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The New Hungarian Quarterly

Problems
of Style and the New Public

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Progress of Economic Consolidation

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The Unknown Haydn

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A Hungarian Poet Looks at England

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A Cooperative Village

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Secret Documents
from the 2nd World War

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Problem of the "Two Cultures"
in Hungary

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Building a Club
in a Working Class District

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The New Hungarian Quarterly

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THE NEW HUNGARIAN QUARTERLY

It is quite an undertaking for Hungarians to edit and publish in Budapest an English-language periodical intended to be read in the English-speaking world. In the audacity and difficulty of this task—and it is not only the linguistic difficulty we have in mind—there is something of what the Hungarian language denotes by the word *virtus*. This term is not identical with the Latin *virtus*, from which it derives, and is only a remote relative of the English *virtue*. *Virtus* is an undertaking which at first sight surpasses the strength of a person or of a group, but in itself or in its aims is too significant and attractive for its challenge to be resisted.

Could a more attractive *task* be conceived of than to afford English-speaking readers, one of the world's largest language groups, an insight into the life and thinking of a small but much-talked-about, and so often misrepresented, nation? Moreover, what *aim* could be more significant than that of promoting mutual knowledge and deeper understanding among the nations? This aim, amidst all the dangers and threats of the nuclear age, implies confidence in peace, attachment to life and respect for man. We are aware of the fatal change that an increase in the Strontium 90 content of the atmosphere might bring about in the conditions of life on earth. Hungarian readers were dismayed at the brief press report from Britain last spring that there had been an increase of Strontium 90 in the bones of newborn infants. It is the intention of this periodical to try to reduce, if only by a few units, the 'Strontium 90' of misinformation and ignorance apparent in the atmosphere of international relations today.

The editorial staff of this magazine would be lacking in '*virtus*' if they were to pursue that aim by reducing their work to a sort of information service supplying data and handing out declarative statements. To avoid this, we mean to deal in this magazine not only with the successes achieved in socialist construction in Hungary, but also with its problems. Indeed, these problems will be discussed more often than the successes, because it is our ambition—in the words of our early twentieth century poet Endre Ady, but with a change of person—to "Show ourselves to all mankind, That they may look on us." And, speaking of poetry, we want English-speaking readers to share our belief that Hungary boasts some really good poets; we want to break down the barrier of an isolated language and give other nations a glimpse of a literature which, we like to believe, is not unworthy of standing beside Bartók's music.

Literature and other spheres of culture provide, in our opinion, the best medium for obtaining a picture of the Hungarian realities of today and for studying Hungary's past. We shall publish English versions of Hungarian short stories, extracts from novels and plays, and, so far as the limitations of translation make it possible, also of poems, for it is in lyric poetry, perhaps, that Hungarian writing is found at its best. At the same time, we feel bound to honour the spirit of the English language and shall consequently do our best to master the art of understatement; and in formulating the preceeding sentence we are fully aware of this obligation. It is our hope that the literary articles to be published by us will convince our readers that we have not been exaggerating. In general, we intend—without omitting reviews and comments—to let the original works speak for themselves as much as possible. This end will be served, apart from the afore-mentioned literary material, both fictional and non-fictional, by reproductions from the field of fine arts. Nor shall we shrink from reprinting musical scores when reviewing some composition that merits such procedure. Considerable space will be devoted to problems of education and schooling, now in the forefront of public attention in all countries. We shall publish analyses and surveys dealing with the social, especially the economic, transformation of and advance in this country's life. A prominent place will be assigned to Hungary's relations with other countries, her participation in international forums, and her international contacts in the spheres of economy, science and culture. Particular attention will be paid to Hungary's relations, past and present, with Britain, the United States and other countries where English is also current.

Publishing without an assured readership may be possible in the case of information booklets or propaganda sheets. It is certainly out of the question with periodicals. Now, although the readership of THE NEW HUNGARIAN QUARTERLY is, at the moment, an imaginary one, we do not intend to limit its scope to publishing what *we* want to say, but also to give space to what its *readers* may be interested in. We shall, therefore, take a stand on topics of concern to the English-speaking reader, on issues currently under debate in the English-speaking world and discussed in the press.

It is our aim to insure that the articles appearing in this magazine should not pass without response; any comment or criticism, whether referring to the contents of this magazine or to the language and style used therein, will, consequently, be welcomed. We are confident that in our later issues we shall succeed in securing contributions from writers, scientists, public figures or private persons in Britain, America and other countries. Members of the older generation who have, in the past, taken an interest in things Hungarian will recall the periodical which was published in Budapest in the years preceding the second world war, under the title The Hungarian Quarterly. In paying tribute to the memory of the late editor of that magazine, József Balogh, who fell victim to the Nazi terror in Hungary in 1944, we are sure that both the staff and the readers of this magazine are at one in their determination never to allow the return of a world in which such as he have to face annihilation.

This common objective of people of goodwill everywhere provides an initial link between the new magazine and its—no longer imaginary—readers. We trust that it will not be the only one.

THE EDITOR

PROBLEMS OF STYLE AND THE NEW PUBLIC

by

LÁSZLÓ BÓKA

> *. . . and the world*
> *I've known; all fading past me into peace.*
> (Siegfried Sassoon)

It is not in my line to make speeches at anniversaries: my memory seems to favour hard facts and is less apt to recall emotional scenes. Not even now, when Hungary celebrates the fifteenth anniversary of the end of the anti-fascist war and of her liberation, do I visualize the great historical fresco of the period; what my memory conjures up are the amusing turmoil and the touching confusion that characterized cultural life in the first moments of peace.

Having been in a P. O. W. camp at the end of the war, I did not witness those first moments of peace at home; but when I came back in October 1945, I had no difficulty in reconstructing what had happened between spring and autumn. It was a period of recordings of diaries written, sketches drawn and marches composed. All and sundry hastened to record the last days of the war, to describe the first moments of liberation when incredulity gave place to rapture, to draw a picture of smoking buildings, of demolished bridges and to write the words of enthusiastic marches for the novel mass movements of a life resuscitated. The marches have, since, faded away, the work of reconstruction has turned those sketches into historical documents, but the diaries—though startlingly uniform in their contents—are still highly interesting. The cellar-style of air-raid shelters knows little variety; the psychology of trembling people crowded together into close places does not produce a great variety as far as literary efforts are concerned; the soldiers of the liberating army wore uniforms, and—when appearing in the twilight of the poorly illuminated air-raid shelters—the white snow-mantles of the liberators could not fail to have a stupefying effect upon the inmates. Although consisting of identical elements, the diary-notes are nonetheless stimulating; reading them today, one is appalled to find how man's horizon is narrowed down in the humiliating agony of trembling for his bare existence; everybody describes his own air-raid shelter and the first soldier who meant his own, individual liberation.

The period of recordings was followed by that of a turmoil the like of which was unprecedented in the forum of Hungarian arts. Writers, painters, musicians, sculptors, architects, theatre people—all and sundry felt that their time had now come. And not only those experienced this feeling who had been silenced by the spreading of fascism in Hungary, be it by having become victims of so-called racial legislation, or by having become exposed to political persecution, or again by having chosen voluntary silence in order to detach themselves from a public life which had turned ever more unbearable since the end of the thirties. Everybody found his voice: all those who, for half a century, had been pushed into the background, passed over and silenced by an arch-conservative official cultural policy, by the profiteering publishers, by the corrupt press pandering to the taste of the petty bourgeoisie, by the leading literary cliques—all these people began to vent their feelings.

Thus, not only the young and fresh voices of pioneers were heard, but also the croaking of hoary naturalists, senile activists, aged painters and sculptors whose post-impressionist pictures and constructivist sketches had been rejected by the hanging committee at the beginning of the twenties; one perceived the rediscovered voice of doddering musicians who had got stuck somewhere at the first revolutionary attempts of Stravinsky, Bartók and Schönberg; all of them were now clamouring for the right to continue and lead to victory what they had begun in 1910. Foxed manuscripts, discoloured pictures and also "modern" pieces of music were dug up which—for all their ostentatious atonality—are not less alien to an audience of our days than would be a song composed for some old posthorn. The influence of freedom on the arts manifested itself in a way as if, instead of the angel of liberty, a belated disciple of Freud had proclaimed the principle of "the unrestricted gratification of individuality and the overcoming of inhibitions": everybody was eager to display his own self, wanted to be indemnified for old offences, was for psychological compensations.

Although many undeservedly silenced human values and many fresh and promising talents were brought to the surface in this chaos, there was but a single group which seemed to be led by a consciously purposeful idea, that of the Marxist writers. This group was by no means composed of members of the same level, same age and same style: some of them had returned from an exile of many decades and others had but recently joined the group. They nevertheless promptly succeeded in finding a common platform by setting themselves the target of representing society faithfully and in perspective, achieving the democratization of style and realizing in literature the basic principles of socialist-realist art; in doing so, they were relying on the experiences drawn from the development of Soviet art. We should sin against historical veracity if we did not mention that, at the outset, this community of principles failed to attract the introverted artists. Such initial failure was only natural at that time; it was not yet possible to go beyond an integration of principles, and no uniform practice could be evolved at such an early hour. The development of the various branches of art was far from being well-balanced; neophytic excesses were unavoidable at that stage, and progress was slowed down by a dogmatism intent upon the rigid application of principles.

We should likewise sin against historical veracity if we omitted to add that the attitude of the Marxist writers nevertheless produced a perceptible effect. It has become quite customary to simplify this effect by attributing it to the increasing political influence of the Communist Party or the consolidation of its power after 1948. Nobody having some knowledge of the process of artistic creation will believe that it is possible to promote artistic trends by administrative measures.

Postwar chaos was soon followed by the period to which I like to refer as that of "touching confusion." A new situation had arisen in the wake of political development. Industrialization, the reorganization and mechanization of agriculture, the liberation of the formerly oppressed proletariat and the poor peasantry and their increasing political influence on the one hand, and the nationalization of the publishing houses and theatres on the other, brought about a profound change in the cultural conditions of the Hungarian people and widened the possibilities of art most radically. It was a very thin layer of society—a few thousand intellectuals—to whom artists could speak before 1945. They were overawed from above by the censorship of a power that showed complete indifference to and was even suspicious of the arts, while—below them—there was a whirling mass of several millions who had always been indifferent to or extremely unassuming in literary matters on account of their low living standard, of the deadly struggle against unemployment and—in the case of the poor peasantry—owing to the lack of education. In these classes, only the organized workers had cultural requirements.

This situation underwent a radical change after 1945. The artists who, for some time, went their old way and continued to speak in a voice meant to be heard by a few thousand listeners were dismayed by suddenly realizing that their voice was heard, enjoyed or criticized by millions.

Genuine artists felt a true emotion but were at the same time embarrassed at the sight of this mass demand. They realized they had to convey their message without lowering their artistic standard and yet in such a form as was acceptable to masses which were longing for culture and had found their way to the fold of culture without antecedents or traditions. This was a difficult problem of style; it was a practical problem of paramount importance that had to be solved without delay.

It is by no means easy to explain why this problem of style was so grave, for it is rooted in the soil of Hungarian literary history. Wishing to limit myself to speaking only of the present period of our literature and arts, I am loath to expatiate upon cultural history even in outlines. I do not wish to go into the past because gazing at family photographs is a pastime dreary beyond words, and also because I could not hide the sadness inevitably conjured up by the memoires of a wearisome past. In order to give a realistic background to what I want to say, I must nevertheless adduce a few historical data.

For historical reasons I do not intend to expatiate upon, Latin was Hungary's official language as also the language of science up to the middle of the nineteenth century; even fiction written in Latin survived as far as the end of the seventeenth century. In addition, a policy of Germanization—sometimes by terroristic, sometimes by more subtle means—was steadily in progress during the four centuries of Hapsburg domination. Therefore, the primary object of Hungarian literature was to spread ideas that were thought to incite readers against political and cultural oppression and to do it in the language of the people, that is, in Hungarian. It follows that the fundamental problems of our literature were of a political and linguistic nature in the past.

