Life", "In Death's Foreranks".

The choice of *themes* often displays challenging contrasts. Life and death, the struggle between vitality and melancholy, often find a fatalistic harmony in the same poem with the thought of death almost welcome — in the midst of life's joys. The hauntingly beautiful "Autumn in Paris"[3] presents his death-wish in the association of autumn and death". . . songs within my spirit burned — I knew for death they yearned . . . then Autumn whispered something from behind. . ." It would be interesting to compare Ady's mystic death-wish with Petőfi's classic vision in his "End of September" (cf. Chapter 7). Another moving picture of fatalistic resignation uses the tone of the folk-tale in its sombre imagery: "The Horses of Death".[4]

Love is a lethal passion: Ady's thirst for love is akin to his resigned acceptance of death, which invades his most sensuous desires; "this kiss consumed we should peacefully — die without sorrow. . . " he says in "Half-kissed Kiss"[5] The poet is "Death's Kinsman", his kiss is the kiss of parting: "Her lips — to kiss I love who goes — not returning. . ."[6] The break with his "femme fatale", Leda, is motivated by his deep longing for pure, chaste, spiritual love: he "wants to be loved by somebody. . . and to be somebody's ("Craving for affection")[7]. In the calm, sad moments of regret the memories of his childhood

return: "A Familiar Lad" — his childhood innocence — mourns his approaching death[8].

Ady was deeply concerned with the tragic fate of his *Magyar nation*. He saw the faults of the present and he despaired of the nation's future. He raised his scolding, prophetic words against his people, like an angry parent, called them his "detestable, lovable nation"[9]. His is the tragic mission of the tormented Messiah[10], the task of awakening his nation with "new melodies of newer years[21]. The mystic attraction of the Hungarian soil is expressed in the moving picture of the "Outcast Stone" (cf. Chapter 7). As the apocalyptic destruction of the War progresses, he despairs for his nation in the face of that monster devouring the youth of the Magyar people. His visionary poem, "Remembrance," written on the day the War broke out, conjures his fearful vision of War with the imagery of a folk-ballad[12].

Ady's tormented heart repeatedly found peace in his never-failing refuge, *God's love*. He remained indeed throughout his sinful, cursing, prophetic career a God-seeking, repenting Christian psalmist echoing David's eternal human cry from the depths of his misery and passion. He is his nation's prophet, and the prophet's destiny is loneliness as his mission is "sad, between Heaven and earth to wander. . ."[13]. He knows that when he is deserted by humans he can find refuge and peace in the Lord, because He "took me in His embrace."[14] Like the ancient poet of his Bible, he found God the greatest consolation and satisfaction. He faces death calmly because: "I've found Him and have clasped Him in my arms, — in death we'll be united, never to part. . ." [15]

Ady's poetry can only be understood if approached with respect and compassion.

The poets of the "Nyugat" circle

Ady's appearance on the literary scene heralded the beginning of a new era in Hungarian literature. His courage inspired a number of poets, essayists and critics rallied around the literary review "Nyugat" ("The West"). Though the writers of this group showed some degree of social concern, their basic philosophy was that of universal humanism. This explains also their interest in foreign literature, especially French contemporary poetry and philosophy.

Mihály Babits (1883-1941), classic poet, aesthete, novelist and critic was a virtuoso of the language and a brilliant interpreter of foreign literature: Latin and western. He was a defender of pure poetry: his goal was aesthetic self-expression without any utilitarian or ideological aspects. The best known of his *novels and novelettes* are: "Stork Calif", a masterly portrait of a split personality, "Pilot Elsa", an Orwellian satire of a future society engaged in eternal wars, and the "Son of Virgil Timar", an emotional parallel between spiritual love and cynicism.

Babits' many collections of *poetry* reflect his warm humanity and classic taste. Even self-pity takes the form of compassion in "Gypsy Song", where he bemoans his own "exile" from the capital in the symbolic image of the homeless gypsy.[16] His pacifism lacks Ady's bitterness and mirrors the classicist's sorrow for the loss of human values ("They sang. . .")[17]. His lofty philosophy resulted in a certain degree of spiritual isolation.[18]

Gyula Juhász, the poet of deep, tender melancholy, searched in vain for sympathy; even his memories failed to console him.[19]

Árpád Tóth, a sensitive impressionist, was a subtle artist of the language and a true interpreter of French poetry. He described the melancholy feelings of the city-poet in exquisite sonnets[20].

Dezső Kosztolányi, poet, translator, novelist, critic and essayist was a charming, witty, optimistic person, an independent and true aesthete. His prose shows an interest in modern psychology. His short stories (many translated into English) describe middle-class city society in colourful, humorous and vigorous style. His poems show his volatile temperament, all shades of light and gloom, vitality and refined decadence. His early farewell to the scene of his youth, "The Trees of Üllői Út", is a moving tribute to Budapest.[21] He understands the timeless beauty of married love threatened by the dull routine of the home. The witty "To My Wife"[22] is that rare phenomen, a love poem to the poet's own wife.

His translations opened new horizons: he interpreted subtle Chinese and Japanese poetry, but also modern American poetry.

Attila József (1905-1937), the son of a deserted mother in a Budapest slum, was the representative of the urban proletariat in modern Hungarian poetry. After his expulsion from the Uni-

versity he joined the illegal Communist Party but was soon expelled from it for his individualistic views. The hardships of his life during the depression affected his mental health and he eventually committed suicide.

His poetry shows flashes of vitality, even humour, but it remains basically pessimistic. His witty, cynic, sad humour is best illustrated in his poem "On My Birthday" mentioned in Chapter 7. Some of his most moving poetry is dedicated to his mother's memory ("Mama")[23]. His basic philosophy is characterised by his sincerity and classic realism. His imagery, naturalistic as it may be, impresses with its truth and lucidity, such as the lines where he describes how he feels mental illness approaching: "I feel my eyes jump in and out. . . when I squint with my whole reality. . . "

The "Ars Poetica"[24], the basic creed of his art, stresses the role of the intellect in poetry. It is surprising to see this highly emotional, often unruly spirit stress the need of conscientious effort involved in writing poetry. We cannot help remembering Petőfi, a kindred spirit who used a similarly classic, realistic, pure language to convey his revolutionary message.

József's own suffering arouses his compassionate approach to his surroundings. The memories of his difficult slum childhood evoke nostalgic tableaus of happier children ("Lullaby")[25]. His deep, humanistic Christianity is expressed in "The Three Kings"[26], a Magyar Christmas scene, reminiscent of the "Bethlehem plays" of the people.

Though bitter and "an exile" in his own country, József still felt one with his Magyar nation: "My dear country — take me to your heart — I want to be your faithful soul. . ." he said in his credo which could be his epitaph.

Some novelists of the period

Géza Gárdonyi (1863-1922) was born of Catholic peasant parents in Transdanubia. He spent his life teaching as a village teacher. His marriage was tragic and he died a melancholic, lonely man in the northern Hungarian town of Eger.

Gárdonyi was successful in many literary genres, but most of all as a novelist. He was a realist, like Mikszáth, but his gentle, shy person lacked malice and cynicism. He was also a good psychologist and could search the soul of the child and the

peasant with perfection. However, his portraits of women were tinged with bitterness and mysogony — obviously the result of his unfortunate marriage.

His best novel is the *"Invisible Man"* (also translated: "The Slave of the Huns") which displays imagination, genuine historical sense and the ability to characterise young people in love. Set in the age of Attila and told by Zeta, a Greek slave, the novel is a good synthesis of history and romance. The background of historical events up to Attila's death highlights the love story of Zeta and the Hun girl, Emőke. The characters are real and credible, and the aim of the narrative is to search for the real ego of the principal characters — hence the title.

Gárdonyi's other historical novels "The Stars of Eger" (the epic saga of Eger's defence in 1552) and "God's Captives" (the story of Saint Margaret of the Árpáds), describe historical events and characters behind romantic plots of gentle youthful love — in the first novel ending in happy marriage, in the second remaining pure and platonic.

Gárdonyi's social novels are spoilt by his distrust of women and his aversion to the institution of marriage. His *short stories,* especially those resulting from his long observation of village life, are idyllic, charming and colourful tableaus of peasant life.[27]

He also wrote many plays, revolving around the problems of village life. The best-known is "Wine", the story of the peasant who promises to give up drinking but breaks his promise. The near-tragedy is prevented by a timely application of peasant common-sense and all ends well.

The work of his sensitive, lonely man has provided immense enjoyment to countless readers. His choice of historical and rural topics limits his appeal to foreigners, though some of his works are available in excellent translations.

Zsigmond Móricz (1879-1942) was born in eastern Hungary of a poor, Protestant family. His novels, short stories and plays present a compassionate and realistic picture of the misfits of Hungarian society during the first decades of the century: the selfish peasant, the irresponsible gentry, the foolish, frustrated middle-class woman, the violent outlaw ("betyár") and the greedy village-merchant. He paints a gloomy picture of a decaying society with coarse naturalism, in racy idiomatic Hungarian. His view is limited: he only sees the misery, servility, conceit,

greed and lewdness of his world without bothering to reveal the good and promising side of Hungarian society.

"Be Faithful unto Death" shows a different Móricz: this gentle, warm story of a sensitive boy's schooldays has been his most popular work (filmed and adapted to the stage as well as in its original novel form). The historical trilogy, "Transylvania" is a fine analytical study of the XVIIth century with a lively plot and true, realistic portrayal of the leading personalities of the Principality.

Gyula Krúdy (1878-1933) was a unique novelist who described hazy, undefined personalities in an impressive, dreamy atmosphere where realities and character delineations disappear, plots become blurred and the present and past are intertwined. His portraits of Budapest middle-class people or country gentry are reminiscent of a surrealistic painting. ("The Sindbad cycle", "The Red Mailcoach").

Christian renaissance

Bishop *Ottokár Prohászka* (1858-1927) who watched the spread of materialism with anxiety, became the inspired voice of the Christian conscience of millenary Hungary. He expounded the principles of modern Catholic social justice in his writings, sermons and lectures; sought out the roots of the spiritual, social and economic problems of his period and pointed to the resources of true Christianity. The mystic depth of his religious writings and the progressive humanism of his social ideas met with mixed response from his contemporaries.

Only after his death did his teachings find their echo among the writers of the short-lived Christian renaissance of the twenties and thirties.

The most popular of the post-war Catholic poets was the gentle humanist, *László Mécs* (1895-), a priest-poet of Northern Hungary. Unfortunately, the imaginative symbolism and colourful language of his poetry defy translation.

The other Catholic poets and writers (Sándor Sík, Lajos Áprily, Lajos Harsányi, Bishop Tihamér Tóth) and the great protestant Bishop, László Ravasz were the leaders of a promising Christian literary revival which ended abruptly with the collapse of the old social structure of Hungary in 1945.

Bishop O. Prohászka, (1858-1927)
the voice of Hungary's new Christian conscience.

29. NO WAY OUT

(Hungary's history from the Depression to the end of World War II)

This chapter records some of the events that have shaped the present world. As the documentation of the events and developments described is still incomplete and the historical perspective is insufficient, we shall only present a chronological record of the main events and introduce the makers of Hungary's recent history, leaving it to the reader to analyse their motives and assess the results of their actions.

* * *

The crisis years

In consequence of the world financial crisis of the 30s, no foreign loans could be raised for the Hungarian economy and some of the existing loans were foreclosed. Banks, businesses and industries collapsed and many farms were ruined because of the 75% fall in the export price of wheat. Unemployment rose causing unrest and demonstrations in the cities.

This was the situation which Bethlen's successor, *count Gyula Károlyi,* faced as Prime Minister (1931-1932). He instituted harsh austerity measures, including a 50% cut in public expenditure (he travelled by bus to his office every day. . .), increased taxation and ordered reductions in salaries and wages. When these restrictions failed to remedy the situation, he resigned.

Horthy appointed the leader of the young radicals in the government party, general *Gyula (Julius) Gömbös,* as Prime Minister (1932-1936). Gömbös was an ardent nationalist with progressive social ideas. The conservatives in the government

advised against radical social reforms and so Gömbös and his brilliant Finance Minister, Béla Imrédy, concentrated on the economic problems. Some foreign loans, expertly negotiated by Imrédy, further cuts in government expenditure and an improved taxation policy set the nation on the road to recovery.

The basis of Gömbös' *foreign policy* was revisionism (cf. Chapter 26), which he sought by peaceful means. He turned first to Italy, the country which seemed to show some understanding of Hungary's problems. When he saw that Hitler was endeavouring to effect a revision of the Versailles Treaty, he suggested closer Italian-German co-operation by forming a "Berlin-Rome Axis" (a term invented by Gömbös). Later, on seeing the increasing German aggressiveness toward Austria, he initiated the Italian-Austrian-Hungarian alliance (Rome Protocols, 1934) in order to resist German pressure. After the assassination of the Austrian Chancellor, Dolfuss, Gömbös realised that nothing could stop the German annexation of Austria and adopted a more Germanophile attitude.

The 1935 election brought victory to his young followers and Gömbös was ready to proceed to his ambitious social programmes. He was then struck by a disease and died at the age of 50.

Horthy, who had not been very happy with Gömbös' pro-German policies, appointed *Kálmán Darányi* in his place (1936-1938). Darányi began by steering a middle-of-the-road policy in both internal and external politics and kept a firm control on all extremists of the left and right. It was at this time that the first National Socialists appeared on the Hungarian political scene. They formed various small parties but could not form a united front. The philosopher of "Hungarism", (the Hungarian National Socialist ideology), Ferenc Szálasi, made his debut in politics and was imprisoned several times — a fact which increased his political charisma and the number of his followers.

Darányi introduced a much-needed electoral reform bill (with secret and compulsory vote for men and women). After Austria's annexation by Germany, Darányi launched a massive rearmement programme. In his foreign policy he favoured, by necessity, Germany, Hungary's new, powerful neighbour. Trying to cede to German pressure, Darányi introduced the First Jewish Law.[1]

Alarmed at his policies, Horthy asked Darányi to resign.

Admiral M. Horthy, Regent of Hungary (1920-1944)

Béla Imrédy, a devout Catholic, and known to be an Anglophile at that time, seemed the right choice for the post of Prime Minister (1938-1939) in the year of the Eucharistic Congress held in Hungary in connection with the 900th anniversary of Saint Stephen's death.

In August of that year, Hitler invited Horthy and Imrédy to Germany. The German leader suggested that Hungary should attack Czechoslovakia, seeing this as an excuse for Germany to step in and crush the country. Horthy and Imrédy rejected his proposals. Then Horthy and his Foreign Minister, Kánya, gave Hitler and Ribbentrop some unsolicited advice on their warmongering policies and the talks broke up in a hostile atmosphere.[2]

At the famous Munich meeting of the four Prime Ministers (29 September, 1938) only Germany's claims against Czechoslovakia were settled. The Hungarian government began negotiations with the Czech government without success. Hungary then appealed to France and Britain, but the two powers suggested that Germany and Italy should mediate. Thus Hungary asked for and accepted the decision of Germany and Italy, given in the so-called *First Vienna Award* (30 October, 1938) which returned to Hungary the Magyar-inhabited southern strip of Slovakia and Ruthenia.[3] The British and French governments acknowledged the territorial changes.

The western powers' reluctance to participate in Central European politics convinced Imrédy that the region had been left to the mercy of Hitler's Third Reich. Thus he changed his anti-German attitude. Hungary joined the Anti-Comintern Pact of Germany, Italy and Japan, left the League of Nations and introduced the Second Jewish Law.[4]

Then someone found proof that one of Imrédy's ancestors was (probably) Jewish. Faced with this evidence, Imrédy resigned.

Horthy turned to his old friend, the former Prime Minister, count *Pál Teleki,* who reluctantly agreed to head the government (1939-1941). In March, 1939, Hungary, simultaneously with the German action against Czechoslovakia, occupied Ruthenia (the easternmost province of the dismembered Czechoslovakia, formerly a Hungarian district). The Hungarophile Ruthenes were pleased, and so were the Poles, who now had a common border with their friends, the Hungarians.

Before their attack on Poland, the Germans asked for permission to move troops across Hungary. Horthy categorically refused.[5]

The coming of World War II

When the war broke out, Hungary remained non-belligerent but helped the Poles unofficially with volunteers and by admitting about 200,000 refugees (including many Jews).

In the summer of 1940, Hungary suggested negotiations with Rumania with a view to a revision of the frontiers in Transylvania. When Rumania refused to negotiate, Hungary mobilised. Rumania then asked Germany to mediate. Thus Germany and Italy handed down the *Second Vienna Award* (30 August, 1940) which returned to Hungary about 40% of the territory given to Rumania at the Trianon Peace Treaty.

In September 1940 Hungary joined the Tri-Partite Pact (Germany-Italy-Japan). Teleki then negotiated a Friendship Treaty with Yugoslavia with a hardly disguised anti-German edge. Yugoslavia was then persuaded to join the Tri-Partite Pact. On the day of the signature there was a coup d'etat in Belgrade and the new Yugoslav government repudiated the pact with Germany and accepted a British guarantee instead. Hitler decided at once to punish Yugoslavia and again he suggested that Hungary should attack first. Horthy and Teleki refused the suggestion.

The Hungarian government decided not to interfere in the German-Yugoslav conflict unless Yugoslavia disintegrated or the Magyar minorities were in danger. Teleki sent this information to London, asking for Britain's understanding of Hungary's position. Britain answered by threatening a break of diplomatic relations if Hungary allowed the Germans to cross her territory and said she would declare war if Hungary attacked. In the meantime, German troops began to move against Yugoslavia across Hungary. Teleki, on receiving the British note and the news of the German troop movements, shot himself in protest against Hungary's involvement (3 April, 1941). The circumstances of the German troop movements and of Teleki's death are still unclear.

Involvement

After Teleki's death the Foreign Minister, *László Bárdossy*, was appointed Prime Minister (1941-1942). Germany attacked

and overran the Yugoslav defences, and on the 10th of April Croatia declared her independence. Yugoslavia now ceased to exist and the Hungarian government sent some troops to the Magyar-populated Bácska district.