This situation was not essentially altered by the fact that—led by the desire to resist German political and cultural aggression—French and English influences were favoured by the most prominent figures of Hungarian literature. Thus, *sui generis* literary tendencies were always overshadowed by political considerations.

It is necessary to know at least this much of our literary history in order to understand my statement that our literature, or, for that matter, other branches of Hungarian art, had no real problems of style in the past.

All this is not to say that certain stylistic tendencies were not afoot in Hungarian literature or that stylistic controversies were unknown to Hungarian writers. However, all such tendencies and struggles remained confined to the innermost circles of literature without—save in a few exceptional cases—extending beyond a limited group of initiates. Our people was struggling for its bare existence and responded only to what seemed to promote the success of the struggle, and only those signals were picked up by the mass of outsiders which they considered vitally important. They were as little concerned with the style of these signals, as is a fighting soldier with the key in which the bugle is sounded. Cultural requirements or the taste of the public played a subordinate part in the life of the arts.

János Horváth, the Nestor of Hungary's literary historians, defined literature in 1922 in the following terms: "Spiritual contact between writers and readers through the medium of written works," and it is no mere chance that this definition met with a complete lack of comprehension or was received with astonishment.

Artistic freedom became a reality in 1945, but it was only in the course of ever progressing development after 1945 that a peculiar phenomenon emerged: artistic freedom gave rise to problems of style. If artists are in a position to speak not to thousands but to millions of people, the question inevitably arises of *how* to speak to these millions. The problem was complicated by the fact that the rise in the size of the public was not merely an arithmetically measurable growth. The public, besides having increased in number, had become more differentiated inasmuch as not only the number of intellectuals had increased but also millions of previously illiterate or culturally backward workers and peasants had turned into readers, enjoyers of art and listeners to music. Historical development made our creative artists grasp the fact that a relationship between writer and reader, painter or sculptor and spectator, composer or musician and listener is established through the medium of style; our artists began to understand that the question of style had ceased to be a problem of the artist alone, to be solved by him alone, and that their style would determine the radius of the circle within which their message would be perceived—that on their style would depend the effect their creations produce.

Were I a philosopher of history, I should surely feel dismayed on discovering that a revolutionary upheaval and the reorganization of society manifests itself as a problem of style in the field of arts. However, being but a modest chronicler of events, I must content myself with recording the fact that the phenomenon in question did indeed produce dismay in the world of arts. There was consternation and—as is usual in such cases—the problem had been oversimplified in order to settle it as quickly and as simply as seemed possible.

A new slogan was soon coined by the representatives of our literature and arts: democratism of style. But a slogan is no panacea even if it happens to express a desirable tendency, as it did in the given instance.

Both those who had launched and those who had accepted the slogan, understood democratism of style to mean a certain simplification of literature and art. They were led by the well-meant desire that artists should meet their new public halfway so as to make it conscious of the fact that it was entitled to the enjoyment of culture and to make it understand that the world of culture was open to all who wanted to explore it. This imposed on artists the task of representing the problems of social metamorphosis, problems of public interest, in a clear and commonly understandable form.

As soon as our artists took this course, they found themselves confronted with two dangers. The first consisted in too prompt success. It was quite easy to find subjects of sweeping interest, and nothing seemed easier than to elaborate them in the primitive manner of didactic tales, to paint them in the manner of illustrative naturalism or compose them in the manner of "tema senza variazioni." A limited number of conventional subjects were soon elaborated and a style was soon evolved which returned to the great popular poets of the nineteenth century in the field of lyric poetry, to the great realists of the end of the nineteenth century in the field of prose literature, to the style of genre paintings in the domain of pictorial art and to somewhere between Brahms and Grieg in the domain of music—quite as if the great style-revolutions of the twentieth century had never occurred. The second danger consisted in the fact that the demand for subjects of public interest and the requirement to represent them in an unambiguous form were felt by some artists as interference in their creative freedom. Feeling offended, they decided to resist such interference as well as the desire of the public and preferred to resort to extremes in content and bizarrerie in form.

This attitude continued to intrigue public opinion for quite a long time. "Why are writers silent?" was the frequently asked question, for it was especially in the realms of literature that silence had become conspicuous. One was inclined to regard such silence as hostility, as a defection and falling away from the socialist trend of our literature. Needless to say that interpretations of this kind were too hasty; there were really very few among the "silent" writers who were unwilling to adopt the new style and it was rather the manner of realization that deterred them.

The fact that many of the new creations were dogmatic in contents and schematic in form was passed over in silence for a long time, without, however, ceasing to preoccupy public opinion. The latter was misled by erroneous generalization also in this instance: utterly mistaken and second-rate works were considered as representing the realization of correct aims. That those responsible for our official literary policy

—a policy which was correct as regards fundamental principles but frequently wrong and often intolerant as regards its methods—accepted this point view; and the fact (why not speak of it?) that a fair number of dogmatic-schematic literary works had appeared also in the Soviet Union at the end of the forties, induced us to accuse ourselves of being still overinfluenced by the taste of a bygone age and deterred us from tracing the evil to the works themselves.

The sweeping change wrought in the Socialist camp by the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, which courageously exposed the mistakes of the past and laid open the path for internal criticism, meant a turning point in Hungarian arts as well. The period of intolerant mistrust came to an end and the liquidation of dogmatic schematism was set afoot.

The liquidation of dogmatism and schematism was interpreted in certain instances as a liquidation of the fundamental style problem of our artists, a discarding of the democracy of style. What actually happened was just the opposite. Two things had become manifest as soon as dogmatism and schematism were discredited. While we were harping on past mistakes we failed to perceive that our efforts made so far had not been quite futile and that a change of style had actually occurred, that our world of arts had undergone a metamorphosis. Whether our artists were willing or unwilling to pay heed to a democratization of style, they were compelled to change their style under the changed historical conditions, and this compulsion was not imposed on them by any extrinsic factors.

Let me emphasize: the change in acoustics was by no means due to an increase in the number of readers and art patrons—it was produced by the fact that the whole of society had been turned into readers and art patrons. A mere numerical increase would have made no difference between Hungarian art before and after 1945; for it should be borne in mind that works written in the great world languages are read by a still greater number of people.

The change in acoustics is due to the circumstance that all social classes have turned into readers and that the new readers, the new art patrons, the new music audience look upon literature and arts as their property; that they feel entitled to make demands on it; that they are not content with amusing themselves; that their interest is not merely a professional one: they expect literature and the arts to reveal their own destiny, to show and explain the world to them; the patrons of literature and art are no longer members of a narrow circle, they are the millions of whom society is composed.

A sort of primary and direct attention is paid to art, and—consciously or unconsciously—artists realize the possibilities so offered. Far from being hampered, an artist who has the privilege of conveying his message not to a narrow stratum of intellectuals, not to a single social class but to all classes, to the entire society, to everybody, must feel that he is enjoying the greatest possible freedom. Just imagine: after the bard chanting at the campfire of his tribe; after the monk reading aloud in the refectory; after the poet of the royal court; after the slave of the bourgeois press—the poet can now finally step upon a platform whence his voice reaches everybody, the painter need no longer paint for just a church altar, a throne room, a cosy home but may produce his creations as if he were authorized to cover the whole sky with the colours of his fantasy, as if a composer were told to adapt his composition to the acoustics of five continents.

While we were still feeling aversion to schematic literature, while we were still hesitating, we had unconsciously re-tuned our words, returned to the basic colours and found the basic tones which sound alike to all listeners. This development is still in the embryonic stage but it is impossible not to see that we have arrived at the threshold of a new sort of monumentality and have well advanced on the path towards true literature in the matter of both subject and style.

We have, without returning to the topics or style of bygone ages, rediscovered that phenomenon which gave rise to the great styles of the past, namely the courageous voice of the artist who readily reacts to decisive social upheavals. The artist of the Renaissance responded to and expressed a new universal order which was no longer maintained by God but by man; the artist of the Enlightenment represented mankind which had ceased to be governed by inherited privileges; in a similar manner, our artists had now to represent and illustrate a new world in which private property was replaced by common property, class barriers by classless society and isolated Ego by a morally united community. As the great upheavals of the past gave rise to great new styles, so must the present decisive transformation give rise to a new style, too.

And as soon as we came to be aware of and rejoice in the fact that the first signs of the new style had already appeared, as soon as we realized that we had already made some headway along the new path, we were faced with the recognition that the inevitable democratization of style was quite different from what we had, in good faith, imagined it to be. Even those who were perfectly well-intentioned in this respect had been thinking of some analogy between the new turn of things and the overthrow of feudalism, the liberation of the peasants in the nineteenth century; they were thinking of a return to the popular tendencies of those times, of some grand simplification, of the revival of the old slogan "return to nature" in the modernized form of "back to the people"—at least as far as style was concerned.

Notions of this kind proved to be false in every single one of their elements.

What were these elements?

With a naïveté suggestive of the nineteenth century, we applied to spiritual life a biogenetic law according to which all those who, because of class barriers, were left outside the pales of cultural evolution had to pass through all stages of mankind's cultural development.

With really appalling disregard of history, we thought that the culturally liberated working class and peasantry continued to remain in exactly the same condition as that in which they had been at the moment of liberation.

And, lastly, with the stupid arrogance of our humanist education, we imagined that the masses—uneducated in the sphere of literature, fine arts and music—were living in a kind of cultural primitiveness, so that—a notion following from all of these three mistaken ideas—we had to condescend to them, to lift them up to our own level with a heroically generous patience.

What first emerged was that the stratum of the people which had been excluded from cultural life before 1945 was able to catch up with it in a very short time. I doubt that original sin exists at all, and I am perfectly sure that there is no such thing as original tastelessness. Far be it from me to suggest that the cultural development of a considerable portion of our working class and peasantry is not hampered by the fact that their education lacks training in literature and arts and that their knowledge in these spheres lacks historical foundation. While deploring such a lack, I cannot help thinking that it has its good sides, too. Their exclusion from literature and arts had the advantage to prevent workers and peasants from being contaminated by the works produced since the second half of the last century by a press and a publishing policy corrupted by capitalism; they were uninfluenced by an art which derived its first impulses from an honest search after modern forms of expression, but deteriorated between the two world wars into a complete dissolution of forms and to self-seeking extremities; they remained innocent of that academic backwardness pursued by Hungary's official cultural policy against all progressive literary attempts. The major part of the broad masses was thus able to preserve an unimpaired taste and to subsist in that ancient, primitive and yet healthy condition which—for want of a better term—we prefer to define as a folkloristic condition: these masses entered cultural life with a keen sense for elementary lyricism, elementary epicism and elementary dramatism. They were eager for unambiguous sentiments, bold plots and the drama of pure contrasts; they demanded clearly expressed emotions and objective representation, in short, that which invests folk poetry with an ancient purity and manifests itself in the chefs-d'oeuvre of the best writers of the great epochs. What reached these masses before 1945 was a degenerated distortion of grand epics in the shape of thrillers and movie-dramas. We are ready to admit that these detective stories and motion-picture plays were not invariably the worst forms of substitutes (sometimes, they were not substitutes but masterpieces in cheap wrapping!) and that modern novelists have learnt quite a lot from them. And it turned out that the Hungarian masses, streaming after the Liberation to the fields of culture without adequate preparation, selected from the abundance of cheap serial publications, sold in a great number of copies, the works of Balzac, Stendhal, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Chekhov, Gorky, Sholokhov, Dickens, Thackeray, Hemingway, Gottfried Keller, Thomas Mann, Heinrich Mann and other authors of a similar calibre, that these were the starting points whence the "uncultured" masses set out on the path leading to modern literature. Their freedom from prejudices enabled them to pick out instinctively the greatest pioneering works and to find their way into the thick of up-to-date literature without having to pass through some sort of biogenetic evolution.

I should like to add that the ignorance of historical interconnections is a defect of no small importance; but the masses which had found access to the world of culture needed no special warning to become aware of this deficiency. The serial lectures on literary, art and musical history offered by the university extensions and other institutions set up in the towns and villages for the spreading of science, enjoy extreme popularity; industrial workers and working peasants attending the conferences arranged by folk libraries frequently ask for works on the history of some particular branch or genre of art; serial publications of musical history, art history and literary history, as also monographs containing the biography of great writers and artists, belong to the most read and most frequently required works launched by the publishing house of the Society for the Spreading of Scientific Information.

All this goes to show that it was absolutely wrong to regard the cultural state of the workers and peasants as static and to act in keeping with such a notion. A large-scale movement was started almost at the very moment of liberation for the liquidation of illiteracy; so-called "working people's schools" were opened for the elementary and secondary education of persons engaged in production; "evening universities" and, later, correspondence courses of the universities were started so that people who could not have dreamed of enjoying higher education before 1945 were now able to obtain high-school and even university degrees. (The simultaneous important changes in the scope and contents of normal school education lie outside the frame of this essay.) Important as these factors were, it was not from them that the working classes received the decisive impetus: political and economic development was the force which provided the necessary dynamism. Those masses of workers and peasants whom socialist evolution had endowed with the power of the former ruling class, who had become active members of a socialist democratic public life, came to occupy leading positions in politics, administration and economy, began to play very important roles in political and economic life, hold and attend politico-ideological seminary lectures, and to participate in decisively important conferences, etc. It is obvious that—while all this did not promote their literary and artistic accomplishments in a direct manner—such activities could not fail to widen their horizon, to enforce the acquisition of wide and profound proficiency in many a field of human culture, and to hasten their intellectual progress. New tasks kept their intellectual life astir and accustomed them to quick orientation; the responsibility of new tasks meant constant mental excitement, and the widening of their political horizon compelled them to acquire philosophical and historical knowledge. Such spiritual and mental progress facilitated their susceptibility to the ready reception of literature and arts; it constituted—in a certain sense—a foundation for their training in literature and arts.

As regards the "primitiveness" of the working masses and the matter of our "condescension" to their level, well, it was in this respect that we had the surprise of our life. Hungary's industry enjoyed an unprecedented development, technology was modernized, agriculture mechanized and concentrated into large units during the period following the war. Physical labour became associated with increasingly intricate mental work and changed in many instances to *purely* mental work. The very manipulation of up-to-date machinery requires a considerable amount of intellectual effort: workmen and peasants have to be familiar with intricate mechanisms and have to understand the physical and chemical processes which occur in the course of industrial production. Personal interest in increased production, and organizational work for the promotion of increased production require a continuous perfection of working tools, an experimentation with new manufacturing methods and a great combinative ability on the part of the workmen. The understanding and appreciation of complicated mechanical structures, the survey of the whole while working on the detail, and the co-ordination of different manufacturing processes will, on the one hand, enable the workman to perform his job most proficiently and will, on the other hand, enable him to acquire a high degree of analytical power, a dexterity in grasping technical constructions and processes and a keen sense of harmony—briefly, qualities that are indispensable for artistic analysis and a conscious appreciation of works of art. Rudiments of natural sciences and technology required by successful productive work in the field of manufacture and industry are, at the same time, indispensable prerequisites to that attitude towards literature and arts which arises from the spirit of our age, an age in which a new physical conception of the universe and the modern notion of natural forces have put an end to the theory of dualism, have given rise to a new philosophical unity and have created a new style characterized by striving for exactitude. It was truly astonishing to find that workers, accustomed to modern technology, experienced less difficulty in understanding and appreciating up-to-date literature than the old intelligentsia with its one-sided humanist education.

It will now be clear that a democratization of style cannot and must not aim at some primitive neo-popularism, some condescending didactic babble, but must try to satisfy a need of a very high order, that it must be capable of representing the unceasing dynamism of a social development which is striding with a new rhythm. It must likewise be clear that the new style cannot have the object of representing the artistic outlook of a past epoch in a primitive popular form but must try to find the adequate expression of a new spirit. Nor is it less obvious that the essence of a democratic style is not simplification but the fact that works created in this style are addressed to a society that is becoming classless, so that to democratize the style means to make it universal.

This is the style problem with which our literature, our fine arts and our music are now grappling. The task is surely magnificent, and—although the beginning is promising and has already produced occasional results—it must be admitted that definite and completely satisfactory results have not yet been reached in any branch or genre. The fact that, in our new society, the artist is not left alone to solve the problems of his work is certainly encouraging. Ever since literature was born, the public has always collaborated with the artist, be it as clients, be it by making the artist conscious of its existence. Yet in the past the clients adjusted their demands to the taste of a narrow circle, so that the artist's message had to be adapted to the requirements of a strictly circumscribed class of society; even if he looked beyond the class barriers—as all truly great artists have always done—the artist knew that, however universal his message, his voice—meant to be heard by society as a whole—was doomed to reach but a stratum thereof, whereas nowadays he will be read and listened to by the whole of society. And this new society has proved to be a very active collaborator who manifests approval or criticism with increasing frequency, with increasing resolution and from an ever higher level. Applause or criticism are not like those of the "tricoteuses of the Convent": they express in this case the anxiety or encouragement of a people which is fond of its artists, which looks upon culture as a great achievement of freedom, which regards artistic creations as its own.

Earlier in this paper, in connection with a brief outline of the past history of our world of literature and arts, it was stated that Hungarian literature had had no real problems of style in the past: it had to grapple with existential problems so that *contents* had a far greater significance than the *form* in which they appeared. This is, by the way, a feature common to the literature and arts of all peoples harassed by external, and oppressed by internal, foes. There was a period in the international literature of our century when repeated attempts at a literary renaissance by means of new forms of expression were made in many places. It was a period of successive stylistic experiments, and, in a certain sense, this period has not yet come to a close. The various "*isms*" stress the importance of the question of "how"; they arise from a pessimism which regards human development as illusion, which is convinced that the horrors of existence remain unchanged and repeat themselves with inexorable regularity so that only new modes of expression can be expected to convey new messages. Such trends reveal artists as isolated spirits who have to penetrate from without into a world that has become utterly alien to them. The comforting and promising feature of the search of our new literature for a new style is the consideration that it is not prompted by the consciousness of a crisis and that, therefore, contents postulate a new form which, instead of evolving independently and for its own sake, arises together with the contents, thus revealing the truth that "*what*" and "*how*" are really two aspects of one and the same problem. The new style now being born from the womb of Hungarian art will reflect the new life that is now being formed. We are confident that it will be the monumental and exact expression of a new humanistic universality.

THE QUESTION OF THE 'TWO CULTURES' IN HUNGARY

Reflections on the controversy about a paper by C. P. Snow

by

JÓZSEF FEKETE

1.

I was very interested to read C. P. Snow's profound reflections on the problems of the culture of the Western world in several issues of 'Encounter', and I closely followed the interesting and varied discussion which followed his study.

There are two reasons why Snow's article aroused a lively response in me. On the one hand I, too, come from a poor family, am a student of natural science and fond of literature, just like Snow. And on the other, the problems of culture are exciting questions in this country, too, and it was at this very time that the new Hungarian school system was being worked out. In the course of the work on the school reform our experts and laymen have been engaged in lively controversy on the proper interpretation of culture and of a general education.

In Hungary, however, the problems arise differently, in a different situation, than they appear from the article to arise in Britain. The two peoples live under different social systems, and this largely determines the questions to be solved, even if as a result of the development and requirements of modern life many of our problems have common roots.

And here, unless we resign ourselves to making the comparison superficial and not factual, we must devote a few sentences to some specific features of Hungary's historic and social development. Historical circumstances—150 years of Turkish rule in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and the fact that until the second half of the nineteenth century Hungary was practically the agricultural colony of the Austria of the Hapsburgs—hindered urbanization and the development of the bourgeoisie. It may be attributed to this peculiar historical situation that the majority of the leaders of the 1848 bourgeois revolution came not from the bourgeois class, but from the country gentry, and that their revolution was at the same time an independence and freedom struggle against Austria.

All this involved several lasting consequences. One was that the official culture developed only along the lines of the humanities, law and literature, based on Medieval Latin culture, and the vehicle of this education was the "gentry middle class" which had evolved from the landed gentry of the past. This class placed its imprint on Hungarian political, social and cultural life right up to 1945.

The "gentry middle class" looked with suspicion, contempt and a feeling of strangeness at commerce and capitalism and indirectly at those branches of science and learning which are their concomitants, that is, the natural sciences and technology. With this we have arrived at the second consequence: for a long time these "capitalist sciences" were excluded from Hungarian public education. The children of these classes, after taking their secondary-school leaving certificates, which gave them the rank of "gentlemen," wanted to be civil servants, judges, army officers, lawyers, or possibly doctors or engineers. They recoiled from careers in commerce and industry as something beneath their dignity. The effects of this, on the strength of the well-known laws of society, spread further and those children of the petty bourgeoisie, or of the peasantry and the working class who occasionally did manage to reach the secondary schools, strove to adapt themselves as soon as possible to their fellow-students to whose class they hoped and wished to belong.

The duality mentioned by Snow, therefore appeared in Hungary even more sharply than in the urbanized West. And not only on account of the class restrictions, for, after all, the English public schools, especially in the past decades, could not be regarded as educational workshops of democracy and equality, but also on account of the historically rooted irreconciliability of the "gentleman" and the "tradesman." And to this were attached the hard shackles of social reality: in pre-war Hungarian society, in this class society interwoven with vestiges of feudalism, the concept of the "educated" man was synonymous, or almost synonymous, with the concept of the privileged upper and middle sections. For this very reason contempt for physical work, to which I shall return briefly, was also expressed socially, as a judgement of value.

2.

Snow has raised the problem of dual culture with particular sharpness. In British society, as he describes it, there is a wide gulf between those with a literary-historical education and those with a scientific-technical education. And, let us add, the gulf is even wider between the educated and the non-educated. Not so long ago—and we have referred to this already in another respect—we could have written a similar article to Snow's. We cannot yet claim that we have already succeeded in solving everything in this respect. The educational effect of our socialist society has blunted the problems, but down deep the struggle of society is still going on for a sound attitude, a uniform culture.

Not so long ago we had scientists who proudly boasted that they had not come across such "useless things" as verses, novels or philosophical thought since their student years, nor did they want to. It is also certain that this was not a general phenomenon in our country, and today one hears no such remarks at all.

Writers, literary scholars, historians, the intelligentsia taken in the narrower sense, regarded the natural sciences as the inevitable requisites of civilization, but they thought to find the superiority of the human intellect in literature, historical science, philology and philosophy. They did not regard knowledge of the natural sciences, primarily of physics and chemistry, as genuine culture.

Moreover the majority of the philologists, literary scholars and natural scientists, as we have already mentioned, despised physical work, just as they regarded culture as something the masses could not assimilate. Their views were also shared by the wider sections of the intelligentsia.

The effect of their attitude has lingered on. No small part of our young people who have taken their leaving certificates under the influence of the old world picture—and now boys and girls from working-class and peasant families, also—despise physical work and consider the only worthy instrument of work to be the office desk.

The concept that the masses and culture are contradictions which preclude each other prevailed all over Europe. Culture was considered to be the creative, original, specific product of the mind of man living in society, a product which burst forth in a brilliant blaze first in one nation, then in another.

At the end of the last century, however, there evolved, especially among the Anglo-American and German philosophers and cultural politicians, a concept of civilization which embraces only the tangible products of human creation. (A home with all amenities, modern roads, the achievements of technology, and so on.) Oswald Spengler in his famous work *Untergang des Abendlandes* defines culture in this sense as the rising, ascending branch of human intellect, and technical civilization as the declining phase of that same human intellect.

This concept is confirmed by the prevalence in the Western world—among the intelligentsia—of morbid existentialist philosophies, the domination of a feeling of loneliness, the feeling of existing apart from society. For society, though individuals die, regenerates itself and lives continuously.

With such a gloomy philosophy of life, society of necessity becomes dwarfed to nothing. The individual, however cultured he may be, wishes to be his own companion and becomes companionless. That is why so many of the natural scientists scorn fiction that depicts human emotions, actions and the processes of spiritual life, and this is why those with a literary education look down with aristocratic arrogance from their ivory tower upon the natural sciences, technology and the masses—after all, for them what is important is what is before birth and after death. That which is between the two is too brief for them to concern themselves with—such things as production, technology, the natural sciences, which are indeed attached to earthly life.