When Germany attacked the Soviet Union (22 June, 1941), Hungary declared her intention to remain non-belligerent. A few days later the Hungarian town Kassa was bombed, allegedly by Soviet planes. After some talks with Horthy and the government, Bárdossy declared to the Parliament that a *state of war* existed between Hungary and the *Soviet Union*.[6] The circumstances of this declaration are similarly unclear.

A small force — the Mobile Corps — was sent to the Russian front. Britain declared war on Hungary in December 1941. Hungary declared war on the U.S. simultaneously with the other Tri-Partite states. In the spring of 1942 the Germans demanded more substantial help in Russia, hinting that as the Rumanians had sent two armies, Germany might return Northern Transylvania to them. So the Hungarian 2nd Army was sent with 10 divisions for front line service, and a few added divisions for occupation duty.

There had been some partisan activity in the Hungarian-occupied Bácska (the Magyar inhabited district of former Yugoslavia). The impetuous Hungarian commander — a pro-German general — took unwarranted, brutal steps to suppress the partisan activity and had many partisans and suspects executed, without the knowledge of the Budapest government. An investigation followed but the general eventually fled to Germany with some of the other officers involved in this so-called *"Ujvidék massacre"*.

As the Regent was in his 75th year, the question of succession had to be considered. The Parliament elected the Regent's son, *István Horthy, as Deputy-Regent*. Upon his election, the Deputy-Regent, a reserve officer in the Hungarian air force, joined his unit fighting in Russia. In Aug. 1942, during one of his missions, his plane crashed and István Horthy died.

Hungary's unwilling participation in the war created among many of the nation's leaders, churchmen, moderate politicians and intellectuals strong anti-German and anti-war feelings which developed into a powerful *silent resistance*. They sought peaceful and legal ways to extricate Hungary from her ever-increasing commitments on the side of Germany. Tibor Eckhardt, the leader of the largest opposition party (the Smallholders), went to the

U.S. in 1941 to prepare a possible government-in-exile should the German pressure become unbearable. Horthy knew about the aims of the group and discreetly supported them.[7]

In the spring of 1942 Horthy appointed *Miklós Kállay* (1942-1944) Prime Minister and entrusted him with the task of extricating Hungary from the war and restoring the country's independence.[8] Kállay began an astute course of diplomatic balancing acts, pretending to be a pro-German and in the meantime preparing the way to regain Hungary's freedom of action. Hungarian humour has dubbed this policy the "Kállay Double Dance" from the famous folk dance of the Premier's native district. To begin with, he brought in the Fourth Jewish Law[9] (after having discussed it with the Jewish leaders). At that time more than 100,000 Jewish refugees from other countries lived in Hungary in addition to the 700,000 Hungarian Jews. Thanks to Horthy and Kállay, they remained in security (though under some restrictions) until the German occupation in March 1944.[10]

Kállay also instituted *secret peace initiatives* abroad but the western responses were evasive. The Casablanca Conference had already stated (1943) the demand for "unconditional surrender", while the Teheran Conference assigned Hungary to the Soviet sphere. These two decisions strengthened the arguments of the pro-German elements and frustrated the efforts of the peace-seekers. The vague verbal promises and agreements reached with Britain and the U.S. were later conveniently forgotten.

In January 1943 the *Hungarian 2nd Army* was holding 200 kilometres of the Don line in Russia with 9 "light divisions" (brigades). The army's armoured division and air-brigade had been placed under German command and used elsewhere. The army had few heavy weapons, hardly any winter equipment (it was –45 degrees) and insufficient ammunition, though the Germans had promised to supply everything.

On January 13, a Russian army group and a tank army attacked the Hungarians. The Hungarian army of about 200,000 suffered 150,000 casualties, among them 100,000 dead. The bitter fighting lasted for three weeks. One Hungarian corps was surrounded and its commander captured fighting; the other divisions were annihilated or thrown back. The men fled in 40-50 degree cold, without transport, as the Germans monopolised the few roads and shelters.[11]

The German occupation of Hungary

Hitler at last learned about Kállay's tentative attempts to "jump out" (in the Budapest cafés everybody knew the exact details). He invited Horthy to Germany in March, 1944, then faced the Regent with an ultimatum: unless Horthy replaced Kállay with a pro-German premier and placed Hungary's full potential at Germany's disposal, Hitler would order Rumanian, Slovak and Croat troops to occupy Hungary. During these "talks" German troops occupied the key positions in Hungary.

Horthy had no choice — Hungary had no fighting troops left to resist. So he appointed *Döme Sztójay* as Prime Minister and accepted pro-German ministers in the Government. German police and SS arrested many moderate and left-wing politicians and anti-German intellectuals. Leading personalities in the administration and army were replaced with pro-German appointees. The SS ordered the concentration of Hungarian Jews in ghettoes, then, without Horthy's or the government's knowledge, and with the connivance of some pro-German officials of the Interior, began to move the Jews to German concentration camps ostensibly for "work".

On learning of the deportations, Horthy defied the Germans and dismissed Sztójay and the officials who had collaborated with the SS in the deportations. He then appointed general *Géza Lakatos* to head the government of generals and non-political experts and ordered him to end Hungary's participation in the war.

After Rumania's volte-face in August 1944, the Soviet troops began to move into Transylvania. There were no Hungarian troops strong enough to stop them and the Germans refused to use against the Russians the panzer divisions occupying Hungary. By October the Russians stood near Debrecen.[12]

The armistice. Hungary's second German occupation

Horthy sent a delegation to Moscow to ask for an armistice. A preliminary agreement was signed there on the 11th of October. After the final Crown Council on the 15th of October, 1944, Horthy announced to the nation that he was asking for an armistice and ordered the troops to stop fighting.

What followed is not clear. There are so many different accounts of the events that one can only state the results:

Horthy was arrested by the Germans and the capital was taken over by the SS and the Hungarian National Socialists. Horthy learned that his (only) son had been kidnapped by the SS. In addition, all the strategic points of Budapest were in German hands (there were hardly any Hungarian troops in the capital). The Regent was forced to rescind his proclamation and to appoint Ferenc Szálasi as Prime Minister, replacing Lakatos arrested by the Germans. Horthy then abdicated and was taken to Germany as a prisoner, where he and his family were kept in custody until the end of the war.

Ferenc Szálasi formed a right-wing coalition government and, in November 1944, was elected "Leader of the Nation" by what was left of the Parliament. The Hungarian army was reorganised and many civilian and military leaders were arrested, taken to German concentration camps or executed (such as the members of the anti-German "Committee of Liberation", led by Endre Bajcsy-Zsilinszky). In Budapest, certain criminal elements, claiming adherence to the "Arrow-Cross" (the Hungarian National Socialists), took the opportunity to commit atrocities against the Jews and opponents of the regime. The retreating Germans took to Germany all the livestock, equipment and machinery they could dismantle.

The entire Hungarian army continued fighting the Russians, their resistance strengthened by the horrifying news of the lootings, rapings and other atrocities in the Soviet-occupied Hungarian territories. For the same reason, hundreds of thousands of refugees moved west with the retreating troops.

In December, the Russians encircled Budapest, which was defended by Hungarian and German troops under the command of general Ivan Hindy. After the fall of Pest, the Germans blew up all the Danube bridges and the defenders continued the fight in Buda. During the seven weeks' siege most of Pest and Buda, including the royal castle, was destroyed. Buda fell on the 13th of February, 1945 (it had been held longer than Stalingrad).[13]

In the west the exhausted Hungarian-German troops fought on bravely, (one town, Székesfehérvár, changed hands seven times), defending Hungarian territory against superior Russian forces until the 4th of April, 1945.

Under Russian occupation

On receiving Horthy's armistice orders, general Béla Miklós, commander of the First Hungarian Army, surrendered to the Russians. He and the members of Horthy's Moscow armistice delegation were taken to Debrecen, occupied by the Russians. Here a "National Assembly" was hastily collected and it appointed *Béla Miklós* Prime Minister. His first government consisted of the members of the armistice delegation, politicians of the moderate or left-wing parties and three Communists (who held the key positions). This *"Provisional Government"* signed an armistice with the Soviet Union and duly declared war on Germany — though no Hungarian unit ever fought against the Germans. The government was later moved to Budapest and received its orders from Marshal Voroshilov, Soviet Commander-in-Chief.

It is impossible to give an accurate account of Hungary's *military and civilian losses.* Of the more than 1 million Hungarians in the services, conservative estimates put the number of dead and missing at 200,000. At least a similar number of civilians perished as a result of bombings, atrocities and deportations, in addition to the 120,000 to 200,000 Jews who died in German concentration camps (it is impossible to determine the exact numbers as many of them were refugees from other countries). Altogether some 550,000 to 650,000 Hungarians perished during the war (total losses of the U.S.: 290,000).

The material losses were incalculable: some cities, most industries, transport installations and rolling stock were totally destroyed; the loss of agricultural produce and private property was immense. About one million soldiers and civilian refugees left the country at the end of the war, though many have returned since ("here you must live and die. . .").

30. "EVERYBODY IS HUNGARIAN. . ."

(Hungarian travellers and settlers in the world)

About one third of the 15 million Hungarians live outside the present frontiers of Hungary. Three million live "abroad" without ever having left their country in the Carpathian basin: their home territory was transferred from Hungary to various succession states by the Trianon Treaty in 1920. We have studied their way of life, art and customs in the various chapters describing the regions of the Carpathian basin.

In this chapter we are looking only at some Hungarians who left the Carpathian basin for various reasons and settled or lived in foreign countries for a considerable period.

The Middle Ages

Several princesses of the Árpád dynasty married into foreign ruling families. We have already mentioned Saint Stephen's daughter, Agatha, and her daughter, queen Saint Margaret of Scotland (Chapter 5). The daughter of king Saint László, *Piroska* ("Irene" in Greek), married to the Greek emperor, was the mother of Manuel the Great (1143-1180), the last great ruler of Byzantium. After her husband's death Irene retired to a convent in Contantinople where she died and is known today as Saint Irene.

Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, daughter of king Endre II, was married to the Prince of Thuringia. After the death of her husband, Elizabeth dedicated herself to the care of the poor and the sick. Her niece, also called Elizabeth, Princess of Aragon, is known today as Saint Elizabeth (Isobel) of Portugal. We

know little of Clemence of Hungary, wife of France's Louis X in the XIVth century. She was an Árpád on her mother's side and sister of Hungary's king, Charles Robert. Her son, John I, was assassinated when he was five days old.

Queen Saint Hedwig (Jadwiga) of Poland was the daughter of Louis the Great. She inherited the Polish throne after her father's death (1382). Then she married the pagan Jagiello, Prince of the Lithuanians, converted him and his people to Christianity and united the two countries.

We have already mentioned the four Dominican monks who travelled to the borders of Europe and Asia in the XIIIth century in search of the "Greater Hungarian Nation" (Chapter 5).

The XVIth - XVIIIth centuries

One of the tragic results of the Turkish wars was the deportation of hundreds of thousands of Magyars of all ages by the Turks as slaves. Estimates indicate that about 2 million Hungarians were subjected to the horrors of slavery. The families were, of course, separated and the children lost their national identity. Many boys were trained in special institutions to become Janissaries, the Turks' elite soldiers. They lost all recollection of their birth, name, religion or family.

Brother György (George) Hollósi who accompanied a troop of Spanish "Conquistadors" in 1541 in Mexico, lived for 40 years among the Zuni Indians of that country. He converted them and protected them from the greedy Spanish conquerors. He died among his Indians who wrote on his tombstone: "Here lies Brother Gregorio Hollósi, brother of all men, who brought light to those who were living in the dark."

Poland's great king, Stephen Báthori was mentioned in Chapter 13.

Among the emigrés accompanying Prince Rákóczi to France in 1711 was count Ladislas Bercsényi, son of the Kuruc commander, Miklós Bercsényi. Young Ladislas settled in France, founded a hussar regiment which still bears his name and eventually became Marshal of France.

The adventurous count *Móric Benyovszky* (1741-1784) began his career as an officer in the Seven Years' War. Seeking further adventures, he went to Poland and joined the Polish freedom fighters against Russia. He fought so well that the Poles

appointed him general and made him a count. He was eventually taken prisoner and deported to East Siberia (Kamchatka). Here he rallied his fellow prisoners and managed to capture the fort of the governor and the heart of his daughter. He then commandeered a Russian battleship and set out to explore the Pacific. Having visited Japan, Hongkong and various islands, he spent some time on Formosa (today Taiwan) straightening out the local political situation. He then sailed on and inspected the huge island of Madagascar off the African coast, then still independent and ruled by countless native chieftains. He eventually arrived in France, where he suggested to the king (Louis XV) that he should establish a French colony on Formosa or Madagascar. The king appointed him a general, gave him the title of count and a few promises, and sent him off to Madagascar. Equipped with his titles (and not much else) he landed in Madagascar, befriended some tribes, defeated the others and in 1776 was proclaimed by the assembled chieftains king of Madagascar. He ruled the island wisely for three years. Among other things he introduced Latin script — with Hungarian spelling — for the Madagascar language. The islanders still use his script and spelling. Then — probably at the urging of his family (he had several, in fact) — he returned to France seeking closer trade and political ties.

This time the French ignored him, so he returned to his native Hungary, where queen Maria Theresa made him a count and appointed him general. But she was not interested in African colonies(she had Hungary, after all . . .) So Benyovszky went to Britain and then to the new Republic of the United States. There he loaded his ship with goods for Madagascar (before they could make him a count and appoint him general) and sailed back to his kingdom. To his surprise, he found a French military establishment there (led probably by a general who was also a count). He fought to regain his kingdom but died during the fighting. Some native legends and street names (and a few generals and counts) keep his memory in Madagascar.

The first Hungarian known to have landed in *North America* was Parmenius of Buda, a naval officer in the British service (1585). Several Hungarian missionaries worked among the natives of South and North America during the XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries. Colonel M. Kovats was a distinguished officer in Washington's army during the War of Independence.

András (Andrew) Jelki, the enterprising boy from Hungary, set out to see the world in 1750 and became a sailor. After having been shipwrecked, captured by pirates and sold in slavery, he reached the Dutch East Indies (alive) where he again landed among some primitive natives who wanted him for (their) dinner, but he "got out of the frying pan" by marrying the daughter of the local chief and eventually became the chief of the tribe himself. Then we find him in Batavia, the capital of the Dutch East Indies, as a prosperous businessman (without his native wife). At a later date we find Jelki in Japan as the Dutch Ambassador there. He died in 1783.

László Magyar reached Portuguese West Africa (Angola) in the middle of the XIXth century. He began mapping the interior of the colony in Portuguese service and discovered the source of the Congo river. Then the fate of seemingly all Hungarian adventurers caught up with him: he married the daughter of the Sultan of Bihé (Bić) and in due course became the king of the country himself. He died in Bihé under obscure circumstances (possibly during a state dinner. . .)

The XIXth century

Sándor Körösi-Csoma (1784-1842), the brilliant Székely scholar, wished to study the origins of the Hungarians. He decided to explore Central Asia first. Being very poor, he travelled to India mostly on foot, equipped only with the knowledge of a dozen languages. After an adventurous journey he reached India in 1822. Commissioned by the Indian (British) government to prepare a Tibetan-English dictionary, he spent 16 months in a Tibetan monastery, studying the Tibetan language and literature, completing his dictionary and translating some Tibetan literature into English. He then travelled to various Tibetan towns (the first European to move about in Tibet freely) and studied data concerning possible ties between Hungarians and the Central Asian races.

On returning to India he published his dictionary and Tibetan grammar which are still the most important source of Tibetan linguistic studies. Having completed his research, he set out to re-enter Tibet and move from there to the area inhabited by the "Ujgur" or "Djungari" people, north of Tibet, whom he suspected of being related to the Hungarians. On his way he

S. Körösi-Csoma (1784-1842)

contracted malaria and died in Darjeeling on the Tibetan border. His memory still lives in Tibet. In 1935 he was proclaimed a "Saint" of Tibetan Buddhism. Various Indian scientific institutions preserve his memory.

Sir Aurel Stein, the Asian explorer, was born in Budapest. He carried out archeological explorations for the Indian (British) government in Central Asia and discovered the so-called "buried cities" in Mongolia.

During the *American Civil War* many Hungarians, mostly refugees from the Freedom War of 1848-49, settled in the United States. Many fought in the Union armies (none with the Confederates), such as generals Stahel and Asbóth, Colonels Mihalótzy and Zágonyi and several units of Hungarian soldiers. Ágoston Haraszty was a pioneer of California, a wine-grower, a businessman and a diplomat.

General *István Türr* (1824-1908) took part in the Italian freedom war in 1860 as Garibaldi's Chief of Staff. He then assisted Klapka in organising the "Hungarian Legion" (cf. Chapter 22). After the Compromise he returned to Hungary and his original profession, engineering. He later worked at the construction of the Suez and Panama canals.

Hungarian-born *Joseph Pulitzer* of newspaper fame served first as a cavalry officer during the Civil War. After the war he became interested in newspaper editing and eventually owned a chain of newspapers. He left his huge estate (about $20 million) to a foundation bearing his name and a school of Journalism.

János Xántus, a self-educated scientist and explorer, discovered several hundred animal and plant species in North America and South-East Asia between 1855 and 1871.

The XXth century: science, art and literature

Eight scientists of Hungarian birth received the Nobel Prize between 1914 and 1976. Only one worked in Hungary when he received the Prize (Albert Szentgyörgyi). Of the others Fülöp Lénárd, Richard Zsigmondy and György Hevesy lived in Germany, Robert Bárány in Austria, György Békésy and Jenő Wigner in the U.S. and Dénes Gábor in Britain when they received the

award. It was said that if two members of the U.S. Atomic Commission had been absent, the others could have held their meeting in Hungarian. The most eminent of these Hungarian-American scientists was Professor *Leo Szilárd*, who demonstrated the possibility of atomic fission in 1939. With his friend, Einstein, he suggested to President Roosevelt that he should set up an atomic research programme in the United States. The team of Szilárd, Teller, Wigner and Neumann — all Hungarians — with the half-Hungarian Oppenheimer and the Italian Fermi constituted the successful Atomic Commission which eventually assured the United States the possession of the atomic bomb.