We can see, therefore, that for various other reasons and to different degrees and with different historical backgrounds the problem of the "two cultures" is not unknown in our country either. In Hungary, too, many thinking people—writers, educationalists, state leaders, natural scientists, philologists, and even engineers—ask the question: Why are there two cultures in Britain, and in the Western countries generally, and why do even we have to struggle with the vestiges of these two cultures?

A number of weighty reasons offer themselves as explanations.

I see one reason undoubtedly in the social system. Under present-day advanced technology only the capitalistic relations of private property can preserve a status in which a substantial part of the people may not delve into the depths of culture. General education is enjoyed by only a minority of society, not because enjoying it is legally prevented by anybody, but because there is no possibility for it. In the age of slave society, under existing relations of production, the sweat and physical exertions of very many people were needed so that a relatively few could work on the development of culture. Nowadays, however, the possibility exists for us to include everybody in the sphere of culture who is suited for it by his ability and diligence.

I see the other reason in the fossilized interpretation of culture as being something static and steeped in tradition. Culture—as I have implied above—is the constantly widening sphere of values ("spiritual" and material goods) perpetuated by a society which is continually changing in its individuals; it is the cultivation of the whole disposition (thinking, feeling, action) of individual men—in keeping with Cicero's interpretation: "Cultura animi philosophia est".

In the Western world—and this is how it was in our country, too—they see the practically neutral cultivation of the brain, or if you like, the soul, as the criterion of culture applied to individual men. In polishing the mind, the material of culture is regarded as an entirely secondary question. Their concept in pedagogic literature is called that of an absolute formal education.

Although our European culture is based on the Greek cultural ideal, in essence it has diverged from it. It has diverged because one has still not succeeded in banishing the idea everywhere and from the conception of every leading social class that in the cultivation of the human personality—or call it soul—the material of cultivation is a question of secondary importance.

Let me give an illustrative comparison. No doubt everybody would smile at the farmer who on his one hectare of land would perform all his agricultural work, ploughing, harrowing, rolling, fertilizing several times and meticulously, but would not concern himself with the sowing seeds and would not take into consideration modern agrotechnical methods. He could well boast that he has the most crumbly soil, but what his soil will produce and at what sacrifice, is an entirely different matter and one he will not boast about.

In the Middle Ages there developed an ideal of general culture according to which the development of certain functions of the mind (thinking, remembering), their cultural quality characterized the educated man, and this degree of development could only be reached through certain studies (material and method); and even today these studies cannot be separated too much from some modernized form of the seven free arts.

Until a society is able to free itself of this traditional ballast it is unable to cope with the problem of the "two cultures." Thus this problem is primarily a social question. Stated more dynamically: the acquiring of a general education among wider and wider sections of the population must be made a social cause. Further, the concept of a general education must be modernized.

It cannot be denied that the goal of the individual man's education is to achieve a high standard of refinement of the personality. But its goal is also that the members of the nation, in the interest of the development of culture (material and spiritual, for I see no difference between the conceptions of culture and civilization used by the different countries), should be able to speak a common language; thus it cannot be a matter of indifference what kind of material is used to cultivate their minds. And it is advantageous if the personality is polished on many kinds of material and activities until it reaches the stage where the acquisition of a specialized education can begin.

We shall have to change our conception of general education. This does not mean that we should regard people possessing masses of information in a positivist manner as educated. Such a conception would destroy culture, and those who speak of a crisis of culture would have proved to be right.

The widest possible sections of the nation should gradually be able to acquire a general education. Items of superfluous information should be eliminated from the concept of general education—items which have no effect on the life of twentieth-century man, and these should be included in the sphere of specialized education. An education should be given which makes a person capable of, and stimulates him to, educating himself further after leaving school in the branch of knowledge he has chosen. The idea of a complete education given up to the leaving-certificate level would have to be abandoned. In the process of education greater scope should be given to the development of character, of moulding a community spirit, of preparing for life in society. The social aims must determine the standard and quality of education.

3.

On the basis of considerations of experience and principle the school should possess the scope of knowledge, methods and actions which will realize the above aim. The improvement of the work of the school makes possible the acquiring of a state of education more quickly, with fewer sacrifices and on a higher level.

That is why there have been school reforms in the recent past and why they are still being carried out all over the world.

A school reform is being worked out in Hungary also.

Apart from the mediaeval schools and colleges (schools of the church, guilds and landlords) the first schooling of a state character in Hungary began in 1777. There were, it is true, a university from 1635 and numerous church secondary schools, but their curricula were not uniform. Education in publicly controlled schools was made compulsory only in 1867. Communal (municipal) and state secondary schools were also set up. At the end of the nineteenth century secondary schools for the teaching of modern languages, science and Latin, higher elementary schools, and intermediate schools for commerce, industry and agriculture also appeared. This school system essentially survived until 1945. The structure of the system was as follows:

The primary school of six forms was intended to provide the whole people with the fundamentals of knowledge. Children began school at the age of six and studied in these schools until they were twelve, automatically advancing one form each year. The curriculum was characterized by writing, reading, arithmetic, religious instruction and a low standard of descriptive information that hardly required any thinking. They learned only enough to become workers in Hungary's underdeveloped industries and agriculture.

But only 50—60 per cent of the pupils, at most, finished primary school. In the towns more, and in the villages less. The children of destitute parents went to work early, or just could not go to school for lack of shoes and clothing.

After completing the fourth form at primary school (at the age of ten) the pupil could go on to a higher school.

The eight-form (eight-year) secondary school, the so-called "gymnasium," with humanities, languages and sciences, catered mostly for the children of the Hungarian landlord and capitalist classes and well-to-do civil servants. Boys and girls of worker or poor peasant origin could attend only in insignificant numbers. These schools offered a high standard of education for their pupils. In the humanistic schools literary, language and historical subjects predominated. The main aim was the development of the "spirit" through a great deal of obsolete information. In the schools of the "modern" type, the subjects of the natural sciences received greater scope, but here, too, Latin and literature were the predominating subjects.

The majority of the pupils who completed their studies in these schools were educated in the old sense of the term, but these were the very people who for the most part, a few years after their final examinations, hardly knew anything about the natural sciences. Apart from the resourceful minority, the larger part of them only felt comfortable in the university benches or behind the civil servant's desk. When they had to go out and face real life they were beset by serious inner conflicts. And this is understandable, too, for the school prepared them not for life, but for a contemplation of the past.

Of self-assurance, however, they received a tremendous amount. In Hungary till 1945 you began to be somebody only in possession of a leaving certificate from a "gymnasium." The pupils of these schools, after finishing the eighth form, took their so-called maturity examinations. Those young men in the army who had taken these examinations wore a special insignia on their uniform. Within a few years they became officers. Those who had taken these examinations, together with the university graduates constituted a separate caste. The leaving ("maturity") certificate was the *visible* mark of gentlemanliness, and it follows from this that the majority of people in possession of one—there were, by the way, a good number of exceptions —scorned physical work, and together with it the worker and the peasant. Moreover, they despised technology, and often the natural sciences, too, because they knew nothing about them. There are incidentally some splendid anecdotes current in Hungarian society which testify to the shocking technical ignorance of the so-called gentlemen, or snobs.

Let us complete the picture by adding that certain subjects—for example, biology, economic geography or astronomy—were hardly taught, mostly for ideological reasons, and history was falsified.

There was another kind of secondary school. After finishing the fourth form of a primary school one could enrol in a higher elementary school. This higher elementary school had four forms, and also gave useful information. In essence it repeated the subjects of the primary school on a higher level. It was a preliminary school for the more exacting trades, commercial workers, and clerical employees.

After four years at a higher elementary school or the "gymnasium" one could enrol in a commercial, industrial or agricultural secondary school of four forms, or a teachers' training school for five years. These schools trained clerical workers or intermediate grade experts for trade, industry and agriculture, or teachers for the primary schools. They were vocational schools. After finishing them the pupils took a leaving examination and received a certificate similar to the "maturity" certificate, but it did not have the same value as the latter. They were treated differently by "society" and could not enrol in certain universities. (In possession of a "maturity" certificate even the most untalented young person could enrol in any university.) One could go over from a vocational school to a "gymnasium" only by passing very difficult supplementary examinations.

The children of the bourgeoisie attended the vocational schools, but the children of the "lower" classes also enrolled in them in much larger numbers.

A part of the "gymnasia" was in the hands of the churches, while the vocational schools were largely state-supported. Tuition fees were very high in the "gymnasia." A poor man was hardly in a position to pay them.

Up to the Second World War the universities and colleges continued to increase, but among the universities the natural science and technical faculties were pushed into the background in numbers and influence. As the result of "gymnasium" or humanistic education the faculties of law and the law colleges had the greatest enrolments.

The training of skilled workers for industry was done largely by practice. The schools giving general education to industrial apprentices were of no higher standard than the primary schools.

The schools for industrial apprentices formed an entirely closed system. It was impossible to break out of it.

The most striking deficiencies of this school system were the following:

The isolation of the secondary schools from each other, the complete seclusion of the "gymnasia" from life and their one-sided education, the complete lack of perspective of the primary schools (only 15—20 per cent of the primary school pupils could continue their studies), the obsolete, impractical approach and teaching methods in the schools.

This schooling system was incapable of giving the whole of the intelligentsia a uniform, practical, fundamental education based on modern European culture.

That was why the best sons of our nation struggled so hopelessly before and under the Horthy regime to awaken our intelligentsia, because the fossilized attitude made it impossible even for a familiar concept to appear in a similar manner in the consciousness of our intelligentsia.

I see the serious problem of the two cultures also in the fact that in the absence of a uniform culture the highly qualified sons of one and the same nation are incapable of understanding each other because the foundations of their education, their approaches are profoundly different—practically incomprehensible to one another.

4.

In 1945 fascism ended in Hungary, and together with it the capitalist social system interwoven with feudal vestiges. Amid numerous political, economic and social problems the questions of culture arose with burning urgency.

Essentially three main problems had to be solved.

1. The cultural heritage of the counter-revolutionary system had to be liquidated in respect to the school system and popular education. A chance had to be given to those who in the past could not attend schools of higher learning. Illiteracy extending to 14 per cent of the country's population had to be ended. The exclusive past school system, with its cultural monopoly of the former landlord-capitalist classes, had to be replaced by a new school system. The methods and organization of extramural popular education had to be placed on a new basis. The wounds caused by the reactionary, inhuman outlook had to be healed.

2. Teachers had to be trained for an educational system involving a threefold increase in the number of pupils of school age and of adults attending school.

3. The content of a correctly interpreted general culture had to be worked out, and, accordingly, relatively uniform public educational material had to be elaborated for the new schools with new educational principles and new methods.

Of these three main problems we achieved great progress in the first two.

A new school system was established. A law was passed for the extension of the age limit of compulsory schooling. From 1945 till 1959 the schooling of all children between the ages of 6 and 14 was compulsory; in 1959 the compulsory age was partly extended to 16.

General education was extended to the widest masses. Popular education outside the school, the dissemination of natural and social sciences, cinemas, libraries, specialized courses, and so on, are rapidly developing.

We trained teachers by the tens of thousands for the increasing numbers of schools. The task was not easy and some mistakes were made. In the countryside we are still struggling with a shortage of teachers. In Hungary there are no jobless teachers: as soon as they leave college they are immediately placed.

Since 1945 we have established a new school system which, however, we had to improve several times, because life demanded changes. Our present school system aims at providing a uniform education, although we must admit that we have not been able to carry this out without shortcomings. That is why there is to be a new school reform.

Every child begins to attend the eight-form general school at the age of six. In the junior section of the general school (forms I to IV) the pupils learn reading, writing, arithmetic, some history and geography, drawing, singing and handicrafts. There is compulsory physical training in every form. The subjects are all taught by one teacher, but in urban schools singing and drawing are taught by special teachers.

In the senior section of the general school (forms V to VIII) there is specialized instruction. The subjects are: Hungarian language and literature, history, Russian, mathematics, physics, chemistry, geography, biology, drawing, singing and physical training. A Western language may be taken as an extra-curricular subject. In a minority of our provincial schools specialized instruction—owing to a shortage of masters and classrooms—has been realized only in part.

The general schools teach with uniform curricula, and no exemptions to their completion are permitted.

The general school is the basis of all further education. On completion of general school the pupils may enrol in secondary schools (four-year "gymnasia," four-year industrial, agricultural or business secondary schools), or industrial, agricultural or commercial vocational schools.

The purpose of the "gymnasium" is to give a general education and qualify the pupils for jobs and for further study at universities. Instruction is given according to uniform curricula in humanistic and natural science branches.

The curricula are made up of the generally known subjects of secondary schools in Europe. Two languages have to be learned in both branches. One is Russian, and the other is a freely chosen Western language (English, French, German, Italian) or Latin. In the humanistic branch, in addition to the customary subjects, psychology and the history of art are taught, and in the natural science branch descriptive geometry, while logic is given in both branches.

The vast majority of these schools are supported by the state, but there are also a few church schools. The Roman Catholic Church has for example eight "gymnasia." Here the majority of the teachers are members of the clergy. Instruction is according to the compulsory state curriculum.

After completing their studies, the pupils take leaving-certificate examinations.

The purpose of the secondary technical schools is that after mastering the essential elements of a general culture the pupils should obtain intermediate training in one branch of industry, agriculture, trade, or public administration. At the end of their fourth year they become technicians, pupils who finish the technical secondary schools take a qualifying examination equivalent to the leaving certificate and at the same time they take a technical vocational examination. Both the "gymnasium" and the technical secondary school leaving certificates entitle pupils to enrol in the university. But of course the taking of a university entrance examination is necessary.

Until 1959 we trained teachers for the junior sections of general schools in four-year teachers training institutes, and teachers of kindergartens in three-year institutes. Enrolment in these schools, too, required the completion of general school studies.

Since September 1, 1959, we have been training schoolteachers and kindergarten teachers having school-leaving certificates in three-year and two-year academies, respectively.

The training of industrial, agricultural and commercial apprentices takes place in apprentices' schools attached to the plants. The pupils work four days weekly, and spend two days studying theoretical subjects. In agriculture the training of skilled workers has not yet been fully elaborated and the methods of training are partly incipient, owing to lack of necessary traditions and experience.

The number of our universities and colleges has increased to two and a half times that previous to 1945 and considerable specialization has taken place. The greatest development has been in the number, the structure and modernization of the universities of a technical character. These universities give specialized training. At the same time the study of philosophy and foreign languages is compulsory at all universities and colleges. Masters for the senior sections of general schools are trained in a three-year teachers' college, and masters for secondary schools study for five years at universities.

A considerable achievement of our school system is the development of adult education at every stage of school. Since 1945 the number of adults receiving school instruction has totalled 600,000. With the exception of a small part of the 180,000 gipsies living in Hungary, illiteracy has practically ceased to exist in this country.

The institution of adult education makes it possible—and does not give merely the right—for boys and girls receiving industrial training but not attending secondary school, to complete their secondary school education by attending evening secondary schools. Workers attending courses in adult education are granted various concessions at their place of work.

The magnitude of the results of adult education may be conveyed by the fact that while the population of the country is hardly ten millions, the number of those participating in adult education is increasing from year to year and in the current school year 120,000 adults are taking courses in various schools and universities.

Those young people who after finishing their general school studies at the age of 14 do not go on to secondary school, nor to vocational secondary schools for industry, agriculture or trade, but apply for preferential jobs of four hours of work daily, are required to attend continuation schools until the age of 16. In these schools there are 8—10 hours of instruction weekly. The curriculum varies according to industrial or agricultural areas. The pupils study, in addition to Hungarian language and literature and history, industrial or agricultural subjects.

Our third main problem—as I indicated at the outset—is the elaboration of the correct material for the curriculum of our public education, parallel with the proper educational aims and methods. In this respect, too, there have been considerable results.

We have ended the one-sided, formal character of education. Steps have been taken for the development of individuals with an all-round culture, but at the same time care has been taken that the curriculum should not be pragmatist, instead the intelligence of the young people should be developed to help them see the general interconnections of things, and the pupils should achieve in the course of activity a certain creative capacity and the ability to train themselves.

We have put education in the natural sciences in its proper place. It is our opinion that to argue over the precedence or superiority of either humanistic or scientific education in respect to their role in general education is nonsensical, or at least anachronistic. We agree with C. P. Snow: a one-sidedly trained man cannot be an educated man.

At the same time pedagogy is gradually receiving greater weight in our school work. We are not yet satisfied with our pedagogical activity, but we feel that the deterioration caused by the war has been repaired. The community spirit is developing in the pupils, and discipline is strengthening; the spiv is not a typical figure in our schools.

In the last few years we have taken a great stride forward in the spheres of fostering respect for and love of physical work, scholastic discipline and diligence. These are features of our pedagogy which must not be undervalued. Of what worth is a keen intellect to society, and ultimately to the individual, if it is not accompanied by a strong will, a crystal-clear character and a love of our fellow-humans.

General education, a dynamic part of culture, is a continually expanding condition of man. Its level can only be determined by experience. Today it has one shape, and after decades it alters, just as the whole of society alters and develops, and just as man in every era—despite the possession of cultural traditions—changes.

5.

Why is there need for a reform of our school system? First of all, because the desire of pupils to go on with their schooling, after finishing general school, has increased tremendously. About 70 per cent of the eighth-form pupils of general schools continue their studies in secondary schools and industrial, agricultural and commercial technical schools. More than 40 per cent of the pupils continue their schooling in secondary schools. Seen in a perspective of 10 to 15 years we may safely calculate that the greater part of those finishing general school will complete their regular or adult secondary school studies.

There is need for a reform also because in the main the material of our secondary-school curricula is still not modern enough, and the various types do not give a uniform fundamental education. We place enormous demands on the pupils. The excellent and good pupils find it necessary to spend four or even five hours studying, in addition to five and six hours of classes in the morning, in order to be able to answer tests the next day. A curriculum affording more spare time and still containing the essential elements of education for the pupil needs to be worked out.

A situation cannot be maintained where the pupils work considerably more than the required eight hours of the grown-ups daily. We shall also have to reduce, and properly select the material of the curriculum in order to allow time for our pupils to read novels, scientific works and attend hobby circles in the afternoons.

There is need for school reform also because the relationship between school and practice is not satisfactory. Our people's economy requires ever more highly-educated, skilled workers in industry, agriculture and trade. The organization of the peasantry into cooperatives, large-scale farming and the shortage of labour require that we provide the widest possible training for our available manpower.

Our general and secondary school pupils must be brought closer to the Hungarian working class and peasantry, so that they should learn to love work, and respect their worker, peasant and intellectual parents, that their "office-desk attitude" should be eliminated completely. We wish that more and more members of the nation may enjoy an identical general education, and that this general education should form a common link between the university professor with highly specialized knowledge and the worker in the factory beside his lathe.

We are striving to acquaint every physically qualified young person with physical work. Physical work—beyond what I have stated above—has valuable educational and instructive effects. Physical work strengthens the body, gives self-confidence, and engages superfluous energies whose unbridled use has led so many young people to moral ruin. The preciseness required by physical work, cooperation with fellow workers reacts on school work, too. In the course of physical work the pupils' depth of vision, their visual approach strengthens. Concrete concepts evolve for the study of geometry. Pupils understand constructions more easily, and during their work in the factory they perceive social relations which give their approach even to literature greater plasticity. During their work in the factory the pupils are compelled to solve problems. The readiness to solve problems plays an extremely important role in mathematics and physics.

After taking all these factors into consideration the heads of our public education system decided to end the crowded state of the curriculum, increase the prevalence of pedagogy in school work and introduce work-instruction on a large scale.

In part of our "gymnasia" during the past school year we experimentally introduced the so-called 5+1 form of education. This simply means that during five days in the week the pupils study theoretical subjects and on one day they work and study either in an industrial or agricultural enterprise. On this day they do four hours of physical work under skilled supervision, and for two hours they study machine drawing, materials and technology. The instructional aim of occupying the pupils with practical work is to acquaint them with one industrial or agricultural trade, and if after taking their leaving certificates they do not go on to universities or colleges, they may after a brief period of training in the given trade become skilled workers.

Work-instruction in the secondary schools is preceded by polytechnical education in the general schools. This means that in the junior sections of general schools our pupils learn handicrafts, and in the senior sections they become familiar with the basic branches of the people's economy—metal and wood industries, agriculture, power-production, electrical, and chemical industries. Naturally this means only a brief glimpse. Our aim is to help the young people choose a vocation, to help them form an attachment for some branch of industry. Apart from this, general school pupils, during their two and three hours of occupation in the school shops or school gardens, learn the use of the basic tools—the saw, hammer, chisel, awl, drill, soldering iron, pruning scissors, spade and hoe. We get them to learn all this information for the purpose of conscious, value-producing activity. We develop a love of the useful, creative character of work in the pupil, in order that he may perceive the necessary harmony between intellectual and physical activity.

In the "gymnasia,"—particularly—we are transforming the experimental and illustrative material of the natural sciences in accordance with the requirements of practice, bearing in mind that even in the natural sciences we must teach all that theory without which practice is incapable of existing. We have set as our goal the rational synthesis of applied and theoretical branches of knowledge. In these schools we regard training for one trade during work-instruction as the most suitable for realizing our instructional and pedagogical aims. Training for a trade is useful for society and makes the individual, the pupil, interested in learning. The number of our secondary school students is constantly increasing.

It is obvious that despite our rapid development not every pupil with a leaving certificate can go to the university. Nor is this necessary. All spheres of our life await educated young people. But it is not a matter of indifference either for the family or society what the young person will do after taking his leaving examination. We consider it a great advantage to turn out leaving certificate holders who, on the basis of specialized knowledge gained during their student years, may obtain qualifications as skilled workers within a few months after their leaving examinations, or within a year at most, and will not have to go to work as low-paid clerical workers.

Our universities have a rich choice among the many holders of leaving certificates. This does not mean, however, that those who are not taken on at the university have been excluded. After a few years of work, more mature and better prepared, talented and industrious young people may continue their studies on a university level either in the day-time or at evening courses. In Hungary more and more factories are sending talented young workers with school leaving certificates to universities with scholarships.

The basis of our reform is justified by the aim of our schools. The aim of our general and secondary schools is partly to prepare our young pepole for production, and on the other hand to mould them through an education that is in keeping with the requirements of our socialist society.

This two-fold preparation takes place, alongside the development of the combined effect of the intelligence, feeling, will and activity, through acquiring various kinds of knowledge and skill.

Our school reform is not yet final. We still have to solve numerous questions. Although the practical activities interrupt the weekly mental activities and are thus refreshing, overloading of the pupils can be avoided only so long as the curricula developed in the course of the school reform contain no more than is necessary having regard to the age levels.

We have innumerable tasks in the development of methods of instruction. Every teacher must make use of modern methods and up-to-date illustrations (films, tape-recorders), he must strive to develop thinking and a readiness for the most profound abstraction. Our pupils must be familiar with the world, its interconnections and its laws—but they must also be taught how man should rule technology, how he should employ it to make his life finer. I very much agree with Chesterton that the world should not be crammed into a man's head; instead, thinking man's rule over the machine, technology and production must be ensured.

6.

All these thoughts return again and again to the concept of a general education, of the cultured man, for the material to be taught in school must provide a general education, or the major part of it.

In my opinion, a person with a general, and let us add, modern education is one who can give a reason in words and writing for the place of "man" in society and nature, with its relationships, on the basis of verified, orderly information, who has a scientific world outlook (that is, suitable for continuous profound thought); has the ability and readiness to perform socially useful activity; is familiar with the norms of social coexistence; feels a community of interests with our socialist society; has developed a striving for the solution, or realization of problems and aims of our society; and has the readiness and ability to enjoy and understand the arts and further train himself alone in his favourite branch of learning and the arts.

In this kind of formulation of general education I was guided by the principle that general education is the intellectual, emotional status of actively engaged men who live in society and are continually being moulded. General education must extend to man's intellect, feelings and activities. And finally I would withdraw the honourable description of an educated man from all those "educated men" in whom the community spirit has not developed, who in their acts cannot display humanism, because their selfishness and crude desires give the lie to their polished intellects, to the mass of knowledge stored up in their minds.