Todor Kármán, engineer and scientist made himself famous in the U.S. through his many inventions and innovations in the field of aerodynamics and rocket research.

In the field of *economics*, Hungarian emigrés have enriched both "worlds": Jenő Varga was the leading economist of Soviet Russia and György Lukács the leading philosopher of Marxism, while Lord Thomas Balogh and Lord Miklós Káldor were the British government's chief economic advisors until recently.

Before World War II the American *film industry* seemed to be Hungary's only colonial empire. The malicious saying "It is not enough to be Hungarian, you gotta have talent too. . ." was wrong, of course, as quite a few had little talent, only "Hungarian connections". But the names of Adolf Zukor, Michael Kertész, Sir Alexander Korda, Zoltan Korda and many others assured Hungarian hegemony in the fledgling art of the film. Some film-stars are also of Hungarian birth, such as Peter Lorre, Tony Curtis, Cornel Wilde and Ilona Massey — they were obviously not born with these well-known names. Others seem to be quite proud of whatever they were born with: the Gábor sisters, Marika Rökk, Éva Bartók and many others.

As Hungarian *writing* is not easily translated, Hungarian writers best known abroad are those who learnt to write in English or German, such as Arthur Koestler ("Darkness at Noon") and Hans Habe. *George Mikes* has achieved the difficult synthesis of Hungarian humour and British satire. His delightful racial tableaus ("How to be an Alien", "Milk and Honey" etc.) delight everybody (including the people he is satirising).

Lajos Zilahy, a well-known novelist before his migration to the U.S., wrote his controversial historic novels, "The Dukays", in America.

József Reményi (1892-1956) was the first great Hungarian-American author, essayist and literary historian.

Albert Wass (1908-) was also a noted Hungarian author in Transylvania before 1945. In 1952 he migrated to the U.S., and became a professor of Florida University. His Hungarian and English writings include novels, short stories, poetry, essays and research work of historical, sociological and folkloric nature.

Ferenc Molnár (1878-1952), the most successful playwright of recent Hungarian literature was also a remarkable novelist and author of short stories. His novel "The Boys of Paul Street", an exquisite tableau of adolescent life has become a world best-seller in many translations. His mystery-drama "Liliom" has achieved world fame through its American stage and film-version "Carousel". Molnár settled in the United States before World War II and continued his career as a successful writer for stage and film.

The playwright *Menyhért Lengyel,* noted for his interest in social problems in his dramas written in Hungary before 1914 ("Typhoon"), migrated to the United States after World War 1 and became a popular film-script writer.

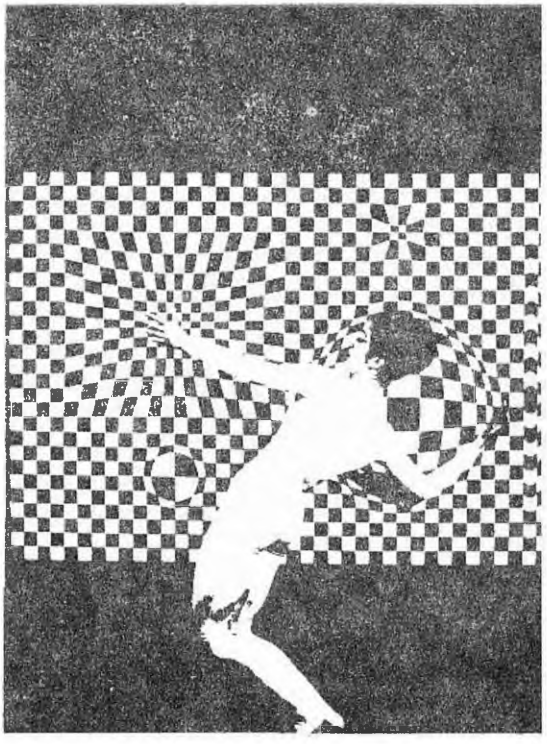
The authoresses Yolanda Földes and Christa Arnóthy in France and Claire Kenneth-Bardossy in the U.S., are well known for their pleasant novels of lighter nature.

Áron Gábor, a journalist living in Germany, presents a staggering indictment of man's inhumanity to man in his auto-biographical work "East of Man".

The number of talented authors: poets, novelists, philosophers and historians living abroad and using the *Hungarian language* in their writings is immense. Their opus represents an important segment of contemporary Hungarian literature, the study of which is, however, beyond the scope of this book.

Music is another field where Hungarian participation has assumed proverbial proportions. The number of well known Hungarian conductors living abroad is truly impressive (Sir George Solti, Eugene Ormandy, George Széll and many others). Since Liszt and Reményi, many Hungarian performing artists, especially of the violin and piano have lived abroad, such as Emil Telmányi, Joseph Joachim, Joseph Szigeti, Johanna Darányi violin virtuosos and Géza Anda, the pianist. Miklós Rózsa and Sigmund Romberg have become well-known for their film and operetta music.

In *Fine Arts* the adage that a Hungarian painter can only succeed abroad has proved true in many cases. Some talented Hungarian artists lived abroad all their creating life, such as Fülöp László, portrait painter in Britain, Ferenc Martyn, avant-garde painter in France, Marcel Vértes, graphic artist, Victor Vásárely, creator of three-dimensional "op-art" in France, György



"Ballet" by V. Vásárely

Buday, graphic artist in Britain, Sándor Finta, the shepherd-boy who became a famous sculptor, author and teacher, László Moholyi-Nagy founder of the "New Bauhaus" movement, György Kepes, professor of Art, M.I.T., and colour woodcut artist József Domján in the U.S.A., Amerigo Tóth in Italy, Zoltán Borbereki-Kovács in South Africa and many others.

Hungarians in Australia

The first Hungarian migrants arrived in Australia in the middle of the XIXth century: many of them were ex-officers of the 1848-49 freedom war.

Most of the immigrants before 1930 were single men who married Australian girls and integrated into Australian society. The 1930s and 40s saw the arrival of the Hungarian migrants who left Hungary because of the oppressive atmosphere in Hitler's Central Europe. They were mostly Jewish intellectuals and businessmen. Hard-working and ambitious, they became respected members of Australian society, but they cherished their Hungarian culture and helped to dispel some misapprehensions about Hungary's role during World War II. The Australians learned through them that Hungary was, during the Nazi oppression, the refuge of the Jews in Europe.

About 15,000 Hungarians arrived in Australia as "displaced persons" between 1949 and 1953. The bulk of them were professional and middle-class people, most of them with families. Having met the earlier Hungarian migrants, the two groups could find a common reason why they came to Australia: to flee the tyrannies of one kind or the other.

After 1956 another 15,000 Hungarians came. As these were mostly single men, many of them assimilated rapidly. On the other hand, those who came with families — at any period — usually kept the Magyar ethnic consciousness in the family and their children learned to appreciate the values of their ethnic heritage (through Hungarian schools, Scout and other youth activities), without interfering with their harmonious integration into Australian society and culture.

In the 1960s many migrants came from Yugoslavia: most of these were Hungarians, members of the Magyar minority in that country. They usually came with their families and often settled close to each other, assisting each other in a form of co-operative. They have mostly kept their Hungarian identity.

It is estimated that in 1970 about 50,000 Australians had Hungarian ethnic origin. This number does not include the children born in Australia.

Only 0.4% of Australians are of Hungarian origin (or, as the Magyars put it. 99.6% of Australians are of non-Magyar origin). but their involvement in certain professions and occupa-

tions is well above that rate. They favour occupations in which independence, initiative and imagination prevail and industry assures success.

There were some 50 professors and lecturers at various Australian universities in 1970. Some academics are well-known such as professor George Molnár who is also a political cartoonist. In their specific fields there are many outstanding scientists, such as the entomologist József Szent-Iványi, the international jurist Gyula (Julius) Varsányi, the anthropologist Sándor Gallus, the demographer Egon Kunz, the historian Antal Endrey and Ákos Győry who, at the time of his appointment, was the youngest professor of Medicine in Australia. Dr. A. Mensáros, a member of the West-Australian government, was the first non-British Cabinet Minister in the State.

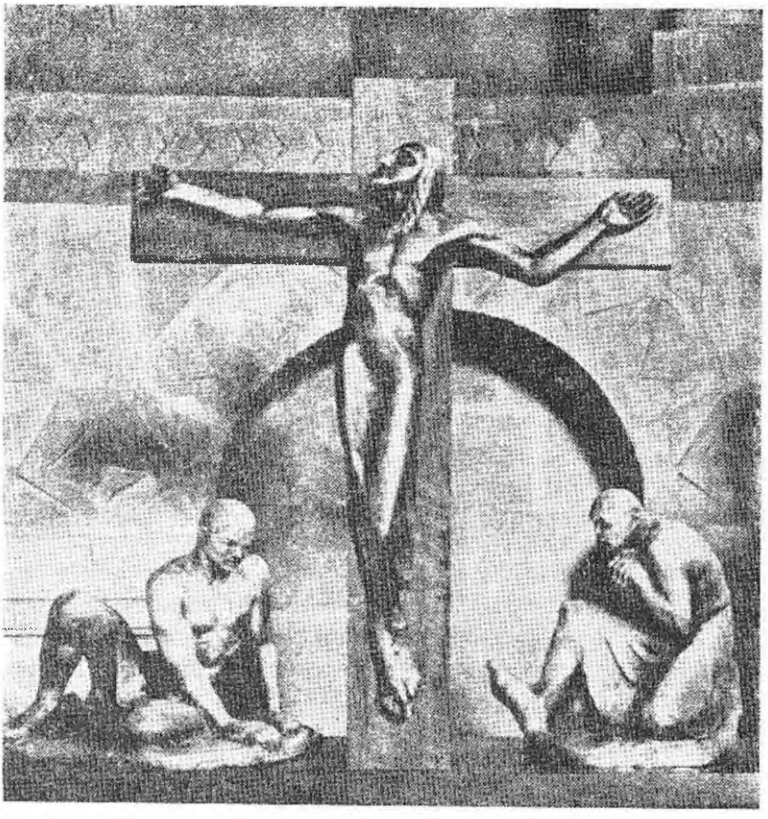
In *art and music* Australia lacked the attraction of some other countries, thus only a few well-known artists settled here. The conductors Tibor Paul and Robert Pikler are the best known names in music. The Fine Arts are represented by the late Andor Mészáros, the sculptor and engraver, Desiderius Orban, one of the "Group of Eight" (cf. Chapter 25), Judith Cassab painter, Stephen Moor and György Hámori decorative artists.

There are many eminent *businessmen* and architects of Hungarian origin in Australia and the number of small businessmen is immense. It seems that some businesses, such as espressos, small-goods manufacturing and clothing manufacturing are Hungarian monopolies.

In *sport,* table tennis was made popular by Hungarians. Australian soccer owes its origins and success to Hungarian coaches, organisers, players and patrons. A Hungarian-founded and sponsored team, the "Budapest" (later: "Saint George- Budapest") has been the most successful team in the country. In chess, Lajos Steiner and other Hungarian players dominated the national championships for two decades. Fencing, a typical Magyar sport, owes its increasing popularity in Australia to Hungarian sportsmen and trainers (G. Benkő, A. Szakáll).

* * *

There are today almost 2 million Hungarian expatriates who have invaded the farthest corners of the world. Hungarians can



Canterbury Altar by A. Mészáros

be found anywhere — and they usually are. As false modesty is not one of their national vices, they do not conceal their presence nor the fact that they are Hungarians. In fact, their vitality, industry and extrovert friendliness make them more conspicuous than population statistics would suggest. One is tempted to accept the thesis of the Hungarian writer, Mikes: "Everybody is Hungarian. . ."

There are about 15 million Hungarians in the world today: not quite 0.5% of mankind.

Without them the sun would still rise and life would still go on — but the rainbow would be a little paler, music a little duller, women a little sadder and mankind a little poorer.

APPENDIX

(NOTES, DOCUMENTATION, SELECTED TEXTS IN ENGLISH TRANSLATION)

THE UNSUNG SAGA

1. From: "Selected Hungarian Legends" F. B. Kovács ed., transl. by E. Wass de Czege, Danubian Press, Astor Park, 1971.

CHAPTER 1

1. Prof. Gy. László: "A Kettős Honfoglalásról" ("The two Conquests"), "Archeologiai Értesítő", 97, pp. 161-190; Prof. P. Lipták: "Origin and development of the Hungarian People", "Homo" XXI (4), pp. 197-210.

CHAPTER 4

1. Recent historical research throws a different light upon this covenant. It seems that the Hungarian tribal federation was led, in the IXth century, by a (nominal) head of state, the "kende", who shared his rule with the military commander, the "gyula" (or "horka"). At the time of the Settlement the "kende" was Kurszán (Kusid or Kursan), and the "gyula" was Álmos, then his son, Árpád, who planned and conducted the military operations of the conquest. "Kende" Kurszán was killed during a raid in 904 and "gyula" Árpád became the sole ruler of the new nation. After having secured the succession for his son (Solt or Zoltán), he conferred the office of the "gyula" on another tribal chief. (Cf. the "Gyula" mentioned in chapters 4, 5 and 14). The "Blood Treaty" may have been fully or partly invented by the medieval chroniclers in order to justify the succession of the Árpád dynasty.

CHAPTER 6

1. *Yonder lies a round, black (!) sward. An enchanted stag grazes on it. His marvellous head carries a thousand antlers. On the thousand antlers a thousand mass-candles burn without being lit — and they go out by themselves. My hiding place is the old law, hola, I hide in songs . . .*
   (Recorded in Zala county, Transdanubia).
2. *Get up father, get up mother, the Ancient Ones have come. My hiding place is the old law, I hide in songs!*
   (Recorded in Udvarhely county, Transylvania).
3. *Stork, stork, turtle-dove,*
   Why are your feet bleeding?
   Turkish children cut them,
   Magyar children heal them,
   With pipes, drums, and reed violins . . .
4. *Tall is the "ruta" tree — leaning over the great sea.*
   Fair Ilona Magyar wears — a crown of pearls
   In her golden-silky hair . . .
   (Recorded in Nyitra county, Northern Hungary).

CHAPTER 7

1. **Sándor Petőfi:**

(In Hungarian:) **Szeptember végén**

Még nyílnak a völgyben a kerti virágok,
Még zöldel a nyárfa az ablak előtt,
De látod amottan a téli világot?
Már hó takará el a bérci tetőt.
Még ifjú szívemben a lángsugarú nyár
S még benne virít az egész kikelet,
De íme, sötét hajam őszbe vegyül már,
A tél dere már megüté fejemet.

Elhull a virág, eliramlik az élet . . .
Ülj, hitvesem, ülj az ölembe ide!
Ki most fejedet keblemre tevéd le,
Holnap nem omolsz-e sírom fölibe?
Oh mondd: ha előbb halok el, tetemimre
Könnyezve borítasz-e szemfödelet?
S rábírhat-e majdan egy ifjú szerelme,
Hogy elhagyod érte az én nevemet?

Ha eldobod egykor az özvegyi fátyolt,
Fejfámra sötét lobogóul akaszd,
Én feljövök érte a síri világból
Az éj közepén, s oda leviszem azt,
Letörleni véle könnyüimet érted,
Ki könnyedén elfeledéd hívedet,
S e szív sebeit bekötözni, ki téged
Még akkor is, ott is, örökre szeret!

(In English:) **At the End of September**

Garden flowers still bloom in the valley;
The poplar is still verdant at the window;
But can you see the winter world over there?
Already the peaks are covered with snow.
My young heart is still filled with summer rays
And within it the whole springtime in blossom.
But lo, my dark hair is flecked with grey
And my head has been struck with winter's frost.

The flower drops and past life races . . .
Sit, my wife, sit here on my lap now!
Will you, who on my breast her head places,
Not bend over my grave tomorrow?
O, tell me, if I die before you,
Will you cover my body with a shroud — weeping?
And will love of a youth sometime cause you
To abandon my name for his keeping?

If one time you cast off your widow's veil,
Let it hang from my headstone, a banner!
I will come up from the world of the grave
In the dead of the night and take it with me
To wipe from my face the tears shed for you,
Who has lightly forgotten her devotee,
And to bind the wound in the heart of one,
Who still then in that place, loves you forever.

(Transl. by Paul Desney).

2. **Endre Ady:**

(In Hungarian): **A föl-földobott kő**

Föl-földobott kő, földedre hullva,
Kicsi országom, újra meg újra
Hazajön fiad.
Messze tornyokat látogat sorba,
Szédül, elbúsong s lehull a porba,
Amelyből vétetett.
Mindig elvágyik s nem menekülhet,
Magyar vágyakkal, melyek elülnek
S fölhorgadnak megint.
Tied vagyok én nagy haragomban,
Nagy hűtlenségben, szerelmes gondban
Szomorúan magyar.
Föl-fölhajtott kő, bús akaratlan,
Kicsi országom, példás alakban
Te orcádra ütök.
És, jaj, hiába mindenha szándék,
Százszor földobnál, én visszaszállnék
Százszor is, végül is.

(In English): **The Outcast Stone**

The stone cast up into the air comes down to earth;
Again and again your son will return,
To you, my little land.
He visits distant towers one by one and then
Reels crestfallen and drops into the dust again,
From which you toss him up.
Always breaking loose, he cannot get away,
With his Magyar cravings which die down
Only to take hold of him again.
I am yours in great anger and defection,
In unfaithfulness, unfortunately Magyar
Weighed down by thoughts of love.
A stone driven upwards unwittingly,
By way of example, my small country,
I fall back onto you.
And whatever the intention, it's all in vain
For though I am tossed away a hundred times,
I will alight until the last.

(Transl. by Paul Desney).

3. **Attila József:**

(In Hungarian): **Születésnapomra**

Harminckét éves lettem én —
meglepetés e költemény
csecse
becse:
ajándék, mellyel meglepem
e kávéházi szegleten
magam
magam.
Harminckét évem elszelelt
s még havi kétszáz sose telt.
Az ám,
Hazám!
Lehettem volna oktató,
nem ily töltőtoll-koptató
szegény
legény.
De nem lettem, mert Szegeden
eltanácsolt az egyetem
jura
ura.
Intelme gyorsan, nyersen ért
a "Nincsen apám" versemért,
a hont
kivont
szablyával óvta ellenem.
Ideidézi szellemem
hevét
s nevét:
"Ön, amíg szóból értek én,
nem lesz tanár e földtekén" —
gagyog
s ragyog.
Ha örül Horger Antal úr,
hogy költőnk nem nyelvtant tanúl,
sekély
e kéj —
Én egész népemet fogom
nem középiskolás fokon
tani —
tani!