The problems of culture and general education—the latter as the culture of man in society—are not solved with the solution of the problems of schooling. Still, I feel that a school system with uniform curricula that function well, with good educationalists, is able to turn out generations whose personal characteristics will create a soaring spirit in the individual, and in its general aspect will bring about a uniformity of culture.

I have put my thoughts to paper in the hope that attempts at the solution of a similar, though not identical, problem might arouse the interest of British educationalists, thinkers and publicists—in brief, the participants in the controversy over C. P. Snow's article.

THE LIVING SZÉCHENYI

by

GYULA ORTUTAY

It was a hundred years ago, on April 8 1860, that István Széchenyi took his own life. The final decision had been made earlier; only the trigger remained to be squeezed. On March 26 he had written in one of his disjointed notes: "I must cease to exist!" Then, a few days later: "I cannot live, but I cannot die either." Then came the last entry, made on April 1: "I cannot save myself." And so, for another week, the struggle must have continued.

It had begun with the fatal search carried out by the Hapsburg secret police in Széchenyi's quarters in the lunatic asylum at Döbling. For another week he struggled against himself, his alarmed environment, the shadows of the Minister Thierry, who would not even answer his letter, and of the grim young Emperor. And so, at the dawn of Easter a hundred years ago he put an end to his life, and his hand "drooped to the ground, across the arm of his chair"—as László Németh's Széchenyi play shows us, the moment before the curtain drops. This moment remains one of the indelible pictures of the historic memories of the Hungarian nation, and as we commemorate the hundredth anniversary of Széchenyi's death, we are continuously aware of it.

We also know from Széchenyi's diary that he had laboured with the idea of suicide more or less from the inception of his political career. His fate had frequently tempted him—to use an expression that the Catholic, but nevertheless fatalistic Széchenyi was wont to employ.

On this day, however, we celebrate the memory of the living Széchenyi, not of him who prepared for death, but of a great Hungarian statesman and creative genius. Our remembrance and our respect turns towards the living Széchenyi, not in the spirit of the cult of Széchenyi nurtured by the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy that was born of the compromise of the Austrian and the Hungarian capitalist and land-owning classes, nor in that of the openly retrogade Horthy system of the period between the two world wars. This cult increasingly robbed Széchenyi's portrait of all earthly reality and—in the words of János Arany, the great epic poet of the nineteenth century—"refined him to an idea," if, indeed, so poetic an expression can be applied to such methods of cultivating heroes of history. Our aim is not to deprive Széchenyi of his terrestrial features but rather to draw a fully realistic picture of his personality—a personality that was live, creative, fraught with suffering, and torn by conflicts. Already in his lifetime, he was encompassed by extreme adulation and extreme hatred, and it was no chance whim that made Széchenyi show ill-humoured suspicion when Kossuth called him "the greatest Hungarian."

"Why, for the sake of what deceptive political tactics does he raise me so high?" he asked. Kossuth himself, later, in the course of their altercations, changed his view and even accused his great adversary of being as treacherous as an adder. And in the dusk of old age, he spoke of Széchenyi once in tones of aggrieved pain, then again of mellow affection that expressed due recognition for a great personality.

Thus it was that in Széchenyi's lifetime the first efforts were made partly to idolise his life-work and partly, through dwelling on the hostility between Kossuth and Széchenyi and the contradiction between revolution and reform, to "refine him to an idea." The fact that Széchenyi—in one period of his life—considered it his main task to put the brakes on, made every conservative and anti-progressive trend after his death want to use him as its banner. It is truly staggering to see how in the official portrayals Széchenyi's grandeur declined to that of a cheap print; to see how his tragic errors and his doubts became base instruments in the hands of politicians who betrayed the nation.

The Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867 and the political trend that had followed in its wake, looked for moral justification in Széchenyi, and used Széchenyi's prophecies to justify Ferenc Deák's compromises. Later, all that Hungarian public opinion came to know of him became increasingly a set of extraneous formulae. Albert Berzeviczy, in a memorial speech delivered at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in 1910, had nothing better to say than to set him before the nation as an example of "an inherited love of his race." After the empty phrases of Berzeviczy it is worth while for a moment to recall the nadir reached in 1942, the year of the Széchenyi festivities, material of which was even published in a voluminous book. In these commemorations the then Prime Minister László Bárdossy—the same man who plunged Hungary into the war—ranted away in praise of Széchenyi's creative personality and his entrenchment in the racial community, concluding that Hungarians were again "true to their European calling, sacrificing their blood in its service."

All this goes to show that the counter-revolutionary Horthy era unscrupulously used Széchenyi, as it did Petőfi, Ady and so many great Hungarians, to serve its own anti-national aims, which were to "cure" people of independent democratic thought, indefinitely to postpone reforms of vital urgency, such as the land reform, and to turn the country into a fascist state.

Though we have not given a detailed analysis of the development of Széchenyi's portrait, we must nevertheless say a few words about three of the versions of this portrait.

Széchenyi's human personage, his political heritage was not uninterruptedly degraded and impoverished to become a collection of empty phrases. There was a period when it again rose to tragic, poetic heights: in the poetry of Endre Ady. In Széchenyi's system of ideas the symbol of the "Hungarian Fallow" had represented the merciless portrayal of reality and its reform had been the stateman's moral and political aim; and he had considered that the inexorable critical enumeration of the Hungarian sins was the only efficient cure.

The "Untilled Hungary" in Ady's work plays a strikingly similar part, and as Ady cracked the whip of his own bitter critique over the ruling classes, Széchenyi, too, with all the suffering of his age, was there in the poet's song. One thing is certain: the part of the critical content of Széchenyi's life-work that was valid in Ady's period, the tragic pathos of the statesman's political philosophy, his moral indignation, live on with fiery passion in Ady's poetry.

The other portrait of Széchenyi, the most minute of all, was that of Gyula Szekfü, a noted historian of the period between the two world wars. It is instructive—precisely because of its contradictions. Szekfü, who after the loss of the First World War endeavoured to produce a critique of the policy of liberalism, found it natural to set up Széchenyi's moral and political system as a universal Hungarian scale of values and an ideal to be followed. Of the cult of Széchenyi, however, he wrote with wry scepticism:

"The subject of the cult of Széchenyi in the last few decades was not the man of flesh and blood, but an abstract idea, a dogmatic construction... We have not been seeking to find what Széchenyi said and did, in order to arrange our lives in pursuance of his instructions, but have proceeded by the reverse method: We have stated what we ourselves were doing, and have sought for recognition and approval of our deeds in Széchenyi's works. We have in this way more or less adapted his spirit to our conditions and ambitions. Thus the more we spoke and wrote of him, the less was there to be found of his spirit."

For all his irony and bitterness, however, the portrait of Széchenyi drawn by Szekfü was also not the true one, but a substantiation of his own historical and political ideas, of his analysis of the Hungarian centuries and his critique of the contemporary situation in Hungary. He used Széchenyi equally to prove the Christian universality of his philosophy of history and to support the historic idea of the Hungarian-German community of fate, the necessity of proceeding through slow reform, the need for solid foundations to the national economy and for multitudes of educated people, and also his horror of revolution. In all these matters, Széchenyi was the canon law—and Szekfü also regarded Széchenyi as his pattern in the strictness of his moral principles, his tragic pessimism and even his irony.

It is all the more stirring to see how Szekfü, the author of this portrait of Széchenyi, the scientist who was afraid of revolution, turned later against the whole of his outlook on history, including his image of Széchenyi. It appears from his articles published in the volume "Valahol utat vesztettünk" (We Have Lost the Way Somewhere) that by 1943 he saw what the Hungarian-German community of fate meant at Hitler's side; and from his rare encounters with the working class and the testimonies of the writers and sociologists who had been prying into the problems of the Hungarian peasantry—the so-called village-research people—he knew by then what an anti-national betrayal the "gradual reform" of the Horthy era, that had taken the place of the sold-out social revolution, really had been. He realised that what had been called a "European sense of calling" had actually been the abandonment of Hungary's place in a progressive Europe. After the liberation, Szekfü was one of the few people who faced up to his mistakes, and it is only with respect that we can read hiscourageous account in his book entitled "Forradalom után" (After the Revolution).

And Szekfü, the follower of Széchenyi and of the policy of reforms, the advocate of historical evolution, drew these conclusions about Horthy's Hungary: "Was it still a State? A Hungarian State? And society? Hungarian society? It was none of these things. The State had disintegrated, society rotted. A line, a long historical line had come to an end, ingloriously, shamefully or, if you like, in a grotesquely bloody tragic comedy.

"Only one way out remained: that of revolution..."

There is yet another unknown portrait of Széchenyi, limited to a very few features: the portrait drawn by the Hungarian people. Did the Hungarian people accept Széchenyi as part of their verbal tradition and preserve his memory? While the older ethnographic and poetic collections preserve the figures of King Mathias and of Kossuth in folk-tales and songs, and both their memories are alive even in the folk-poetry of the Rumanian, Slovak, Slovenian, Carpatho-Ukrainian and Moravian peoples, the older collections carry nothing about Széchenyi. Shortly after 1945 we organised a nation-wide ethnographic survey. From over five hundred villages we collected tens and tens of thousands of testimonies about the heroes and the events of 1848. These reminiscences clearly reflect the opinions of our people, their traditionally preserved verdict over Arthur Görgey, of the treachery of the commander-in-chief who ordered the surrender of Világos, as well as about the hopes of the serfs, the struggles and the defeats, and above everything and everyone else, about Lajos Kossuth. He became the symbol of 1848—49, of the struggle for freedom and also of the social revolution. Though there is mention of Mihály Táncsics, the first public representative of the Hungarian workers, of the poet Sándor Petőfi and of others, Kossuth was nevertheless the main hero, and it is in his figure that the memories of the peasantry are concentrated.

Our research workers also inquired about the memories of Széchenyi. The summing up might well be given in the words—very, very brief—of Gábor Petrohai, a poor peasant of Porcsalma: "Of Széchenyi I know nothing." (Ethnographic Archives on 1848. Szat. XXIV. 44.) True, we have another, also brief piece of evidence from Galambok, by a smallholder aged 76, which points to the existence of a cult of Széchenyi: "As far as Széchenyi was concerned, the old folk thought of him practically as a God," said József Szabó. (Archives, Za. VIII. 94.). The rest of the informants mainly provided variations on the nothing of which Gábor Petrohai spoke. A poor peasant from Kapuvár knew this much: "Count Széchenyi, the greatest Hungarian, also lived thereabouts. The castle is not far from here. His poem says that 'Hungary was not, but it shall be.' What he did I do not know." (Archives, Sop. V. 43.) A woman from the Mecsek foothills remembers that "perhaps it was he who had the Chain Bridge built." (Archives, Ba. XXVII. 45.) A farmer from Bábolna spoke thus of the antagonism between Kossuth and Széchenyi: "Széchenyi wanted peace, Kossuth guns." (Archives, Pe. IV. 17.) According to another source, the Calvinists spoke of Kossuth, the Catholics of Széchenyi. (Archives, Za. XII. 82.)

Perhaps the most detailed reminiscence of all was this: "Both Széchenyi and Kossuth wanted the liberation. But they were not on good terms, because Kossuth was a commoner, while Széchenyi was a count. Both worked to break us away from the Austrians. Kossuth was the better man." (Archives, Au. XVI. 72.)

This was all that a very detailed examination of the reminiscences of the Hungarian people produced. It is a sad and meagre result. It indicates that, as far as Széchenyi is concerned, the memory of the Hungarian people has preserved very little of the events of the Reform Era and of the great preparations for and the struggles of 1848, while of Kossuth there were thousands of loving reminiscences and traditions. Even the years at Döbling and Széchenyi's tragic death did not bring about a change. This negative picture involves a condemnation. A condemnation not so much of Széchenyi but of the cult developed around him, which accentuated those very features in Széchenyi's life that turned him against Kossuth, against the true progress and true interests of the nation. This Széchenyi could *not* be a hero of the Hungarian people, together with Kossuth and King Mathias the Just. No glorification could make him a popular hero in this way.

In our period, however, the Hungarian people will come to know István Széchenyi and make him one of its heroes not in the naively simplified, symbolic terms of folklore but through the true features of actual history. It is up to our Marxist historical science to present this true, living Széchenyi. We shall here ourselves attempt, on the occasion of this hundredth anniversary, to present a very partial sketch of the historical personality and political activity of Széchenyi. This portrait, based on the results of our research workers, does not attempt any idealisation or false modernization. We have no need to make some sort of proto-Marxist or Utopian Socialist of Széchenyi, simply to find in him justification for our present-day tasks, principles and struggles. Our aims, our principles and our methods differ from those of Széchenyi. Even though we may find it instructive to note how deeply Széchenyi was disturbed by the aspirations for independence that he himself had also promoted with his reforms, how he was frightened off by the first signs of the bourgeois revolution and how after 1849, in his struggle with his self-accusatory ideas, he came to justify the revolution—all this does not mean that we should try and find present-day parallels and force them on this tragic life.

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The contradictions in Széchényi's life and political work were rooted in his social and family traditions, in the works of his ideals and precursors, but above all in the contemporary social and economic conditions of Hungary and the political aims he set himself.

Széchenyi's childhood was also determined by this duality. The company of his father, Ferenc Széchenyi, the founder of museums and libraries, consisted in his youth of freemasons and was permeated with the ideas of the French enlightenment. The father's first secretary was the Jacobin József Hajnóczy and the instructor of his daughter, Ferenc Verseghy, priest and poet, was also a radical, who was later imprisoned. Whether it was the trial of Ignác Martinovics and his companions, the Hungarian Jacobins—when Hajnóczy was also executed—or an upsurge of religious feeling that prevailed on him, we do not know, but a radical change took place. Pious literature replaces the encyclopaedists; monarchist secretaries followed one after the other; and the children's instructor after Verseghy was the pious Father Kelemen Hofbauer.

Then there were the real shadows of the peers' lives: the country itself, with all its apparently irremediable backwardness, terror and exploitation, living in a ferment of hatred, where the men of spirit, — noble, civil and clerical reformers — had through rebellious decades, right up to the 1820s, vainly sought a way out. It would be instructive to have a close look at this age. It would be instructive to examine how, on the one hand, this backward, feudal agricultural colony that was Hungary, was surrounded by the progressing Western peoples, and how it was, on the other hand, in contact with the even deeper backwardness that prevailed East of its borders.

In England, by this time, not only did the developing industry and trade promoted capitalist development; the Chartist movement of the new working class was already pointing to a more distant future. The ideas of the French revolution had not died, their effect was spreading over Europe. French, German, Belgian industry was expanding and even in Hungary's vicinity, in the Moravian basin, industrialisation commenced. German experts worked out the theory of intensive agriculture and endeavoured to harmonise the relation between agriculture and education, so as to profit the State. In Western Europe the economic, social and cultural conditions for bourgeois development were established.

Beyond this enrichment and intellectual stir of the West lay Széchenyi's Hungarian Fallow. But here too, the apparently hopeless scenery showed signs of new shoots. Beside the official Latin, the Hungarian language, the language of the servant-folk, was discovered and authors and poets set about developing and rescuing it. The ideas of the encyclopaedists and of Voltaire mingled with the teachings of the German rationalist-pietist school of statecraft in the heads of many Hungarians. Almost simultaneously there appeared the linguistic and folklore research movement; the Jacobin plans of reform and experiments in social organisation; Samuel Tessedik with his rationalist village Utopia, his plans for developing education and the economy; Gergely Berzeviczy, with his dream of world trade and his works exposing the inhuman conditions of the peasants.

Tessedik and Berzeviczy imagined that their social reforms would be carried out within the framework of the feudal order, to the advantage of the ruling class. There is no doubt that the obstinately recurrent ideas in Széchenyi's works, where he envisaged reforms without upsetting the social structure, are closely related to the ideas of Tessedik and Berzeviczy. The young Széchenyi was, however, undoubtedly also influenced by the more radical and consistent Jacobin ideas, which turned him against the conservative elements of the peerage. As late as 1828, but still with the fury of a young man, he wrote to Károly Esterházy of their unworthy ancestors: "Let their remains rot!" Monarchist loyalty, the search for cautious reforms and the curse on his predecessors mingled in the passions of the young man when he entered on his political career.

Széchenyi's greatness lies in that he saw the place of his blighted nation in Europe and perceived the main stations of the way out, in the economic, political, cultural and moral fields. His tragedy was determined by his social limitations which, acting as an inner brake, set the limit between reform and revolution to which he could progress and decided the moment when he would have to turn against the released social forces of the nation. It was a matter of necessity for him to come into conflict with both the Hungarian nation and the Hapsburg Court, and these conflicts could only be inexpiable and insoluble. It was these conflicts that wore him down. The proof of his human greatness, his moral power and a patriotism that went beyond his class limitations was given in his solitude at Döbling; passing beyond the revolution of March 1848, he came to consider the revolutionary justice of the decision of April 1849, that dethroned the Hapsburgs and declared Hungary to be a Republic. He then understood and defended this decision, and herein lies the human oneness and fulness of his tragedy and of his greatness. This was the guiding thread of his life, which has already appeared here and there in the preceeding pages and which we shall endeavour fully to expound. His death illuminated this unity of grandeur and of tragedy.

Let us, however, first devote a few words to some of the achievements of his work and of his life that have lasted to this day. He emerged from the circles of the high nobility, which considered the inferior social classes to be hardly human beings and handled the values of the country as such exclusively personal pieces of property that there were Hungarian peers whose debts of ten million contemporary *forints* were larger than the total of serf taxes throughout the country. He emerged from circles only a small part of which was affected by the nascent desire for a national and social revival, while the greater part—as is well evidenced by a memorandum on schooling drawn up by the Palatine Archduke Alexander Leopold—would even have forbidden elementary schooling for peasants. According to the Palatine, even primary education was a wicked thing—*eine verworfene Arbeit!*

This was the moment when Széchenyi set out to establish the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, to cultivate the Hungarian language and create a national culture. "The greatest possible number of educated people" became one of the leading principles of his life, when he demanded civil rights for "all the population of Hunnia" and, when profiting by the experiences on economic and social matters that he had gained during his journeys in Western Europe and the East, he exposed the rottennes of the whole feudal system through expounding the problems of credit in Hungary.

And if, in order to measure the attitude and the subsequent deeds of István Széchenyi, we use the scale that he himself set in the motto to his book, the *Stadium*—namely that "A man is worth as much as he has been of use"—, then we may rightly say that in these years Széchenyi did more than anyone else. Even the simple enumeration of all he did would be difficult—from the foundation of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in 1826, through all the ideological and political propaganda expounded in his Credit *(Hitel)*, Light *(Világ)* and Stadium, in leaflets and debates, to his initiatives in the fields of economic, social and cultural progress.

All those ideas which had only been dreams, the regulation of rivers, the building of canals, the economic reform measures that had only just been suggested were all adopted by Széchenyi, raised to a higher level, and made the subject of positive and successful endeavour for their fulfilment. If a suggestion is made for a Hungarian National Theatre, then he, writing of it, already envisages the necessity of having in every larger Hungarian town a theatre which would be suited to the propagation of Hungarian culture and the refinement of tastes and habits. On this issue, he proceeds just as directly to the whole picture, as at a later date, when writing of steam shipping on Lake Balaton, he vividly presents the prevailing state of affairs and enthusiastically envisages the future:

"The Balaton now carries not a single ship worth the name, not even a tolerable boat. Whether this is something to marvel or to laugh at, I do not know: Let a steamship float upon it only once and it will call miners to the pits and urge thinking people to use steam and breathe the spark of life into the whole, furnishing the now pleasant, but drowsy country with such joyous liveliness that the inhabitants around Lake Balaton will greet it as the sweetest herald of the springtide of a better future."

But let us not go into further detail. The first period of Széchenyi's political activities coincided fully with the main direction of progress of his nation and was linked with what had been best in the work of his forerunners. The age, the progressive forces of the nation and Széchenyi's activities were in full harmony. In this period, even his class limitations hampered him less. Nay, they even spurred him to criticism and justified, as it were, his sharp comments on the failings of the Hungary of the noblemen. This was the period when Széchenyi's ideas and his practical economic activities, his political propaganda coincided and represented the vital interests of the nation. This was when he developed his ruthless, instructive judgement, his insistence on self-examination, the disclosure of the Hungarian sins, which reactionary national conceit was as indisposed to hear then as later. This was when he called upon all those working on separate plans for the nation, to cooperate in the common interest of the nation. How little his own social limitations tied his hands and how thoroughgoing a social change the idea of reform involved is shown unmistakably in *Credit*, where he declares in the Conclusion:

"And so I do openly confess that the main obstacles to the progress of our country and to its elevation to a higher level are we, the wealthier landowners."

It is easy to see why the conservative, reactionary peers maligned him as an agitator, as Zsigmond Kemény also writes, and it is equally easy to see why people inspired by national enthusiasm looked to him with ever greater devotion and followed his precepts and initiative. And while Metternich and the high society of Vienna had previously treated the political efforts of "Stefferl," which they took for a manifestation of sheer self-complacency, with a sort of condescending benevolence, their brows now darkened, and the sale of *Stadium* was prohibited. Széchenyi himself, who had looked upon his reforms as being in the common interest of the ruling family and of the nation and as a process of useful evolution, began to understand that he was coming up against the interests of the dynasty and slowly, gradually ceased to feel himself part of the social ferment that had begun and which, in addition to the orders of nobles and bourgeois, gained strength among the serfs, too. It was partly in defence and partly as an attack that he now wrote in *Stadium*—before his disputes with Kossuth actually began—that he was body and soul an advocate of the principle of aristocracy in politics. True, he explained that this was in the sense in which aristocracy means the rule of the best.

And for all his brilliant initiatives, his propaganda, the Bridge Association set up to prepare the building of the Chain Bridge (1832), and all the other achievements, the steamships between Vienna and Pest, the Casino, the ever more fruitful work of the Academy, an ever richer literary and scientific life, for all his being called by Kossuth the greatest Hungarian—a doubt nevertheless arose in his heart, a doubt whether his policy was correct. *Incipit tragoedia.* In 1815 he had, in good-natured self-mockery, depicted in his diary the basic conflict of the elegant Captain of Hussars, interested in machinery and taking lessons not only from the engineers but even the ordinary workmen, busying himself with wood oil in the morning, and spraying himself with exquisite Eau de Rasumofsky in the evening before going to a party. The contradictions that began in the thirties and developed in their full sharpness between 1840 and 1842 were no longer so simple, and touched upon the vital interests both of the nation and of Széchenyi. Justice was, we cannot doubt, on the side of national progress, of the interests of the national revolution: historic justice was not on the side of the hesitant Széchenyi, who shrank from responsibility.

And the argument took place not only between Széchenyi and Kossuth and the radical youth (among them the sons of even the richest peers!). By this time, the debate was raging between the timid reformer and national public opinion that now craved for national independence, social liberation and revolutionary change. This was how Széchenyi came to be squeezed between the upper and the nether millstones: that of the Austrian ruling family, of the reactionary peers, and that of the nation awakening to its spring fever of revolution. He gave himself to intrigues—so unworthy of him! He even sought Metternich's alliance against Kossuth, but then shrank back in disgust. (It was for this plan of Széchenyi's that Kossuth, profoundly shocked, called him a man with the mentality of an adder.)

Every subject led to argument, whether it was that of the union of interests, of the "youth" or the "old age" of the nation and of the historico-philosophical theories related to this question which preceded those of Spengler; of economic measures, of the development of industry or of the problems of national education. There were some debates in which we would today undoubtedly say that Széchenyi was right, e. g. the discussion in 1842, when he spoke up in the Academy against enforced Magyarisation and on behalf of the recognition of the equal rights for the national minorities. Over this question he, who was so ardent an advocate of adherence to the nation and to his kind and looked upon the development of the national entity of Hungary as the central theme of his political thought, proved to be more universally-minded and far-sighted than Kossuth and his other radical adversaries.