(In English): **For my Birthday**

I am thirty-two, how nice:
this poem is a fine surprise,
a bric —
a brac.
A gift to surprise now in jingle
in this lonely café ingle
my self
myself.
My thirty-two years went away
without earning a decent pay.
How grand,
Homeland!
I could have been a teacher then
not one who lives by fountain-pen
as I,
poor guy.
But so happened at Szeged town
the Varsity boss sent me down,
funny
man he!
His warning roughly, rudely came,
for my "I have no God" poem
his hand
the land
defended boldly and with rage.
I quote herewith for future age
his theme
and name:
"As long as I have here a say
you won't be a teacher" — turned away
muttered,
stuttered.
Should Mr. Horger gloat with glee
that grammatics is not for me,
his bliss
dismiss.
For my words the entire nation
beyond high school education —
will reach
to teach.

(Transl. by Egon Kunz).

1. *Though they stoke the fire,*
Still it dies away;
There is not that love
Which does not pass away.
Love, oh love, oh love,
Accursed misery,
Why do you not flower
On the leaves of every tree?

(Northern Hungary. Transl. by Paul Desney)

2. *Soft spring winds are waters wooing,*
My flower, my darling.
Birds are choosing, mates are wooing,
My flower, my darling.
Whom shall I choose then and woo, Dear,
My flower, my darling.
You choose me and I choose you, Dear,
My flower, my darling.

(Moldavia, a Csángó-Székely song. Transl. by J. C. Tóth).

3. *Gazing round the battlefield of Doberdo,*
I admire the starry heaven's wonder bow;
Starry heavens, lead me to my Magyar country,
Show me where my darling mother weeps for me!
Dearest mother, wonder where my end shall be?
Where my crimson blood shall flow away from me?
In the heart of Poland you will find me buried;
Dearest mother, never, never weep for me!

(Békés county, Southern Hungary, transl. by J. C. Tóth).

4. *The bird is free to fly*
From branch to branch,
But I am not allowed
To visit my beloved.
God bless, oh bless my Lord
The house of my beloved,
But strike God, strike
Those who live in it.
Not even all of those,
But only her mother;
Why has she not given
Me her only daughter?

If she is her daughter,
My lover is she too;
If she is dear to her,
Dearer is she to me.

(Transylvania. Transl. by Paul Desney).

5. *I have left my lovely homeland!*
Left a famous little old land;
Sadly I turned once more to see
Through my falling tears its beauty.
Bitter food and bitter my days!
On and on their bitter tang stays;
Tearfully I gaze at the sky,
Numbering the stars as they die.

(Békés county, Southern Hungary. Transl. by J. C. Tóth).

6. *Rain is falling, softly gently falling,*
Spring will soon be coming;
How I wish I were a rose bud,
In your garden blooming!
Rose, my Dear, I cannot be,
Franz Joseph is with'ring me
In his famous great Vienna barracks
Boasting of three stories!

(Békés county, Southern Hungary. Transl. by J. C. Tóth).

7. *I shall plow the king's court with my sighs;*
Sow it with my country's bitter cries;
Let him see and know, the great emp'ror!
What grows in the heart of his Magyar.
Sorrow grows in it from sorrow's seeds;
Wounded is the Magyar heart, it bleeds;
Take, o Lord, the king and emperor!
Let him not oppress his poor Magyar!

(Gömör county, Northern Hungary. Transl. by J. C. Tóth).

8. *Jolly hussar, jolly hussar, jolly when he's dancing;*
Jingling saber, jingling saber, jingling as he's prancing;
Jingling, jingling, go on jingling, click your, click your spurs too!
Louis Kossuth's listing crew is making music rouse you.

(Veszprém county, Western Hungary. An 1848 song. Transl. by J. C. Tóth).

9. (a) *There where I am passing, even trees are weeping.*
From their tender branches golden leaves are falling.
Weeps the road before me, grieves the path forlornly;
Even they are saying: Farewell, God be with thee.

(Csik county, Székely district. Transl. by J. C. Tóth).

(b) *I'm a goin', goin', far away a goin',*
From the dust of roamin', I've a mantle formin'!
All my grief and sorrow, sadly twine around it,
While my falling tears drop buttons shining on it.

(Csik county, Székely district. Transl. by J. C. Tóth).

10. *Leaves and branches make a forest;*
Grief and sorrow mould the heart best;
Grief and sorrow, like a light breeze,
Where I go they follow with ease.
Gleaming sun is on the meadow
Shines on ev'ry maiden's window;
Tell me, o Lord: why not on mine?
Why does mine not see the sunshine?

(Bukovina, a Csángó-Székely song. Transl. by J. C. Tóth).

11. (a) *How I wish I were a morning star-beam!*
I would shine on you, my dear, when you dream:
I would shine on you early, right early;
One last kiss, I'd ask you then to give me.

(Great Plain. Transl. by J. C. Tóth).

(b) *Fragrant are the woods when they are green!*
Lovely when the wild dove's nest is seen!
Like a dove a maiden longs to be
Close beside her lover constantly!
I am not to blame for being sad!
Only Mother is, for if she had
Given me to my own chosen love,
I would be as happy as a dove!

(Nyitra county, Northern Hungary. Transl. by J. C. Tóth)

(c) *Leaving with the waning of the morning star,*
My dear love is walking to her home afar.
Shining boots are gleaming on her pretty feet;
Glowing starlight beams up on my little sweet.

This I wish for you my dearest, ev'ry day:
Lush green meadow, turn to roses on your way.
Fresh green grass too, rosy apples for you grow;
And your heart will never forget I love you so!

(Békés county, Great Plain. Transl. by J. C. Tóth).

(d) *Lovely leaves and branches make a citron tree!*
Dearest heart, how can they part us, you and me?
Like the star when parted from its shining beams,
So shall I be parted from my sweetest dreams.

(Bukovina, a Székely-Csángó song. Transl. by J. C. Tóth).

(e) *Cricket lad is marrying Lord Mosquito's daughter,*
Slipping, slopping is the louse, best man should be smarter;
Jerking, jumping up the flea, best man, too, pretending;
Ev'ry kind of ugly bug wants to be attending.

(Tolna county, Transdanubia: humour. Transl. by J. C. Tóth).

(f) *Rugged rock a-looming, roses on it blooming:*
Love is such a splendid thing!
Love is but a dream though, if you've never known its glow;
O how sad if it is so!

(Nyitra county, Northern Hungary. Transl. by J. C. Tóth).

CHAPTER 14

1. Cf. Vopiscus: *"Vita Aureliani"* 39: (Aurelianus) ". . . *provinciam Daciam a Traiano constitutam sublato exercitu et provincialibus reliquit.* . ." Also: Eutropias IX.15: ". . . *abductosque Romanos ex urbibus et agris Daciae.* . ." These and other contemporary Roman and Greek historians state that emperor Aurelianus evacuated the entire Roman population both from the towns and rural areas of Dacia.
2. According to F. J. Sulzer (Geschichte Daciens, Vienna, 1781) and E. R. Rösler (Rumänische Studien, Leipzig, 1871), the original home of the Vlach (Wallachian, Rumanian) people was in the south of the Balkan peninsula (between Albania, Greece and Bulgaria). After the IXth century these nomadic herdsmen moved to the north and north-east. One branch crossed the lower Danube and moved into the Wallachian Plain (between the Carpathians and the lower Danube). A Byzantian source (Anna Comnena)

mentions them here first in the XIth century. From here some of them crossed the Transylvanian mountains into Hungary. A Hungarian document from 1224 mentions first the presence of some Vlach shepherds in the Fogaras district (south-western Transylvania). (Cf. Zathureczky: Transylvania. Anderson Research Center, University of Florida, 1963).

According to the Rumanian linguist Cihac, the vocabulary of the Rumanian language contains 45.7% words of Slavonic origin and only 31.5% of Latin origin.

3. *That's how the Hungarians sow*
Their oats very slowly!
That's how the Hungarians reap
Their oats very slowly!

That's how the wife
Steals the oats, steals the oats!
That's how the wife
Drinks its price, drinks its price!

4. *It is time to go*
And to get married.
The question is only
Whom should I marry?
If I marry a town girl,
She can't spin, weave,
I'll have to buy my
Pantaloons myself.
If I marry an old one
She'll be always sullen,
And whenever she'll speak,
It'll be like thunder.
Only one hope I have
To keep me going,
I'll remain a bachelor.
Forever, perhaps . . .

(Extracts)

CHAPTER 15

1. *I shall die indeed,*
Mother, my dear mother,
For Helen Görög,
For her slender waist,
For her full lips,
For her rosy cheeks . . .
For blue-eyed Helen Görög.

. . .

Do die, my son, do,
Ladislas Bertelaki,
They'll come here to see
The marvellous dead,
Virgins and fair maidens.
Your love will come too,
Your fair Helen Görög.

. . .

— Arise, my son, arise,
Ladislas Bertelaki,
She for whom you have died
Is standing at your feet . . .

(Extracts. Transl. in Leader: Hungarian Ballads).

2. (The concluding verses:)

Her little son set out crying,
He set out crying to the tall castle of Déva.
Three times he shouted at the tall castle of Déva:
"Mother, sweet mother, speak but one word to me!"
"I cannot speak my son, for the stone wall presses me,
I am immured between high stones here."
Her heart broke, so did the ground under her.
Her little son fell in and died.

(Extract from N. Leader: Hungarian Ballads).

3. (The concluding lines: after the boy's suicide)

. . . His mother sent
River-divers,
They took them out dead,
The girl in his arms;
One of them was buried
In front of the altar,

The other was buried
Behind the altar.
Two chapel-flowers
Sprang up out of the two,
They intertwined
On top of the altar. . .

(Extract from N. Leader: Hungarian Ballads).

4. (The first and last lines:)

"Aye! Come home, mother,
Father is ill!"
"Wait, my daughter, a little,
Let me dance a little,
I'll go at once,
I just spin and dance a little,
I'll be at home soon" . . .
. . .
"Aye! Come home, mother,
We have buried father."
"Oh, aye, my bedlinen,
I may get a new husband,
But I can't make bedlinen,
Because I cannot spin or weave . . ."

(Extracts from N. Leader: Hungarian Ballads).

5. *Once upon a time out went fair maid Julia*
To pluck cornflowers in the cornfield,
To pluck cornflowers, to bind them into a wreath,
To bind them into a wreath, to enjoy herself.

Up, up she gazed into the high heaven,
Behold! a fine pathway came down from it,
And on it descended a curly white lamb.
It carried the sun and the moon between its horns,
It carried the sparkling star on its brow,
On its two horns were ay! two fine gold bracelets,
Ay! at its two sides were two fine burning candles,
As many as its hairs, so many the stars upon it.
Up and spoke to her the curly white lamb:
"Do not take fright at me, fair maid, Julia,
For now the host of virgins has fallen short by one.
If you were to come with me, I would take you there,

To the heavenly choir, to the holy virgins,
So as to complete their pious host;
I would give the key of Heaven into your hands.
At the first cockcrow I would come and see you,
At the second cockcrow I would propose to you,
At the third cockcrow I would take you away."
Fair maid Julia turns to her mother,
And up and speaks to her: "Mother, my sweet mother,
(. . . she tells her mother what happened and continues:)
Lament for me, mother, lament. Let me hear while I still live,
How you will lament when I am dead."
"My daughter, my daughter, in my flower garden,
You the wee honeycomb of my first bee-swarm,
You the golden wax of this wee honeycomb,
The earth-spreading smoke of this golden wax,
The earth spreading smoke, its heaven-breaking flame!
The heavenly bell, untolled it tolled,
The heavenly gate, unopened it opened,
Alas! my daughter, she was led in there!"

(Complete text — except for repetition in verse 4 — from N. Leader: Hungarian Ballads).

6. (Extracts):

Once a prince of old
Thought he could find a sweetheart.
He decided right there
Dressed up as a coachman.

(He went to the rich judge's daughter, asked her hand in marriage but she said:)

I would never wed, no,
A poor coachman fellow!
Ask my poorest neighbour!
Basket-weaver's daughter.

(He did and the basket-weaver's daughter said):

Yes, I will, I like you!
I'll be waiting for you!

(Dressed as a prince he went back to the judge's daughter, who said she would be delighted to marry him, but the prince told her that he was marrying the poor girl. The prince then went to the basket-weaver's daughter who could not recognise him and refused:)

I refuse to do so!
Handsome prince, I say no!
I have promised my hand
To a handsome coachman!

(The prince removed his royal disguise and said):

I am he, no other!
Let us kiss each other!

(They did).

(Transl. by J. C. Tóth).

7. (Passage from the Tale of a King, a Prince and a Horse): *". . . We are passing through the glittering Glass Mountain of Fairyland" — said the "táltos" horse. "You see, those who want to carry off a "Tündér" (fairy) girl for a wife must cut their way through the Glass Mountain. But there is no other horse except me that could do it. You know now why I have asked for the diamond shoes. Without them we would not be able to cross the Glass Mountain . . . Bind up your eyes and let us go ahead."*

(So they did. The Prince bound up his eyes and the horse set forth at a great speed). "Now, dear master, you can untie your eyes," the "táltos" horse said. The boy looked around and saw around him a beautiful meadow undulating with the ripple of pure silk and with every blade of grass in it as bright as a pin. Right in the middle of that meadow there lay a man. As the man lay there his sword went round and round him. "He is the old comrade your father is yearning to see" said the táltos horse . . . (When the old man woke up) the boy greeted him: "May God bless you with a happy day, uncle." "God bless you too, my son. What brought you here, beyond the beyond, far even for the birds to come?" . . . "I am a Prince, the youngest son of the King who weeps with one eye and laughs with the other. It was his wish that I come here to lead you to him, because you are his dear old comrade, and just like him, you weep with one eye and laugh with the other. But he feels sure that if he could see you again, both his eyes would weep first and then laugh for joy."

(The Prince brought the old man back to his father then went back and) . . married the princess of Fairyland ("Tündérország"),

and they had a big wedding feast . . . and if they are not dead, they are still alive to this day.

(From "Folktales of Hungary", ed. L. Dégh, transl. by J. Juhász, Uni. of Chicago Press, 1965).

8. (The conclusion of the legend "Blood Treaty")

. . . Chieftain Álmos turned toward the people and spoke: "The time has come when we shall retake the land which is our rightful legacy, the land of Atilla. According to the customs, the people of the Magyars must select a ruler who shall lead them in war and in peace. . . The tribes must unite into a nation again, and have one leader and one mind, as it was in the days of Atilla. . . The chiefs have chosen my oldest son, Árpád, to be your ruler for life."

The seven chiefs held a shield in front of Árpád. As Árpád stepped on it, they raised him high above their heads. He stood straight on the uplifted shield and in his hand sparkled the Sword of God (Atilla's sword). . .

The people around him broke out in cheers and the Táltos stepped forward with Atilla's wooden cup in his hand.

"Come before me, ye seven Chiefs," said the Táltos in a loud voice, "and you Kabars, who are joining us, do the same. Pledge your oath to your leader, Árpád, and his descendants!"

One by one, the Chiefs slit the flesh of their fore-arm and let their blood flow into Atilla's cup. . . The Táltos mixed wine with the blood, poured a small amount on the ground, and sprayed a few drops into the wind, in four directions. Then he gave them the cup, and one by one, they drank from it.

(Extracts from "Selected Hungarian Legends" ed. A. Wass, Danubian Press, 1971. Transl. by E. Wass de Czege).

9. (The last episode from "Matthias and his Barons")

Once the king and his barons were walking past a reedy swamp. A hot day it was. "A bit of rain would be just in time for these reeds," said the king though the reeds stood in water. The barons caught each other's eye and began to laugh. 'What need was there of rain when the reeds stood in water?' The king made no reply. When they got home, he gave orders to serve them the finest dishes generously salted and without any drink to wash the meal down. And at his orders big bowls were placed under the table, at the feet of each baron. The bowls were

filled with water, and the barons had to put their feet into the bowls. When they had finished supping, the barons desired some drink as the good dishes made them thirsty. They asked the king to let them have some water as they were nearly dying with thirst.

Said the king: "What for? Your feet are in water. You were laughing at me when I said the reeds wanted a good rain. You said, 'Why should they want rain as they stood in water?' Well, why should you want water when your feet are in it? You will get none."

(From "Folktales of Hungary", d. by L. Dégh, transl. by J. Juhász, Uni. of Chicago Press, 1965).

10. *In the far-off days when Jesus and Peter were still going about in the world, they were making for the Hungarian "puszta" (Plain) when they came to a village inn. Peter, who was tired, said "Let us go in." The Lord said then, "All right, let us take a little rest in there."*

Inside the inn, some "betyárs" (outlaws) were making merry, shaking their legs in a lively dance.

The two wanderers lay down by the wall to rest for a while. But Peter, who was lying nearest the dance floor, received so many kicks in his side as the dancers went dancing past him that before long he felt anything but pleased at their manners. So he thought that it would be quite a good idea to change places with the Lord.

"Let us change places, Lord," he said, "and let me lie next to the wall for a while."

"All right, Peter, let's change places."

But now the dancers thought that for a change they should give a few kicks to the man lying next to the wall, and it was Peter again who got all the kicks.

(From "Folktales of Hungary").

CHAPTER 17

1. (a) (The first verse of the "Siege of Eger":)

You, Hungarians worship God now,
And indeed give thanks to Him,
Of valiant soldiers in Eger speak highly,
I tell you a chronicle, give me hearing . . .

(b) (Extracts from "Of the many Drunkards":)
You many drunkards, hear about your morals,
About the sins committed in your drunkenness against God,
For many a time you forget your God . . .
. . . . .
In thirst this was composed by one called Sebestyén,
In Nyirbátor in 1548,
The stewards did not give me wine, be cursed . . .

2. (Extracts):

Soldiers, what men could be
More blessed on earth than we,
Here in the frontier command?
For in the pleasant spring
Merrily songbirds sing,
Gaily on every branch!
Sweet is the meadow rose,
Sweet dew the sky bestows;
What men know life like our band!

(Transl. by Paul Desney).

3. (In a similar vein he grieves, in Christian humility for the sins of his youth):

Unhappy is my lot;
My pangs are great, God wot;
My youth is turned to sighing.
For toil is hard to bear,
My yoke is harsh to wear
In spite of all my trying.
The good old times have flown
By winds of evil blown,
And left me to my crying.

("Farewell" — first verse. From Kunz: Hungarian Poetry. Transl. by W. Kirkconell)

4. *When autumn dews are done,*
Across the waning sun
November winds come blowing.
They snatch the falling leaves,
Across the bitter eves
Their yellow fragments strowing
Soon where I walk today

Along the greenwood way
Strides winter with its snowing.

("Farewell": as above)

5. (From: "Greeting on finding Julia"):

I do not even want the world without you, my sweet love, who now stands whole beside me, my sweet soul.

The joy of my sad heart, sweet longing of my soul, you are the happiness of all; the pledge of God be with you.

My precious palace, fine scented red rose, beautiful queen-stock, long life, fair Julia!

(Extract. Transl. by Paul Desney).

6. (Extract from Peter Pázmány's "The Guide to the right Faith):

Men build slowly, but they are quick to destroy their beautiful buildings. Not so Almighty God. For he builds quickly. In six days He created Heaven and Earth in all their fairness and splendor, but he took seven days to lay siege to a single city, Jericho. He decided to bring Niniveh to dust and ashes and yet He tarried forty days.

Nor will He hasten to bring this world to dust and ashes. He waits with great patience, as He does now. When the time will approach, He will give terrifying signs. Do you know, o Christians, why God has willed that there be great and manifold horrors before the Last Judgement? Because our God is infinitely good and full of mercy. He threatens us, so that we may know there is still time to come to Him.

(From: B. Menczer: A Commentary. . . Amerikai Magyar Kiad6, 1956).

7. The concluding strophes of Zrinyi's "Peril of Sziget" express the poet's pride in his achievements both in poetry and in warfare. Whilst his somewhat exaggerated claim to poetic immortality is in keeping with the typical baroque style of his age, he realises that his true destiny is to "light the Ottoman moon":

My work is done, a monument whose grace
No spiteful stream of time can wash away,
No fire's rage can harm, nor steel deface,
Nor gnawing envy cause its slow decay.

I seek my fame not only with my pen,
But also with my sword so feared by men;

And all my life I'll fight the Ottoman moon,
And gladly for my country die, be it late or soon.

(Transl. by W. Kirkconnell. From: "Hungarian Poetry").

8. (The folk-song variation of "Rákóczi's Farewell" — as recorded in an eastern-Hungarian village in Szatmár county):

Listen to my speech,
My dear Hungarian people,
Advise me, my brave soldiers,
What should I do?
The Germans are coming,
Destroying everything,
By sword and fire.

(The "Rákóczi-song" — the work of a skilled poet):

Alas, Rákóczi, Bercsényi,
Leaders of brave Magyars,
Bezerédi!
Where are you now,
Living idols of
Our Magyar people!

Alas, you great, old
Magyar people,
How the enemy is
Ravaging you!
Once a beautiful,
Ornate picture!

CHAPTER 18

1. (As the bride leaves her parents' house for the church she says):

The hour has come to start out on my road,
To reach the goal with my beloved mate,
That we may be linked with the chain of love
In the house of God, that we may have another.
My dear parents, your tears spring from
The painful feeling in the parental heart.
Although I was a flower blooming in your garden,
I desired an even greater happiness than that.
Let me go on my road now,

I leave you in the protection of the Lord,
I greet you with all my heart.
(As she enters the house of her mother-in-law:)
My dear mother, I wish you good evening,
I stand at the door of your house with fear.
As the migrating bird leaves her nest,
So I left that of my dear parents.
So does a single bird fly about alone
Until it finds its mate at last.
But your dear son is no longer alone,
Having found his loving mate already.
I have become a companion to your dear son today,
Receive me as your daughter now. . .

(From: Fél - Hofer: Proper Peasants, Corvina, Budapest, 1969).

2. (Good-wish song — usually sung by the children of the family):

Arise, brave people,
Dawn is smiling,
Approaching, like an angel
On wings of golden feathers.
Green blades of grass,
Dress up prettily,
They wash and dry themselves
With lilies and roses.
As the number of grasses
In the flowery meadows,
As the number of drops
In the great ocean
So many blessings
For our dear . . . . . .

CHAPTER 20

1. (Extracts from D. Berzsenyi: "My portion"):

Peace is my portion. I have moored my boat;
No fairy dream shall, lure me to cast loose;
Place of retirement, to thy breast receive
Th' aspiring youth.
Wherever fate shall cast my lot in life,
I am free from penury and care,

Always and everywhere in calm content
To heaven I look.

(Transl. by W.N. Loew. From: "Hungarian Poetry" ed. E. F. Kunz, Pannonia Publ. Co. Sydney, 1955).

2. (From: M. Csokonai-Vitéz: "To the Rose-bud"):

Open, Rose-bud, sweetly smiling,
Open up at last;
Open to the vagrant breeze
Whose kisses are awaiting you.
Oh, how this weedy garden
Will take pride in you!
Oh, how dare they take
This precious garment from you.
Let me pick you, elegant stalk;
Already you are beautiful.
How many pert, coquettish,
Cheeky girls await you!
No, no! let no one of these
Undo her clasps at your sight;
Dear Julia, who planted you
Will grant you a new garden.
There you may parade your purple
Among more precious robes;
There you may parade your perfume
Among her dearer scents.

(Transl. by Paul Desney.)

3. (Extract from the song "To Hope" by M. Csokonai-Vitéz):

Why do you flatter me with your honied lips?
Why are you smiling at me?
Why do you still raise in my bosom a dubious heart?
Keep to your own devices, you encouraged me once,
I had believed your pretty words, yet you have deceived me.

4 (Two stanzas from S. Kisfaludy's "Lamenting Love"):

(No. 75) O thou stream, that springing
from the cold hill's side
tears down sadly ringing
where dark pine trees bide
with hesitant windings
between rock and tree,

till, loosing your bindings,
you reach the sea,
art the image of my life,
which sobs its tortured way
snared by endless strife
towards its final bay.

(No. 126) Days come, days go back,
but sorrow does not range;
the hours fly and pass,
but my destiny does not change.
Volcanoes tire;
Rivers, lakes run dry:
but not my fire
or tears from my eye;
forests, meadows, come alive;
star-clusters turn and swill;
fortune revolves and thrives;
only my misery stands still.

(Transl. by Paul Desney).

5. (First verse of "National Anthem" by F. Kölcsey):

God, bless the Hungarian
With abundance, gladness,
Graciously protect him when
Faced with foes or sadness.
Bring for people torn by fate
Happy years and plenty:
Sins of future, sins of late,
Both are paid for amply.

(Transl. by E. F. Kunz. From: "Hungarian Poetry", ed. by E. F. Kunz).

6. ("The Sorrowing Husband" by Ch. Kisfaludy):

At Szatmár village is an inn,
Fair Mistress Therese lives within.
Her eyes are lustrous, black her hair,
Her form all grace, beyond compare,
She is the fairest of the fair.
But woe! — the truth, — it must be told, —
Though beautiful, she was a scold.
Just now a quarrel she began;

To chide, to brawl, to rail — it ran
As but an angry woman can.
This time it was the husband who
Upon himself her anger drew.
He meekly sat behind the stove
From whence she with a broomstick drove,
When sudden, in the noisy hum,
A cry is heard: "The Tartars come!"
Though each one trembles, runs, hides, weeps;
Still, our good Mistress Therese keeps
Her courage, goes into the street
For boldly any man to meet,
A splendid weapon is her tongue.
As said before, she's fair and young,
Her face all rosy from the flare
She had been in; her neck, arms are bare,
Her heaving breast, her fiery eye
Her usual good looks amplify.
The Tartar comes. His eyes are fire,
And burning with brute desire
When Mistress Therese he espies
He realises what a prize
She would be. So with no ado
Up comes to her the Tartar foe
And taking hold around her waist,
With one strong pull he had her placed
Beside himself, and then with haste
He into the far distance raced.
No woman more his saddle graced
Than now he, drunk with joy, embraced.
The spouse, whose wife had just been stolen,
Feels, that his eyes with tears are swollen;
Looks up the road on which they fled
"Poor Tartar!" is all that he said.

(Transl. by W. N. Locw. From: "Hungarian Poetry", ed. by E. F. Kunz).

7. (A prose rendering of the concluding lines of "Fair Helen" by M. Vörösmarty):
. . . Pale as a snow-white statue stands fair Ilonka, speechless. numb.

"Shall we indeed go to the huntsman at the court of Mátyás, dear child? It is better for us in the wilds of Vértes; our little home there will give us peace". The grandfather spoke with understanding grief, and the sad pair went on their way, their steps stricken with care.

If you have seen a fair flower in bloom drop through inner sickness — so did fair Ilonka, fearing the light, droop beneath her secret sorrow. Her companions were feelings aflame, painful memories, dead hopes. Her life, brief yet an agony, passed away, fair Ilonka languished to the grave; her languishing was the fall of lilies: her face of innocence and grief. The King comes and stands in the deserted house; they rest in their eternal home.

(From: "Five Hungarian Writers", D. M. Jones).

8. (From "To the Daydreamer" by M. Vörösmarty):

Into what place does the world of your eyes now lapse?
What do you look for in the doubtful distance there?
Can it be past time's dark flower perhaps
Upon which, trembling, clings your wondrous tear?
Clad perhaps in the future's veil you see
Nightmarish apparitions which come your way.

He who wants a flower does not bear a bush;
He who would have vision gazes not into the sun;
He who would seek after pleasure loses out.
Only the humble are not brought pain through desire.
. . . Don't look, don't look into the distance of desire
The entire world is not our land to hold;
Only that which the heart alone can encompass,
That only can we hold as our own.

(Transl. by Paul Desney).

9. (From "Thoughts in the Library" by M. Vörösmarty):

What can we do here? struggle — each one
according to his strength — for the noble aim.
Before us a nation's destiny lies.
When we have raised that from its sunken state
and placed it as high as possible by
the clear rays of spiritual struggle,
we can say, turning to our ancestors'
ashes: Thanks be, Life! To your health!
we've had a good time — we've done a man's work!

(Transl. by Paul Desney).

10. (From "Appeal" by M. Vörösmarty)

Be true to the land of thy birth,
Son of the Magyar race;
It gave thee life and soon its earth
Will be thy resting place.
Although the world is very wide,
This is thy home for aye;
Come weal or woe on fortune's tide,
Here you must live and die.
This is the dear, hallowed soil
On which our fathers bled:
This, where a thousand years of toil
Has bound the mighty dead.

(Transl. by W. Jaffray. From: "Hungarian Poetry").

11. (From "The Old Gypsy" by M. Vörösmarty:)

Gypsy, strike up! You've gulp'd your wine for pay.
. . . Strike up! Who knows how soon the day will come
When fiddle-bow is bent and music dumb?
Grief's in your heart, but wine is in your glass:
Play, gypsy, play, and let your troubles pass!
Your boiling blood should eddy like the tide,
The marrow of your brain be stirr'd and warm,
Your eyes should glitter like a meteor,
Your sounding string be like a thunderstorm.
Strike up? But no! In silence leave the strings
Until that day when earth shall join in feast,
Till all the storm and darkness shall be past,
And war's abhorrent discords shall have ceas'd
When that day comes, play on with new-found cheer
Until the very gods rejoice to hear!

(Transl. by W. Kirkconnell. From: "Hungarian Poetry").

CHAPTER 21

1. (Prose rendering of the first verse of "Shepherds' Dance")
I wish I had woken up sooner. I have just heard the angels' voice telling us that Jesus was born in a humble stable. Now I want to go there, hoping to see Little Jesus. Come, dear friend, let us go, our old shepherd friend will play the flute. We shall entertain Jesus and Mary while you catch a lamb.
(Recorded in Pest county, Central Hungary).

2. (Extracts — in prose — from "Gloria . . .")
Gloria in excelsis — wake up, shepherds, wake up! Today your Lord was born in Bethlehem. You find Him in a humble stable there. . . (Recorded in Northern Hungary).

3. (Variant of the carol "Herdsmen. . .")
Herdsmen, when in Bethlehem, they were
Tending herds in the night on the fields,
God's angels appeared before them.
With great fear their hearts grew heavy.
"I bring you good news, don't be afraid,
For today was born your Lord and Saviour. . ."
(Recorded in the Jász district, Great Plain).

4. (Variant of the carol "Kirje. . .")
Kyrie, Kyrie, Little Baby,
Little Prince of Bethlehem,
You became our Saviour,
You have saved us from damnation.
There is no cover on Jesus' bed
The poor Dear must be cold!
He has no warm wintercoat,
He has lost His little lamb.
Little Jesus, golden apple,
The Holy Virgin's His mother.
She swaddles Him with her own hands
Rocks His cradle with her own feet.
(Recorded in a Great Plain village).

5 (Variant of "Shepherds. . .")
Shepherds, wake up,
Let's go at once
To the town of Bethlehem
To the humble, little stable!
Let's go, let's not tarry,
Let's get there tonight,
To pay our respects to our Lord.
(Recorded in Zala county, Transdanubia).

6(a) (From: "A Beautiful Rose"):
She could find no shelter in the town,
They will have to stay in the desert.
Oxen and the ass stand around the manger,
They look down on Little Jesus.

If I were your cradle I would rock you gently,
I would not let you catch cold,
I would cover you and look after you,
I would serve you, my Master.
(Recorded in a Great Plain village).

(b) (Another carol with the same theme):
O, if you had been born
In our town, Bicske,
In Hungary you would have found
A warmer home and better people . . .
(Recorded in Komárom county. Transdanubia).

7. (Extracts from a "Bethlehem play"):
(All): Bethlehem, Bethlehem,
In your vicinity
Mary arrived and went
Into a humble stable.
There she was sitting
Like a forsaken turtle — dove,
Making ready for the blessed birth.
(The Angels): God's Lamb is crying,
There she is who takes pity on Him.
The Holy Mother is rocking Him:
Aye, aye, aye, Jesus, sleep!
(Mary): Don't cry, my sweet,
Thou art my ornament!
Beautiful lullaby they sing,
The heavenly host, aye, aye, aye, sunshine of my soul.
(Joseph): Alas, this manger is very hard,
My dear Son, alas, Thou art cold.
There is no shelter here against cold
Except Saint Joseph's cloak.
Aye, aye, aye, Jesus, sleep!
(Recorded in Sopron county, Transdanubia).

8. *Our Gracious Lady,*
Great Patron of our nation,
Being in great, dire need,
We address you thus:
Do not forget in her peril
Hungary, our beloved country,
And us, poor Hungarians!

CHAPTER 22

1. (Extracts from the address given by Louis Kossuth in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania in 1852. He looks back on the achievements of Hungary's freedom struggle in 1848-1849 then appeals for American moral and political support for Hungary's continued struggle to regain her independence).

". . . In Hungary (before 1848) the people of every race were equally excluded from all political right — from any share of constitutional life. The endeavours of myself and my friends for internal improvement — for emancipation of the peasantry — for the people's restoration to its natural rights in civil, political, social and religious respects — were cramped by the Habsburg policy. But the odium of this cramping was thrown by Austria upon our conservative party: and thus our national force was divided into antagonistic elements.

Besides, the idea of Panslavism and of national rivalries, raised by Russia and fostered by Austria, diverted the excitement of the public mind from the development of common political freedom. And Hungary had no national army. Its regiments were filled with foreign elements and scattered over foreign countries, while our own country was guarded with well disciplined foreign troops. And what was far worse than all this, Hungary, by long illegalities, corrupted in its own character, deprived of its ancient heroic stamp, Germanized in its salons, sapped in its cottages and huts, impressed with the avoidable fatality of Austrian sovereignty and the knowledge of Austrian power, secluded from the attention of the world, which was scarcely aware of its existence, — Hungary had no hope in its national future, because it had no consciousness of its strength, and was highly monarchial in its inclinations and generous in its allegiance to the King. . ."

(This logical, unemotional analysis of the deeper causes of Hungary's defeat in 1848-49 from an address given in English to an American audience compares interestingly with a highly emotional speech given to the Hungarian Parliament in July 1848. On this occasion Kossuth, the Finance Minister of the first Hungarian government, asked for an appropriation to enable the government to set up a national defence force of 200,000 soldiers (Cf. Chapter 19). The following are the introductory and concluding sentences of the speech):

"Gentlemen, in ascending the Tribune to call upon you to save the country, I am oppressed with the greatness of the moment; I feel as if God had placed in my hands the trumpet to arouse the dead, that if sinners and weak, they may relapse into death, but that if the vigour of life is still within them, they may waken to eternity. The fate of the nation at this moment is in your hands; with your decision on the motion which I shall bring forward, God has placed the decision on the life or death of Hungary. . ."

. . . (After having explained the need for a strong defence force, he concluded:) ". . . I here solemnly and deliberately demand of this House, a grant of 200,000 soldiers and the necessary pecuniary assistance. . ."

(When Kossuth reached this part of his speech, Paul Nyáry, the leader of the opposition, stood up, and raising his right hand, as if in the act of taking an oath, exclaimed: "We grant it . . ." As one man the deputies repeated the words of Nyáry. Kossuth continued with a voice trembling with emotion):

"(Gentlemen). . . you have all risen to a man, and I bow before the generosity of the nation, while I add one more request: let your energy equal your patriotism, and I venture to affirm that even the gates of hell shall not prevail against Hungary. . ."

(Hollister, W.C. "Landmarks. . .", J. Wiley and Sons New York, 1967; Headley: Life of Kossuth, quoted in "Hungary and its Revolutions" by E. O. S., London, G. Bell, 1896).

CHAPTER 23

1. (From: S. Petőfi: "National Song):

Magyars, up! your country calls you!
Break the chain which now enthralls you.
Freemen be, or slaves for ever.
Choose ye, Magyars, now or never.
For by the Magyar's God above
We truly swear
We truly swear the tyrant's yoke
No more to bear!

(Transl. by W. N. Loew, From: "Hungarian Poetry").

2. (a) (From: "The bush is trembling. . . ":)

The bush is trembling for
A bird alighted upon it;
My soul is trembling for
You have come into my mind,
My lovely little girl,
Of this world you are
The brightest diamond.

(Transl. by Paul Desney).

(b) (From: "I'll be a tree. . .":)

I'll be a tree if you are its flower,
Or a flower, if you are the dew:
I'll be the dew, if you are the sunbeam,
Only to be united with you.

(Transl. by E. F. Kunz).

(c) (From: "Autumn is here, here again. . .":)

Darling, sit down by my side,
Sit and make no sound,
While my song departs over the lake
Like a whispering wind.
Slowly place your lips to mine,
If kiss me you would deem,
So as not to awaken Nature
And so disturb its dream.

(Transl. by Paul Desney).

3. ("The cottage door. . .")

The cottage door stood open wide,
To light my pipe I stepped inside,
But, oh! behold, my pipe was lit,
There was indeed a glow in it.
But since my pipe was all aglow
With other thoughts inside I go,
A gentle winning maiden fair
That I perchance saw sitting there,
Upon her wonted task intent
To stir the fire aflame, she bent;
But, oh! dear heart, her eyes so bright
Were shining with more brilliant light.

She looked at me as in I passed
Some spell she must have on me cast.
My burning pipe went out, but oh!
My sleeping heart was all aglow.

(Transl. by C. H. Wright. From "Hungarian Poetry").

4. (From: "The Hungarian Plain":)

What, O ye wild Carpathians, to me
Are your romantic eyries, bold with pine?
Ye win my admiration, not my love;
Your lofty valleys lure no dream of mine.
Down where the prairies billow like a sea,
Here is my world, my home, my heart's true fane,
My eagle spirit soars, from chains released,
When I behold the unhorizoned plain.
Upwards I mount in ecstasies of thought
Above the earth, to cloud-heights still more near,
And see, beneath, the image of the plain,
From Danube on to Tisza smiling clear.
Stampeding herds of horses, as they run,
Thunder across the wind with trampling hoof,
As lusty herdsmen's whoops resound again
And noisy whips crack out in sharp reproof.
Far, far away, where heaven touches earth,
Blue tree-tops of dim orchards tower higher,
Like some pale fog-bank, and beyond them still
A village church projects a simple spire.
Fair art thou, Alföld, fair at least to me!
Here I was born, and in my cradle lay.
God grant I may be buried 'neath its sod,
And mix my mouldering cerements with its clay!

(Transl. by W. Kirkconnell. From: "Hungarian Poetry").

5. (From: "One Thought torments me. . . ":)

One thought torments me: that I lie
Upon a featherbed to die!
Slowly wither, slowly waste away,
Flowerlike, the furtive earthworm's prey;
Like a candle slowly to be spent
In an empty, lonely tenement.
My life, let me yield
On the battlefield!

'Tis there that the blood of youth shall flow from my heart,
And when, from my lips, last paeans of joy but start,
Let them be drowned in the clatter of steel,
In the roar of the guns, in the trumpet's peal,
And through my still corpse
Shall horse after horse
Full gallop ahead to the victory won,
And there shall I lie to be trampled upon.

(Transl. by E. B. Pierce and E. Delmár).

6. (From: "Bor the Hero" by J. Arany:)

Shadows of the dying day
On the quiet valley fell,
Bor, the Hero rode away —
"Sweet and fair one, fare thee well."
Wind-swept branches stir and strain,
Lo! a lark is singing near,
Bor, the Hero rides amain,
Silent falls the maiden's tear.
Whither wends that soaring flight?
Darkness mingles earth and sky
"Daughter, haste, thy troth to plight!"
There is none to make reply.
Darkness mingles earth and sky,
Ghostly shapes the forest fill,
There is none to make reply,
"Come!" 'Tis Bor that whispers still.
Spirit lips a chant intone,
Ghostly whispers stir her mood,
"My dear spouse, O! mine alone,
Take me wheresoe'er you would."
Near the fane of hoary stone
Gleams a light transcending day,
Spirit lips a chant intone,
Festal robes the priest array.
With a light transcending day,
Ruined aisle and altar shine,
Festal robes the priest array,
"Now, Beloved, thou art mine."
Darkness mingles earth and sky
Hark! frightened owlet cried!

Cold in death, the altar nigh,
Lay the young and lovely bride.

(Transl. by C. H. Wright. From: "Hungarian Poetry").

7. (From: "The Bards of Wales":)

Edward the king, the English king,
Bestrides his tawny steed,
"For I will see if Wales" said he,
"Accepts my rule indeed."
"In truth this Wales, Sire, is a gem,
The fairest in thy crown:
The stream and field rich harvest yield,
And fair are dale and down."
"And all the wretched people there
Are calm as man could crave;
Their hovels stand throughout the land
As silent as the grave."
Edward the king, the English king,
Bestrides his tawny steed;
A silence deep his subjects keep
And Wales is mute indeed.
The castle named Montgomery
Ends the day's journeying;
The castle's lord, Montgomery,
Must entertain the king.
"Ye lords, ye lords, will none consent
His glass with mine to ring?
What! Each one fails, ye dogs of Wales,
To toast the English king?"
All voices cease in soundless peace,
All breathe in silent pain;
Then at the door a harper hoar
Comes in with grave disdain:
"Harsh weapons clash and hauberks crash,
And sunset sees us bleed,
The crow and wolf our dead engulf —
This, Edward, is thy deed!"
"Now let him perish! I must have"
(The monarch's voice is hard)
"Your softest songs, and not your wrongs!" —
In steps a boyish bard:

"The breeze is soft at eve. that oft
From Milford Haven moans;
It whispers maidens' stifled cries,
It breathes of widows' groans.
Ye maidens bear no captive babes!
Ye mothers rear them not!"
The fierce king nods. The lad is seiz'd
And hurried from the spot.
"No more! Enough!" cries out the king.
In rage his orders break:
"Seek though these vales all bards of Wales
And burn them at the stake!"
In martyrship, with song on lip,
Five hundred Welsh bards died;
Not one was mov'd to say he lov'd
The tyrant in his pride.

. . .

"'Ods blood! What songs this night resound
Upon our London streets?
The mayor should feel my irate heel
If aught that sound repeats!"
Each voice is hush'd; through silent lanes
To silent homes they creep.
"Now dies the hound that makes a sound;
The sick king cannot sleep."
"Ha! Bring me fife, drum and horn,
And let the trumpet blare!
In ceaseless hum their curses come . . .
I see their dead eyes glare. . ."
But high above all drum and fife
And trumpets' shrill debate,
Five hundred martyr'd voices chant
Their hymn of deathless hate.

(Transl. by W. Kirkconnell. From: "Hungarian Poetry").

8. (From: "The Death of Buda", Canto Six: "The Legend of the Wonder Hind").

The bird flies on from bough to bough;
The song is pass'd from lip to lip;
Green grass grows o'er old heroes now,
But song revives their fellowship.

. . .

Across the waste now faintly come
The sounds of distant fife and drum;
In darksome loneliness they seem
Like heavenly music in a dream.
Here mystic state the fairies keep,
Along the wilderness they dance,
Or 'neath the cloudy vapour sleep;
And revel in the vast expanse.
No man is near, but there are seen
Earth's maids of fair and noble mien;
The daughters of Belár and Dúl,
Apt students in the fairy school.
A test severe they must endure;
Must hold enslav'd in amorous chains,
To hapless fate nine youths allure;
While fancy-free each maid remains.
'Tis thus they learn the fairy art,
To wield false hope's heart-piercing dart;
Each eve recount the feats of day,
Then dance the darksome hours away.

(Transl. by E. D. Butler. From: "Hungarian Poetry").

9. (From: "I lay the lute down. . .")

. . . O my orphaned song, what thing art thou? —
Perhaps the spectre of departed lays
That issues from the tomb with pallid brow
To whisper down the graveyard's grassy ways?. . .
Art thou a coffin garlanded with flowers? . . .
A cry of anguish in a wilderness? . . .
Youth of my soul, bereft of golden hours,
Ah, whither hast thou stray'd in thy distress! —
I lay the poet's lute down. Dull as lead,
It irks the hand. And who still asks for song?
Who can rejoice in flowers that are dead?
Who seeks their mouldering fragrance to prolong?
If men destroy the tree, the bloom it bore
In shrivelling beauty perishes anon.
Youth of my soul, returning nevermore,
Ah, whither, tell me, whither hast thou gone!

(Transl. by W. Kirkconnell. From: "Hungarian Poetry").

10. (Extracts from I. Madách: "The Tragedy of Man").

(Scene One:)

Lucifer (to God):

A corner is all I need,
Enough to afford a foothold for Negation,
Whereon to raise what will destroy
Thy World . . .

(Scene Three:) (Adam and Eve have just been expelled from Paradise)

Eve (to Adam): I am making such an arbour
As we had before, and so can conjure up
The Eden we have lost . . .

(Scene Eleven: Eve looks at a grave:)

Eve: Why dost thou yawn before my feet, grim Death?
Dost thou believe I fear thine awful gloom?
The dust of Earth is thine. But not the breath
Of radiant life. I'll shine beyond the tomb!
While Love and Poetry and Youth endure,
Upon my homeward way I still will go.
My smile alone the ills of Earth can cure . . .

(Scene Thirteen: Adam, though disgusted with the frustrations of mankind, realises that he has a task to perform:)

Adam: Though Science may redeem the Earth, in time
It too will pass away, like everything
Which has fulfilled its end. But the Idea
Which gave it life, again will rise triumphant.

(Scene Fifteen: Adam, having seen in his dream the tragedies and frustrations of human history, decides to prevent it all by committing suicide:)

Adam: Before me is that cliff — below the gulf.
One jump, the last act, the curtain comes down,
And I say: the comedy has ended . . .

Eve: . . . I am a mother, Adam . . .

(Adam falls upon his knees and turns to the Lord again, but he still fears for the future:)

Adam: . . . My heart on high I'll set!
But, ah, the end! If that I could forget

The Lord: Man, I have spoken! Strive and unfalteringly. trust!

(Transl. by C. P. Sanger. From: Madach: "The Tragedy of man", Ed. Pannonia, Sydney, 1953).

11. ("In Twenty Years", by János Vajda).

Like the ice that caps the peak of Montblanc,
That neither sun nor wind can warm,
My quiet heart does no longer burn
No new suffering can do it harm.
Around me the stars in their millions
Winking lead me on as they revolve
Scattering over my head their shine;
Even so, still I will not dissolve.
But sometimes on a quiet, quiet evening
As I slide alone into my dreams
Upon the enchanted lake of youth
Your swan-like form appears.
And when the rising sun arrives
Then my heart is again alight
Like Montblanc's eternal snows
After a long winter's night.

(Transl. by Paul Desney).

12. (From the last chapter of "The Dark Diamonds" by M. Jókai: Ivan, the owner of a coal-mine, finds the girl of his dreams — working in his coal-mine)

The girl stood still on top of the coal. . . The next moment Iván was at her side . . .

"You are here! You have come back here!"

"I have been here, sir, for almost a year, and if you will keep me on, I should like to stay."

"You can stay, but only on one condition — as my wife," cried Iván, pressing her hand to his heart.

Evila shook her head, and drew away her hand. "No, no. Let me be your servant, a maid in your house, your wife's maid. I shall be quite happy; I want nothing more . . . if you knew all, you would never forgive me."

"I know everything, and I can forgive everything."

His words proved that Iván knew nothing. If he had known the truth, he would have known that there was nothing, nothing to forgive. As it was, he pressed his love to his heart, while she murmured:

"You may forgive me, but the world will never pardon you."

"The world!" cried Iván, raising his head proudly. "My world is here," laying his hand on his breast. "The World!

Look around from this hill. Everything in this valley owes its life to me; every blade of grass has to thank me that it is now green. Hill and valley know that, with God's help, I have saved them from destruction! I have made a million, and I have not ruined any one... My name is known all over the world, and yet I have hidden myself here, not to be troubled with their praises."

"Oh, sir," she whispered, "if I do not die, I shall always love you, but I feel that I shall die."

As she spoke she fell back in a faint. Her brilliant colour faded to a wax pallor, her flashing eyes closed; and her body, which a moment before was like a blooming rose, crumpled lifeless, like an autumn leaf.

Ivan held her lifeless body in his arms.

The woman whom he had loved for so long, for whom he had suffered so much, was his, just as her pulse ceased to beat, just as she said: "I shall always love you, but I feel that I shall die."

But she did not die.

A diamond is a diamond for ever.

(Transl. by F. Gerard. From: "The Dark Diamonds". Corvina Press, Budapest, 1968).

13. (From: K. Mikszáth's novelette, "The Gentry": a Budapest journalist has been a guest at a wedding attended by Hungarian-Slovak gentry in the northern county Sáros. After the wedding he asks his friend about the luxury and pomp displayed by the guests)

"And those four-in-hands," I exclaimed, "the pomp, the splendour and brilliance, the Havana cigars and everything, everything?"

"So much eyewash. The four-in-hands were borrowed from one place; the trappings here, the first pair of horses there, the second pair from another place. . ."

"But this is sheer deceit!"

"Poppycock," Bogozy interrupted passionately. "Who would be deceived? Everyone knows that the other hasn't got four horses. These good boys, myself included, simply keep up form. . . beautiful, ancient form. Why, all this is so charming. . . This is the custom with us and customs must be respected at all costs. . . But as regards the merits

of the case, even if the brilliance and pomp, the splendour and liveliness, the refined and easy manners, the joviality and aristocratic airs. . . the horses, the silver cutlery. . . don't belong to one or the other. . . by all means they belong to somebody — to all of us. These things happen to be scattered among us and whose business is it if, on certain occasions, we artificially pool them on one spot? . . ."

(Transl. by L. Halápy. From: "Hungarian Short Stories", Oxford Uni. Press, London, and Corvina, Budapest, 1967).

CHAPTER 26

1. ". . . (Károlyi) thought that he was going to assure a better armistice for the new, pro-Allied Hungary, so he went, probably following Czech advice, to Belgrade, to receive what he thought more generous terms from General Franchet d'Espérey. . . Their humiliation, indeed, was complete. . . When a socialist member of the delegation was introduced to the French commander, the latter exclaimed, "Etes-vous tombés si bas?" (Have you sunk to such depths?). . ." (From "History of the Hungarian Nation" S. B. Várdy, Danubian Press, Astor Park, 1969).
2. On March 20, 1919, Károlyi addressed the following proclamation to the people of Hungary:

"*To the people of Hungary!*

The government has resigned. Those who had been governing by the will of the people with the support of the Hungarian proletariat, have now realised that the compelling force of circumstances demands new directions. . . The Paris peace Conference has decided to place almost the entire territory of the country under military occupation. . . The aim of the military occupation is to use Hungary as the operational and supply area against the Russian Soviet army which is now fighting on the Soviet-Rumanian border. The territories taken from us are to be the reward given to the Rumanian and Czech troops to be used against the Russian-Soviet army.

As the provisional President of the Hungarian People's Republic I turn to the proletariat of the world for justice and assistance against this decision of the Conference of Paris. I resign and hand the power to the proletariat of the peoples of Hungary.

Mihály Károlyi."

In his "Memoirs", published in 1956 (J. Cape, London), Károlyi asserts that he never signed this proclamation, and that in fact he was removed from office by a "coup d'etat" staged by the Social Democrats and instigated by the Entente (!). (Pp. 156-157). He fails to explain, however, why his regime was replaced by Kun's Communists, not the Social Democrats who had — allegedly — ousted him, why he remained in Budapest during the Kun regime (in the fashionable Svábhegy district), on very friendly terms with the "usurpers" (Communist Kun and Socialist Kunfi), and why he left Hungary in a hurry a few days before the downfall of the Kun regime (July, 1919). He also fails to explain why he had to wait until 1956 to repudiate the famous (and fatuous) proclamation.

3. After a counter-revolutionary uprising in Budapest, the Kun government issued a proclamation urging the Communists to "retaliate by the Red Terror of the proletariat. . ." (Hungarian text quoted in "Magyarország Története Képekben", Gondolat publ. Budapest, 1971).

4. General H. H. Bandholtz, U.S.A. member of the Inter-Allied Military Mission in Budapest wired to Paris on August 16, 1919: ". . . the Rumanians were doing their utmost to delay matters in order to complete the loot of Hungary. . . (after having carted away locomotives, railroad cars, machine tools and other equipment) they proceeded also to clean the country out of private automobiles, farm implements, cattle, horses, clothing, sugar, coal, salt and, in fact, everything of value. . . dismantled telephones even in private residences." Another member of the U.S.A. Mission reports that the "total amount of rolling stock taken by them (Rumanians) from the Hungarian State Railways was 1,302 locomotives and 34,160 railroad cars." The Rumanian occupation caused damage, as it was officially estimated, of almost three billions of gold crowns (equivalent to the same amount in US dollars).

   In another telegram, addressed to the Supreme Allied Council in Paris (October 13), General Bandholz states that "in all towns occupied by the Rumanians we found an oppression so great as to make life unbearable. Murder is common: youths and women are flogged, imprisoned without trial, and arrested without reason. . ." (Quoted in S. B. Vardy: "History of the Hungarian Nation" pp. 214-215. Ed. Danubian Press.

Astor Park, 1969.) (Cf. also: H. H. Bandholtz, "An Undiplomatic Diary", ed. by F. K. Kruger, New York, 1933).

5. The "White Terror" myth was born in the imagination of Károlyi and his emigré friends in Paris and London. The ex-president substantiated his accusations by grossly misstating the date of Horthy's entry into Budapest. In his "Memoirs" he writes: "On *August 12th* Admiral Horthy, having waited for the departure of the looting Rumanian troops, made his entry into the city (Budapest). . . and started his punitive White Terror". (Károlyi: Memoirs, J. Cape, London, 1956, p. 174). It is a historic fact that Horthy entered Budapest on *November 16th* (1919), by which time the worst of the lawless acts of individual revenge against Kun's henchmen was over. During the months of the "legal vacuum" (August-November, 1919), Horthy and his collegues of the Counter-Revolutionary Government (Bethlen, Teleki etc.) lived under the watchful (and somewhat suspicious) eyes of the Allied (French) commander in Szeged and had therefore neither the authority nor the opportunity to commit (or to stop) "atrocities."

Thus Horthy and the Hungarian governments of two decades (and, indirectly, the entire Hungarian nation) were branded "fascists", "white terrorists" (and worse) because of the blatant distortion of facts by a confused ex-politician trying to excuse his own blunders.

Regrettably, most foreign historians (and politicians) repeated uncritically these accusations without bothering to check their dates or to read the reports of the members of the Allied Military Mission in Budapest, who were closely observing Horthy's actions in 1919 and 1920 (while Károlyi and his friends collected their "evidence" in Paris and London). Thus the British High Commissioner P. B. Hohler, the leader of the Inter-Allied Military Mission, Brig. Gen. R. N. Gorton, and Admiral Sir E. Troubridge stated in their reports of *February and March 1920:* "There is nothing in the nature of terror in Hungary. . . life is as secure here as in England. . ." (Quoted by Károlyi in his "Memoirs", p. 377). Similarly, the U.S. observer, Col. Horwitz (himself Jewish) attested: "Horthy's forces had done everything within reason to prevent such persecutions (of the Jews and Communists). . . as to there being a real "White Terror", there was nothing of the

kind. . ." (Quoted in Várdy: History of the Hungarian Nation, p. 215).

6. The 10th of the "Fourteen Points" of President Wilson states that: ". . . the peoples of Austria-Hungary, whose place among the nations we wish to see safeguarded and assured, should be accorded the freest opportunity of autonomous development. . ." The Hungarians were one of the "peoples" of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. . .

7. Historic Hungary — including Croatia — had, in 1910, an area of 325,000 sq. km. and a population of 21.800.000. An area of 232.500 sq. km. (71.4%) and a population of 13.280.000 (63.5%) were transferred to the succession states by the Trianon Treaty. Counting Hungary proper — without Croatia — the 1910 area of the country was 283.000 sq. km. with a total population of 18,300,000. The following detailed statistics refer to Hungary proper — without Croatia.

   Total losses by the Trianon Treaty:
   Area: 190.000 sq. km. (67%)
   Population: 10.700.000 (58%)
   Left to Hungary after 1920:
   Area: 93.000 sq. km., population: 7,600.000
   Gains by the succession states:
   Rumania: area: 103.000 sq. km. population: 5,260,000
   Czechoslovakia: area: 62.000 sq. km. population: 3,520,000
   Yugoslavia: area: 21.000 sq. km. population: 1,510,000
   Austria: area: 4.000 sq. km. population: 290,000
   Poland: area: 600 sq. km. population: 25,000
   Italy: area: 21 sq. km. population: 50,000.

   The number of Magyars transferred to each succession state was about 1/3 of the population of each detached territory, i.e.: to Rumania 1,700,000; to Czechoslovakia: 1,100,000; to Yugoslavia 550,000.

   Each detached area had also a large population of non-Magyar tongue who were alien to the nation to which the area was transferred (e.g. Germans). Thus the area annexed by Rumania had a Rumanian population of 55% only, the Czechoslovak area a Slovak population of 60%, the Yugoslav area a South-Slav population of about 33%.

   For comparison, here are the data of the last Hungarian census before Trianon — the census of 1910. These data refer to Hungary proper (without Croatia):

Magyars: 9,950,000 (54%)
Rumanians: 2,950,000 (16%)
Slovaks: 1,950,000 (10.4%)
Serbs: 460,000 (2.5%)
Other South Slavs: 150,000 (1.1%)
Others: Germans, Ruthenes etc.: 2,840,000 (16%).

The proportion of foreign nationalities in the newly created succession states was very similar to the Hungarian situation in 1910. Thus the Trianon Treaty created three new states with similar minority problems.

Though the Wilsonian "Fourteen Points" guaranteed "self-determination" and "autonomous development" to "the peoples of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy", only one act of "self-determination" was allowed in connection with the Trianon Treaty: the western Hungarian town Sopron, claimed by Austria, was retained by Hungary after a plebiscite in 1921. No plebiscite and no "autonomous development" was granted to any Magyar-speaking region in the territories occupied by the victorious succession states, though large Magyar-speaking areas were contiguous to the Trianon frontier.

CHAPTER 28

1. (E. Ady: "The White-Lady":)

An old, fearful castle is my soul,
A mossy, lofty, forlorn spot.
(Behold! how enormous are my eyes,
Yet sparkle not, and sparkle not).
The lone, forsaken rooms ring hollow.
From the walls so sad, so dreary,
Black windows look down on the valley, —
(So weary are my eyes, so weary!)
Eternal are here apparitions,
The stench of vaults, the shroud of fog;
And shadows rustle in the darkness
And unforgiven phantoms sob.
(But rarely at the hour of midnight
My large eyes begin to flare —)
The white-lady roams then the castle
And smiles, standing at the window there.
(Transl. by R. Bonnerjea. From: "Hungarian Poetry").

2. (From: "Up flew the Peacock. . .")

New winds are shaking
The old Magyar maples,
Waiting we wait for
The new Magyar miracles.
Either we are madmen and
All of us shall perish.
Or what we believe in
Shall verily flourish.
New flames, new faiths,
New kilns, new saints
Exist, or anew void mist
The future taints.
Either the Magyar words
Shall have new senses,
Or Magyar life will stay sad,
Ever changeless.

(Transl. by C. W. Horne).

3. ("Autumn came to Paris")

Yes, Autumn came to Paris yesterday,
Gliding in silence down Rue Saint-Michel;
Here in the dog-days, soft beneath the leaves
She met and hail'd me well.
I had been strolling toward the slumbering Seine,
Deep in my heart burn'd little twigs of song;
Smoky and strange and sad and purple-hued.
I knew for death they yearned.
The Autumn understood and whisper'd low;
Rue Saint-Michel grew tremulous and grey;
The jesting leaves cried out along the street
And flutter'd in dismay.
One moment: then the Summer shone again,
And laughing Autumn left on tripping toe;
And I alone, beneath these whispering leaves,
Beheld her come and go.

(Transl. by W. Kirkconnell. From: "Hungarian Poetry").

4. (From: "The horses of Death"):

On the white road of the moonlight
The winds, wild shepherds of the sky,

Drive on their flocks of scudding cloud
And towards us, towards us, without sound,
Unshod, Death's horses onward fly.
He before whom those horsemen rein
Into that saddle mounts, his breath
Catching, grown pale, and with him fast
Along the white road of the moon
Seeking new riders, gallops Death.

(Transl. by J. C. W. Horne).

5. (From: "A half-kissed kiss"):

This kiss consumed we should peacefully
Die without sorrow.
We long for that kiss, we crave for that fire,
But sadly we say: tomorrow, tomorrow.

(Transl. by R. Bonnerjea. From: "Hungarian Poetry").

6. (From: "A Kinsman of Death"):

I am akin to death, his kinsman,
Fleeting to the love I love, swift burning:
Her lips to kiss I love who goes
Not returning.
Roses I love, the sick, the languid,
Women whose passion fears the morrow,
Years of the past, radiant years,
Years of sorrow.

(Transl. by J. C. W. Horne).

7 ("Craving for Affection"):

No gay forefathers, no successors,
No relatives and no possessors.
I belong to nobody,
I belong to nobody.
I am what every man is, Grandeur,
A North, Secret, and a Stranger.
Distant will o'the wisp,
Distant will o'the wisp.
Alas, but I cannot thus remain,
I must make myself to all quite plain,
That seeing they may see me,
That seeing they may see me.

Therefore all: Self-torture, melody!
I want to be loved by somebody,
And to be somebody's,
And to be somebody's.

(Transl. by R. Bonnerjea. From: "Hungarian Poetry").

8. (From: "A familiar lad"):

A little lad came to me last night,
Who once was I, now dead, beguiling,
Gently smiling.
At my wrinkling face he stares and stares,
And sheds many a tear in surprise
Upon my eyes.

(Transl. by R. Bonnerjea).

9. (From: "Detestable, lovable nation"):

If thousand times I turn from thee,
'Tis but a dance, an illusion.
In Magyarland things are awry,
I shall wait till the conclusion,
My loving, beloved and loathsome nation.

(Transl. by R. Bonnerjea. From: "Hungarian Poetry").

10. ("The Magyar Messiah"):

Our weeping is more bitter,
More piercing torments try us.
A thousandfold Messiahs
Are Hungary's Messiahs.
A thousandfold they perish.
Unblest their crucifixion.
For vain is their affliction,
Ah, vain is their affliction.

(Transl. by W. Kirkconnell).

11. (From: "Gog and Magog"):

Through Verecke's immortal pass came I.
Old Magyar songs still clamour in my ears,
Yet may I through Dévény break in here
With new melodies of newer years?

(Transl. by R. Bonnerjea).

12. (From: "Reminiscences of a Summer-night"):

I thought, at that time, I thought.
that some neglected God
would come to life and take me away;
and right up to now here I live
as the somebody that that night made of me
and waiting for God I reminisce
over that terrible night:
it was a strange,
strange summer's night.

(Transl. by Paul Desney).

13. ("In Elijah's Chariot"):

God, as with Elijah, elects those
Whom he most loves, whom most he hurts.
He gives them quick-beating, fiery hearts
Which are like burning chariots.
This Elijah-tribe flies towards heaven
And stops where snow eternal is.
On top the ice-capped Himalayas
Crumble, rumble their carriages.
'Twixt earth and heaven, sad and homeless,
The winds of Fate them onwards chase.
And their chariots gallop on towards
Vile forms of beauty, cold and base.
Their hearts burn, their brains are icicles,
The world mocks them and rocks with fun,
But with diamond dust their cold highway
Is sprinkled by the pitying sun.

(Transl. by R. Bonnerjea).

14. (From: "The Lord's arrival"):

When all deserted,
When I bore my soul crumbling violently,
The Lord took me in His embrace,
Unforeseen, silently . . .

(Transl. by R. Bonnerjea).

15. (From: "Adam, where art thou?"):

'Tis only because God with flaming sword
To clear my human path has marched before.
I hear His footsteps walking in my soul
And His sad query: "Adam, where art thou?"

My breath replies in throbbing past control,
I have already found Him in my heart,
I've found Him and have clasped Him in my arms,
In death we'll be united, ne'er to part.

(Transl. by W. Kirkconnell).

16. (From: "Gypsy Song", by M. Babits):

"Here the meadow, there the wood,
countries bad and countries good,
although all the same to you:
everywhere the skies are blue.
If a Jew walks woodland way,
without looking, thus you prey.
If a girl goes meadow ways,
without asking you embrace.
That's because you sprang from branch
born beneath a tree in trench
and as fruit falls far from tree
so your mother shall lose thee:
fatherless, motherless,
homeless, landless, countryless."

(Transl. by E. F. Kunz. From: "Hungarian Poetry").

17. (From: "They sang long, long ago in Sappho's day...")

The world is selfish grown:
Just common hunger, common fever, faint
Confusion stammering, — and beyond that crew
Lies loneliness and silence. Song has flown,
And love, like doves' soft kiss, is silent too.
In our own hearts, my dear, song's word is rife.
They sang long,long ago in Sappho's day.
Kiss me! For song is dead, and grieving life
Takes refuge where two hearts own single sway.
Once men were truly men; but now, a herd
Of tired beasts that chew the cud of care.
Be thou an island till the fens that gird
Thee round grow red with sunrise! Learn to con
Cocoons that breed bright moths! Who need despair?
The old gods pass and go, but man lives on.

(Transl. by W. Kirkconnell. From: "Hungarian Poetry").

18. (From: "The lyric poet's epilogue"):

So I remain my own prison walls:
the subject and the object both, alas,
the Alpha and Omega both, am I.

(Transl. by A. Kramer).

19. ("I have forgot" by Gy. Juhász):

I have forgot the fairness of her hair;
But this I know, that when the flaming grain
Across the rippling fields makes summer fair,
Within its gold I feel her grace again.
I have forgot the blueness of her eyes:
But when Septembers lay their tired haze
In sweet farewell across the azure skies,
I dream once more the sapphire of her gaze.
I have forgot the softness of her voice;
But when the spring breathes out its softest sigh,
Then I can hear her speak the tender joys
That bless'd the springtime of a day gone by.

(Transl. by W. Kirkconnell. From: "Hungarian Poetry").

20. (From: "The pendulum", by A. Tóth):

Hoarse is the husky tickling's muffled chant
As often through the night my sad eye sees
Eternity (it seems) sway there aslant
And whittle futile Time to atomies.
Only a myriad pendulums are awake:
Blind, swaying splendors and mysterious miens,
Relentless sickles, golden guillotines.

(Transl. by W. Kirkconnell. From: "Hungarian Poetry").

21. (From: "Trees of Üllői-út" by D. Kosztolányi):

The yellowed fields are withering,
trees of Üllői-út.
My moods like suns of autumn sink:
soughing and slowly blows the wind
and kills the past spring's root.
O where, O where does fly the youth?
You sad leaved trees, O tell the truth,
trees of Üllői-út.

(Transl. by E. F. Kunz. From: "Hungarian Poetry").

22. (From: "To my wife"):

You came in my room telling something odd;
so after years of years I realised
that there you are and scarcely listening
surprised I looked at you. I closed my eyes.
And this to myself I repeated mumbling:
"I am used to her as I am used to air.
She is giving me the breath."

(Transl. by E. F. Kunz. From: "Hungarian Poetry").

23. (A. József: "Mama")

For one week I haven't stopped to think
always of Mama, at the sink,
bearing a creaking basket of soft
clothes at her lap up to the loft.
I was still a plain-spoken lout —
I shouted, stamped my feet about:
let her leave the clothes in a heap
and take me up the stairs so steep.
She went on dumbly hanging clothes,
not scolding, nor even looking on
and the clothes, shining, swishing,
wheeled and soared up high.
I should not wimper — it's too late —
I now see how she was great —
grey hair flowing on the sky,
dissolving blue starch there up high.

(Transl. by Paul Desney).

24. (From: "Ars Poetica"):

Ferment is fine to lose oneself in!
Repose and tremors embrace
and clever charming chit-chat
arises from the foam.
Other poets? of what concern are they?
Let them all mime their intoxication
up to their necks
in phoney images and wine.
I go past today's pub
to meaning and beyond!
A free mind will never serve
the scurrilous modes of drivel . . .

(Transl. by Paul Desney).

25. (From: "Lullaby"):

The sky is closing his blue eyes,
the houses' eyes close one by one,
the fields sleep under eiderdown —
so go to sleep my little son.
On the armchair sleeps the coat,
dozes the tear, his job is done,
he won't tear further, not to-day —
so go to sleep, my little son.
The dream like glassball will be yours,
you will be giant, mighty one,
but only close your little eyes —
and go to sleep, my little son. . .

(Transl. by E. F. Kunz).

26. (From: "The three Kings"):

Jesus, Jesus, God greet you, God greet you!
Three kings are we well and true.
Flaming star stood round our place,
so we came on foot in haste.
Lord Saviour, God bless you, God bless you!
Far and warm lands crossed we through.
All our bread and cheese is gone,
all our shining boots are worn,
but we brought you gold a lot,
incense in an iron pot.
Blushes, blushes Mary red, Mary red,
happy mother bends her head.
Through the tears which fill her eyes
scarcely sees her Jesus Christ.
All around the shepherds sing. —
Time to feed the little thing.
Dearest three Kings, kind and true,
now good night, good night to you!

(Transl. by E. F. Kunz. From: "Hungarian Poetry").

27. (From: "A painter in the Village" by G. Gárdonyi):

"I'd like to beg you, Mr. Picture-maker, to paint my little daughter, my Ilonka. . ."

"Which one is your daughter?" asked the painter.

"She's dead, Sir, she's dead," the woman said with tears in her eyes.

"She was an only daughter," I explained as the mother faltered, "a lovely creature, with blue eyes."

"It's a difficult business," the painter answered. "Have you got some photograph of her?"

"No, I haven't, my dear Sir, that's why I want her to be painted, because I haven't got a picture of her."

On our way home the painter suddenly asked:

"Did the little girl look like her mother?"

"She'd have grown up to be just like her, if she'd lived."

"I'm going to try something," he said merrily. "I'll paint that woman as though she were seven years old."

And the following day he began to paint the portrait of the dead child. The mother posed zealously, though she did not quite know what for . . . When the picture was ready, the artist took a large green shawl and from it improvised a frame around the painting. Then he called the woman.

No sooner had she glanced at the picture than she burst into tears.

"Do you recognise her?" I asked, deeply moved.

"Of course I do, Sir," she answered, "although the poor thing has changed a lot in the other world."

(Transl. by L. Halápy. From: "Hungarian Short Stories").

CHAPTER 29

1. The *"First Jewish Law"* decreed that, in the future, only 20% of the persons engaged in certain professions (Journalism, Medicine, Theatre, Law, Engineering) and salaried commercial employment could be Jewish.

According to the 1930 census, 5% of Hungary's population belonged to the Jewish faith. At the same time, the proportion of Jews in certain professions was the following: lawyers: 49%, journalists: 32%, doctors in private practice: 55%, salaried employees in commerce: 42% etc. (Cf. Macartney: "October the Fifteenth" and contemporary statistical publications).

2. ". . . Horthy warned Hitler not to undertake the operation (the attack on Czechoslovakia), because in his belief it would lead to a world war, and Germany would be defeated, because she would find the British Navy against her. Britain would assemble a coalition, and although she often lost battles, she

always ended by winning the war. . .” (Macartney: “October Fifteenth” vol. I. p. 242, Edinburgh Uni. Press. 1957).

3. The Munich Agreement of Sept. 29, 1938, signed by Hitler, Chamberlain, Daladier and Mussolini, stated that: “. . . the problems of the . . . Hungarian minorities in Czechoslovakia. . . if not settled within three months by agreement between the respective governments, shall form the subject of another meeting of the Heads of Governments of the four Powers here present. . .”

4. The *“Second Jewish Law”* decreed that the proportion of Jewish persons in the free professions should be reduced to 6% gradually, (without dismissing those already employed) and in commerce to 12%. There were many exemptions.

5. “. . . On the 9th (September, 1939), Ribbentrop asked Csáky (Hungarian Foreign Minister), requesting passage of German troops through Hungary against Poland. . . in return he offered Hungary . . . the oil wells of the (Polish) Sambor region. . . The next morning the meeting (of the Hungarian Cabinet) agreed unanimously to reject the request. . . Horthy added a rider that the Germans should be told that he was having the railways mined and would have them blown up if the Germans tried to use them. . .”

“. . . during the brief campaign (September 1939) Hungary had given Poland all active assistance that the laws of neutrality allowed. . . In fact a trifle more, for a legion (of Hungarian volunteers), some 6000 strong, had fought on the Polish side. . .” (Both quotations from Macartney: “October Fifteenth” vol. 1. pp. 366-367).

6. By June 26, 1941, Italy, Finland, Rumania, Slovakia, and Croatia had followed Germany in declaring war on Soviet Russia whilst Hungary had only broken off diplomatic relations. The Germans kept urging Hungary to join the campaign, adding veiled hints to the territorial claims of Slovakia and Rumania (which were already belligerents on the German side). After the attack on Kassa (26 June), Bárdossy saw Horthy who demanded “reprisals” (but not a declaration of war). A cabinet meeting was inconclusive, though the majority of the ministers seemed to be in favour of a statement that “Hungary regards herself as being in a state of war with Russia”. Without returning to the Regent or consulting the Parliament, Bárdossy informed

the German Legation and issued a press communiqué (June 27) that "Hungary was at war with the Soviet Union." Only then did he announce to the Lower House of the Parliament that "the Royal Hungarian Government concludes that in consequence of these attacks (the bombing of Kassa) a state of war has come into being between Hungary and the Soviet Union".

The Hungarian Constitution reserved the right of the declaration of war to the Regent — but only after Parliament had previously given its consent. There is no doubt therefore that Bárdossy disregarded the Constitution. Prof. Macartney suggests a typically "Magyar" reason: Bárdossy wished that if things went wrong, all responsibility should fall on himself, not on the Regent or the individual members of the Parliament. (Macartney: "October Fifteenth" vol. II. pp. 28-30. Cf. also N. Horthy: "Memoirs", New York, 1957).

7. ". . . the policy adopted by all the 'democratic' and 'left-wing' leaders alike was to shelter behind the Government, support it unobtrusively, and let it play their game for them. . . The stories spread abroad of heroic resistance by these elements to the 'German Fascists' and their 'Hungarian abettors' were pure fiction. Hungarian resistance to Germany throughout the war was directed from the top: its key figures were the Regent, Kállay and Keresztes-Fischer (Minister of the Interior in several governments)." (Macartney: "October Fifteenth" I. p. 379).

8. Horthy's instructions to Kállay were: to defend, preserve and (if necessary) to restore the complete independence (internal and external) of Hungary, to develop toward the Germans spiritual and moral resistance and to keep the concessions to the minimum, short of provoking a German occupation. To keep the Army as intact as possible. . . To seek contact with the British and to call a halt to the anti-Semitic measures. Later Horthy authorised Kállay to initiate armistice negotiations with the western powers but insisted, as a point of honour, on giving Germany previous notice of an eventual armistice agreement. (Kállay: "Hungarian Premier", Oxford Uni. Press, 1959. Also: Macartney and Horthy op. cit.).

9. The *"Third Jewish Law"* (1941, Bárdossy) prohibited marriage between Jews and non-Jews but imposed no other restrictions.

The "*Fourth Jewish Law*" (1942, Kállay) provided for expropriation, against compensation, of all Jewish-owned land. (There were very few Jewish landowners in Hungary). Another measure, introduced later, excluded the Jews from active armed service in the Defence Forces. Instead, they served in labour formations as auxiliaries.

10. Prof. N. Rich (a Jewish historian) in his work "Hitler's War Aims" I-II (London, Deutsch, 1974) praises Horthy for having preserved Hungary as a refuge (for Jews) until the Germans took over the country in 1944. Other (non-Hungarian) historians support this opinion (Macartney etc.).

11. After 17 days of fierce fighting the Hungarian IIIrd Army Corps was surrounded by strong Russian armoured formations. The German commander, general Siebert, ordered the Corps to "attack the Russians". The Hungarian Corps commander, general count Marcel Stomm issued the following order to his troops: "Krasznoje Olim, February 1, 1943.

The Roy. Hungarian IIIrd Army Corps, having been separated after the Uryv breakthrough (13 January) from the Roy. Hungarian 2nd Army, was placed under the orders of the German Group Siebert. In this position, the Corps has been protecting the withdrawal of the German 2nd Army for the last 12 days. During this time, the Hungarian soldiers had to suffer the horrors of the Russian winter nights outdoors, without food, ammunition, without cover in the open snowfields. . . Today I received the order to lead you in an attack to break through the Russian lines. . . through the Russian army which even the well equipped and armed German troops were unable to stop. . . I can not pass this order to you, as it would be senseless to expect the half-starved, half-frozen Hungarians to go to their deaths by the thousands. . . After this I must allow everybody to look after himself as well as possible. . . God be with you, Hungarian soldiers!"

On issuing this order, general Stomm said good-bye to his staff and began to walk. . . in the direction ordered by his commanding officer, toward the Russians. He could hardly walk as both his legs were frozen. He was captured later — with his service revolver in his hand — the only general captured armed by the Russians. . . (The author's own information. The general's order was published in the Hungarian newspapers after the war).

12. In the middle of 1944 about 1,100,000 men were on active service in the Hungarian Defence forces (out of a total population of 14 million) — a remarkable effort after the horrendous losses at the Don in 1943. However, only one Army, the 1st (successfully defending the eastern Carpathians under generals Lakatos and Farkas) was fully equipped. The makeshift 2nd (northern Hungary) and 3rd (Transylvania) Armies consisted of troops without heavy equipment, modern transport, armour, air support or anti-tank defences. Moreover, several divisions were still on occupation duty employed by the German Command in distant sectors of the eastern front.

The suspicious Germans refused to equip the Hungarians with heavy and modern weapons even though the production of the Hungarian war industry (still working at full capacity) had been almost entirely requisitioned by the German command. Only a few new units could be provided with modern equipment, such as the elite "Szent László" division (general Z. Szügyi) — destined to become the last defender of Hungarian soil in 1945.

13. Budapest was defended by about 70,000 troops — more than half of them Hungarians — against 20 Russian divisions supported by 2000 planes.

It is impossible to give an estimate of the military and civilian losses, but we know that some units suffered very high casualties. The Budapest Guard Battalion fought to the last man and the University Regiment lost 80% of its effectives. Thousands of civilians died during the house-to-house fighting and in consequence of indiscriminate shelling, bombing, lack of food, fuel and medical help. The water, gas and electricity services broke down completely at the beginning of January (during the coldest winter in living memory). The districts occupied by the Russians were subjected to a reign of unbridled violence by armed gangs of Soviet army "deserters" (a term used by Russian Marshal Voroshilov).

On the 14th of February the pale winter sun rose behind a pall of smoke and red haze over the ruins of the city once called the "Queen of the Danube". The guns were silent at last and the screams of the wounded soldiers in the burning Buda hospital had stopped.

It was the dawn of Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent. 1945.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

(This is the list of the main English language works consulted by the author. Works written in other languages are not mentioned here, neither are articles, pamphlets and chapters in comprehensive works or encyclopaedias).

ALVAREZ, A. (intr.) Hungarian Short Stories, Oxford Uni. Press, (The World's Classics). New York, Toronto, 1967.

BANDHOLTZ, H. H. An Undiplomatic Diary, Columbia Uni. Press, New York, 1933.

BARTÓK, B. Hungarian Folk Music, Oxford Uni. Press. London, 1931.

BOLDIZSÁR, I. (ed.) Hungary — a Comprehensive Guidebook, Corvina, Budapest, 1959.

BOWRING, J. Poetry of the Magyars, Print Smallfield, London, 1830.

CSICSERY-RÓNAI, I. The First Book of Hungary, Franklin Watts Inc. New York, 1967.

DE DARUVAR, Y. The Tragic Fate of Hungary, "Nemzetör" and American Hungarian Literary Guild, Astor Park, 1974.

DEGH, L. (ed.) Folktales of Hungary, Uni. of Chicago Press, 1965.

DESNEY, P. Hungarian poems in English translation, (manuscript), Sydney, 1972-1974.

DOBSZAY, L. The Kodály Method and its Musical Basis, Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest, 1972.

DOMJÁN, J. Hungarian Heroes and Legends, D. Van Nostrand Co. Inc. Princeton. 1963.

DONALD, R. The Tragedy of Trianon, Thornton Butterworth Ltd. London, 1928.

ENDREY, A. Sons of Nimrod (The Origin of Hungarians), Hawthorn Press, Melbourne. 1975.

E.O.S. Hungary and its Revolutions (with a Memoir of L. Kossuth), London, 1896.

ERDEI, F. (ed.) Information Hungary, Pergamon Press, Oxford, (Countries of the World, vol. 2), 1968.

FEKETE, M. Eminent Hungarians, Aurora, München, 1966.

FÉL, E. and HOFER, T. Proper Peasants, Corvina, Budapest — New York, 1969.

FÉL, E., HOFER, T. and CSILLÉRY, K. Hungarian Peasant Art, Corvina, Budapest, 1969.

FENYŐ, M. Hitler, Horthy and Hungary (German-Hungarian Relations, 1941-1944), Yale Uni. Press, 1972.

FOLDVÁRY, Z. G. An outline of the History of Hungary between 890 A.D. and 1146 A.D. (manuscript), Sydney.

GÁBORJÁN, A. Hungarian Folk Costumes, Corvina, Budapest, (Series Hungarian Folk Art)

GALLUS, S. (ed.) Studies for a New Central Europe, Mid-European Institute, New York, 1968-1972.

GINK, K., KISS, I. S. Folk Art and Folk Artists in Hungary, Corvina, Budapest, 1968.

GOÓR, Gy. The Hungarian Soldier, (manuscript), Sydney. 1972.

GROSZ, J. and BOGGS, W. A. Hungarian Anthology, (a collection of poems), Pannonia, Toronto, 1966.
HARASZTI, E. The Ethnic History of Transylvania, Danubian Press Inc. Astor Park, Florida, 1971.
HORTHY, N. The Confidential Papers of Admiral H., Corvina, Budapest, 1965.
HORTHY, N. Memoirs, Hutchinson, London, 1956.
HUNGARIAN PAST, periodical, ed. by the Hungarian Historical Society, Sydney.
HUNGARIAN RHAPSODY: The Hungarian State Folk Ensemble, Corvina, Budapest, 1956.
HUNGARY: edited by the Hungarian Rotarians, Budapest, 1931.
ILLYÉS, Gy. Once upon a Time (Forty Hungarian Folk Tales), Corvina, Budapest, 1964.
JONES, D. M. Five Hungarian Writers, Clarendon, Oxford, 1966.
KÁLLAY, M. Hungarian Premier, Oxford Uni. Press, London, 1954.
KAMPIS, A. The History of Art in Hungary, Corvina, Budapest-London, 1966.
KÁROLYI, M. Memoirs (Faith without Illusion), J. Cape, London, 1956.
KERTÉSZ, St. Diplomacy in a Whirlpool: Hungary between Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia, Univ. of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame, 1953.
KIBÉDI-VARGA, A. The Hungarians, Amerikai Magyar Könyvkiadó, Köln, 1956.
KIRKCONNELL, W. The Magyar Muse. (An Anthology of Hungarian Poetry) Kanadai Magyar Ujság, Winnipeg, 1933.
KLANICZAY, T. History of Hungarian Literature, Collet's, London. 1964.
KODÁLY, Z. Folk Music of Hungary, Barrett and Rockliff, London, 1960.
KOSSUTH, L. Memoirs of my Exile, Cassell, London, 1886.
KUNZ, E. F. Blood and Gold (Hungarians in Australia), Cheshire, Melbourne, 1969.
KUNZ, E. F. (ed.) Hungarian Poetry, Pannonia, Sydney, 1955.
KUNZ, E. F. (intr.) I. Madach: The Tragedy of Man (transl. by C. P. Sanger), Pannonia, Sydney, 1953.
LEADER, N. Hungarian Classical Ballads and their Folklore, Cambridge Uni. Press, 1967.
LOEW, W. N. Magyar Poetry, New York, 1899.
MACARTNEY, C. A. Hungary (A Short History), Edinbourgh Uni. Press, 1962.
MACARTNEY, C. A. Hungary and her Successors 1919-1937, Oxford Uni. Press, London, 1937.
MACARTNEY, C. A. October Fifteenth. A History of Modern Hungary, 1929-1945. I-II, Edinburgh Uni. Press, Edinburgh, 1956.
MANGA, I. Hungarian Folksong and Folk Instruments, Corvina, Budapest.
MENCZER, B. A Commentary on Hungarian Literature, Amerikai Magyar Kiadó, Castrop-Rauxel, 1956.
MINDSZENTY, J. Card. Memoirs, Macmillan, New York. 1974.
MONTGOMERY, J. F. Hungary, the Unwilling Satellite, New York, 1947.
MUSICA HUNGARICA ed. by B. Szabolcsi and M. Forrai. Qualiton, Musica, Budapest. 1970.
NEW HUNGARIAN QUARTERLY (THE), monthly periodical. editor: I. Boldizsár, Budapest.
NYERGES, A. N. Poems of E. Ady, Hungarian Cultural Foundation, Buffalo, 1969.
ORTUTAY, Gy. Hungarian Peasant Life, Officina, Budapest, 1948.
PADÁNYL V. Dentumagyaria, Transylvania, Buenos Aires, 1963.
PAPP, A. Hungary (A Guide Book), Corvina, Budapest, 1971.
RAJETZKY, B. (ed.) Hungarian Folk Music I-II, UNESCO Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Qualiton, Budapest.

REMÉNYI, J. Hungarian Writers and Literature, ed. by A. J. Molnar, Rutgers Uni. Press, New Brunswick, 1964.
RICH, N. Hitler's War Aims I-II. A. Deutsch, London, 1974.
RIEDL, F. History of the Hungarian Literature, Heinemann. London, 1906.
SINOR, D. History of Hungary, G. Allen and Unwin, London, 1959.
SMITH, L. S. Hungary, Land and People, Athenaeum, Budapest, 1933.
SNYDER, L. L. Fifty Major Documents of the Twentieth Century, Van Nostrand, New York, 1955.
SZABOLCSI, B. A Concise History of Hungarian Music, Corvina, Budapest, 1964.
TÁBORI, P. The Real Hungary. Skeffington, London, 1939.
TÓTH, J. C. Sing out and Go (Hungarian Folk Songs), K. and J. Tóth, Lorain, Ohio, 1969.
VÁRDY, B. and KOSÁRY, D. History of the Hungarian Nation, (The Hungarian Heritage Books, Astor Park, Danubian Press, Florida, 1969.
VARSÁNYI, J. (ed.) Quest for a New Central Europe (A Symposium), Australian Carpathian Federation, Adelaide, 1976.
VISKI, K. Hungarian Dances, Dr. Vajna, Budapest, 1937.
VISKI, K. Hungarian Peasant Customs, Dr. Vajna, Budapest, 1937.
WANKLYN, H. G. The Eastern Marchlands of Europe, G. Philip and Sons, London, 1941.
WARREN HOLLISTER, C. (ed.) Landmarks of the Western Heritage I - II, J. Wiley and Sons, New York, 1967.
WASS, A. (ed.) Selected Hungarian Legends, Danubian Press, (Hungarian Heritage Books), Astor Park, Florida, 1971.
WEISSBERG, A. Advocate for the Dead, A. Deutsch, London, 1958.
YOLLAND, A. B. Hungary, T. C. and E. C. Jack London, 1917.
ZAREK, O. The History of Hungary, London, 1939.
ZATHURECZKY, J. Transylvania, Anderson-Hall Research Centre, Uni of Florida, 1963.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Grateful thanks are due to the following authors and publishers for their permission to reproduce extracts from copyright works:

Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, J. Cape Publishers, London, Corvina Press, Budapest, Danubian Press Inc. Astor Park, Flo., Mr. Paul Desney of Sydney, NSW, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, Dr. E. F. Kunz of Canberra, ACT, Oxford University Press, Oxford, Pannonia Publishing Co. Sydney, NSW, K. and J. C. Tóth Publishers. Lorain, Ohio, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Amerikai Magyar Kiadó, Köln, John Wiley and Sons New York.

INDEX

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

CONTENTS

ZOLTÁN BODOLAI was born and educated in Hungary. He completed his higher studies in Hungarian literature, linguistics and history at the Budapest University where he gained his Ph. D. During the last years of World War II he served in the Hungarian Army.

After a short stay in Germany he settled in Australia where he worked as a high school teacher until his recent retirement.

During the early forties he was secretary to a group of influencial advisers to Hungary's leaders. He thus had the opportunity to observe the nation's decision-makers during the critical war years.

Since 1945 Dr. Bodolai has ceaselessly worked for the preservation of the Hungarian cultural heritage among migrants of Hungarian ethnic origin.

For several years he taught at the University of Sydney as tutor of Hungarian history, culture and language. His compendium of Hungarian history and culture, *"The Timeless Nation"* was published by the Hungaria Publishing Company (Sydney) in 1977. It was sold out in three editions in Australia. A fourth (unchanged) impression was published by Árpád Publishing Co. in the USA in 1984.

In 1983 his book *"Hungarica"* (a chronicle of events and personalities of the Hungarian past) was published in Hungarian and English. His shorter books examine various momentous events of Hungarian history.

Dr. Bodolai has also compiled several Hungarian and English language courses and had many articles and essays published by various periodicals.

This fifth, revised edition has been published by the Transylvanian Association of Canberra, Australia in 1989.