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Széchenyi's opposition regarding the vital problems of the nation could not, for all that, be dependent on part-problems concerning which he was right. Even Ferenc Toldy, in the obituary that has been quoted, pointed out the essential fact that Széchenyi foundered on the border-line between reform and revolution. He could not follow his nation, he could not comprehend that Kossuth was right.

In 1847, Széchenyi was still on the defensive against the accusation that he had been the incendiary of the incipient fire of revolutionary change. Shortly, however, came the reunion for a brief period—after so much political obstruction, intrigue and conflict of the nation's two great statesmen, Széchenyi and Kossuth. This is evinced not only by the letter which Széchenyi wrote to his secretary, Antal Tasner, in March, 1848 ("My friend, we are experiencing miracles! I am filled with the fondest hopes... I cannot doubt the most blissful development of our nation," etc. etc.), but even more by the positive work with which he supported in the first few months the government of Lajos Batthyány, who had been appointed Prime Minister in April 1848, and whose cabinet included Lajos Kossuth.

Engrossed in gloomy thoughts by June 1848, he wrote a self-defensive letter himself—one that was not quite worthy of his moral standards—addressed to the chancellor, György Apponyi. In it, he brooded over the question of how he could have turned against Kossuth, the nation's favourite, the Calvinist democrat. By August, he was wrestling with the problem of whether to escape or to stand firm; of whether to look after his family or to seek irresponsible oblivion in suicide. And when the sea rose high and the people of Pest sallied forth, Széchenyi fled—in both senses. He made an attempt at suicide, then his doctor took him in hand (or rescued him?). Széchenyi's tragic flight from his country which now was engaged in a life-and-death struggle was a tragic fall from the peaks of grandeur to the depths of his own diseased mind, heading towards madness.

Henceforth he was an inmate of the lunatic asylum at Döbling. Here, in the dejection of the Döbling sanatorium, surrounded by informers and prying telltales, the old Széchenyi, who had gone under in the struggle, once more regained his strength after his years of mental paralysis. In our view, the best proof of Széchenyi's political greatness was, above all, that his solitude at Döbling served not only as a political refuge, not only to cure his disease, but also as an occasion for a tremendous critical re-examination of his own political views, of the Hungarian struggle for freedom and of the revolution. And his examination justified neither the monarchist world of peers, nor his own doubts and vacillations, nor the previously so deeply revered and feared Hapsburg monarchy—but Kossuth's policy, the rightful self-defence of the people who had risen in revolt, and the revolution of the nation that had failed to win its rights. It is obviously much easier now to state these points than it was for them to mature in the sanatorium that had become Széchenyi's prison. One can well imagine how hard it must have been for this wounded but still proud spirit, animated by wild passions, to turn against its own former ideas and political conceptions.

When he recovered from his illness, he turned with all his energies, with the tendrils of his winding, romantic sentences, with all his bitter irony against the system of Prime Minister Alexander Bach, who then ruled Hungary with absolutist methods. The unparallelled work, the Great Satire which was never finished, mercilessly exposed all the filth of the Bach system, unequivocally prophesied its fall and was a but thinly veiled threat, seemingly uttered by an obsequiously polite lackey, that "the tables are sometimes turned in the world." In the allegory of the impaled princes it is as though the threat of the sansculottes smouldered in the author's words. When an anonymous political pamphlet in praise of Bach's system was published, entitled *Rückblick* (Retrospection), Széchenyi wrote a polemical reply *Ein Blick auf den anonymen Rückblick* (An Inspection of the Anonymous Retrospection). With it he again entered into political life, to ridicule the absolutism that quaked behind its façade of self-praise, to expose its sins and to bear testimony on the side of his nation that had been doomed to peril. All this was an ever more open stand on the side of the revolution of 1848—49, and of Kossuth. During the search made at Döbling on March 3, 1860, a nearly completed work of Széchenyi's was found—a work which deprived the autocracy of even its legal foundations and was at the same time its author's clear confession of faith on the side of the struggle for freedom, the social revolution and the rightful self-defence of the Hungarian people. It was against the chaos and the blindness of absolutism that he wrote this work *Disharmonie und Blindheit*, in the last months of his life. Let us see what Széchenyi, who attempted to the last moment at least fictitiously to remain true to his emperor, had to say in this writing about the dethronement at Debrecen, in April 1849.

"When did the National Assembly at Debrecen pass this, basically legal and therefore comprehensible, but immeasurably awkward and childish resolution? It is very noteworthy that it only did so on April 14, 1849, when the Imperial Patent of March 4th had already declared that Hungary was a subjugated territory and the defenders of the country rebels, and had thus declared them outlaws! The constitution had then been destroyed not by Kossuth and the so-called rebels, but by the iron hand of tyranny, more precisely by Prince Schwarzenberg and his servitor, Alexander Bach. For this very reason it will only remain in its present state as long as the ruling dynasty has the material strength necessary for oppression, but not a moment longer."

The same idea had, in fact, more politely been set out in his *Offenes Promemoria*, his Open Letter addressed to the Emperor in 1859. There was no legal basis for oppressing the Hungarian people. The revolutionary struggle of this people could be justified before history and ethics, but even on the basis of formal law. This was the final outcome, the essence of Széchenyi's mental torment at Döbling, of the rediscovery by the statesman of himself and of his nation. And though Kossuth, in his emigration in Italy, could obviously not know this so clearly, the great adversary could nevertheless sense it, for all their conflicts, their bitter struggles and Kossuth's deep sense of personal injury. What else would explain the letter which he wrote on receiving the news of the death of Széchenyi, to László Teleki, also an *émigré* and a champion of Hungarian independence?

"Széchenyi's death, I know, affected you deeply. It shook me, to the depth of my soul. Ah, this was not how he should have ended. He should have lived, making up in the hoped for rebirth of our nation for all the errors of his life and leaving a name the reverence for which would not be admixed with a sigh of sorrow. I, as a Hungarian whose enemy he was (I was never his), I as a Hungarian have been proud, that he, too, was a Hungarian. And in him, even during his hostility, I always honoured the Hungarian Prometheus, who in the bosom of our nation kindled the latent heavenly spark to flame."

Kossuth's words embrace the essence of the whole Széchenyi problem. And this forgiving tone, we know, could not only have been that due to a tragic death and to the all-forgiving moment of the passage of life. We finally see the grandeur of Széchenyi in the fact, to which we devote the commemoration of the hundredth anniversary of his death, that he found the way to his struggling, suffering nation and wished to and was able to become one with it. This was how Széchenyi, who had been crushed on the brink between reform and revolution, who had fallen into the mad abyss of self-accusation, returned to life and rose to his down-trodden nation. And even though after the horror of the search he fled to death from the probable sentence of Hapsburg autocracy, he has remained a live historical hero of the Hungarian people, a great labourer upon the edifice of his nation's future.

ON THE EMBANKMENT

A Short Story

by

GÉZA OTTLIK

I

A change? thought Damjáni. How we long for it, yet how much it can hurt us. How we long for something new; a new world and, together with it, a new self. And yet with what yearning we desire the return of the old world, the old self! We want the old as well as the new. What greed! thought Damjáni. They walked along what, in his childhood, had been called Átlós Street, and then down another street that had once been Fehérvári Road.

It was about noon. The February sunshine glistened on the melting snow. Beside the lake where, thirty years ago, there had been empty plots of land which had been their playgrounds, their kingdom, and where the bleak, burnt-out meadows stretching to the furthermost suburbs of the city had begun, there stood a six-storeyed block of flats. It had been built originally above the drained swamp; some weeks ago most of it had been torn down by a big bomb. Only a short while previously, Damjáni, in place of the swaggering new row of houses here, had longed to see again the old heaps of rubble, the flat rush-covered land, the vacant endlessness of the wind-blown, uneven sparse meadows; how glad he would have been now at the sight of the symmetrical, putty-coloured, block-like buildings, instead of the broken row of houses, seared and torn.

Yet everywhere here, man had destroyed his own handiwork—and though the destruction, in places, had been performed with terrifying thoroughness, and though occasionally Damjáni was frightened by the scale of this upheaval, he was unshaken, and felt no sense of despair. This strange confusion affected him like the piquant sensations of a news-reel or the picture reports in a daily paper, straight from the press. He had seen all these changes before and he knew that they did not date from the beginning, nor would they last for ever. The picture would change many times again, sometimes to its advantage. He was not sorry, for instance, for that outmoded taxi which, its wheels missing, perched on the edge of the pavement, like a tin box, dented to death. He did not regret the rusty gas street lamp which leaned grotesquely upon it; nor the twisted ugly metal shutters of the shop windows. A torn chestnut tree stood with twisted cables around its bald crown. For the tree he felt a little sorry.

Soon his eye tired and he became nervous. Everywhere the same? He quickened his pace. Faster, more and more impatiently, he stumbled with his companion over the snow-covered, muddy stones. Now and then Lona fell behind. He wanted to get clear of the ruins as soon as he could. He was tired now of these glaring newspaper sensations. He hurried towards his city. He wanted to be home, for now—though he did not show it—he was sick of the whole adventure. But the disorder did not diminish. He was still limping, but not enough to speak of.

Damjáni was an actor. A piece of wire played fellow to the single yellow tortoise-shell ear-piece of his spectacles. Lona, who had never seen him differently, would have been unable to think of him with a faultless pair. A lined camel-hair coat, woollen scarf, a brief-case with a zipper, constantly adjusted and crippled spectacles—these things to her meant Damjáni. And a crumpled shirt collar. For even if, somehow, she managed to wash his shirt, she was quite unable to iron it.

Damjáni was freshly shaved, his soft, elastic skin stretched by the alum. He had an insignificant face, the sort of face it is impossible to remember. Still, when he walked along bustling boulevards, travelled on a bus, of—once in a while—went to a coffee-house to dine, he was known. Though he never played in films, nor was known for his love affairs. many recognized him. "Look! Damjáni!" they would whisper. Mostly he acted in serious, straight plays, and mostly in supporting roles. The people in the bus and at the neighbouring tables in the restaurant looked at Damjáni's pleasant, characterless face and were surprised to discover what good features he really had. "Not an ugly man!" they'd say. What they really wanted to say was: "He is not a good-looking man though..." No, he was not good-looking as people expect an actor to be. Except that people didn't expect Damjáni to be handsome. With his parts, which usually demanded of him bizarre make-up and strange costume, he was so much part of the character that it was difficult to recognize him as a private individual. And, individuality was not expected of Damjáni, nor good looks, even by those who recognized him. Instead, a little embarrassed, they told themselves that the off-stage existence of an actor having his day off seemed almost superfluous. For twenty years Damjáni had been a member of the same great theatre where he had begun his career, and there was not a season in which he had not appeared in at least three or four plays. He was a useful actor, reliable, conscientious. He had wanted to be a doctor, but only a month or two after gaining his diploma he had signed his contract with the theatre. This had been in 1924.

Not twenty years ago, as he had counted to himself, but twenty-one. Twenty-one, exactly three times seven. They approached the bridge. He had heard that it had been blown up. The streets were fairly crowded. It was the first day that people had dared to emerge from the cellars. There was an Easter, or at least a festive, spirit abroad. The new year Damjáni had added to his calculations, though entered upon long ago, was in reality only just starting. Inside a doorway a man was selling corn-cakes and also diaries. The Easter mood, apart from the newness of the year, was created by the spring-like fresh air, the pure sunshine, and the strange quietness: the absence of machine-gun and cannon fire, of bomb explosions, of the customary permanent and monotonous rumble of collapsing houses.

Damjáni turned to the girl. "When were you born?"

Lona was struck by the unexpected brusqueness of the question. But she answered obediently: "Nineteen twenty-four."

"Ah, ha," he nodded, "and where?"

"Well, at home, at Újfalu."

Damjáni suddenly remembered that he had asked this once before. He knew almost nothing about Lona. He paid small attention to what little the girl had said about herself, and then forgot it almost at once. His mind had only registered that she had come to the capital, for the first time in her life, in December and that her parents were dead. Was her father a gentile lawyer? or a Jewish carpenter? He was embarrassed to ask a second time. She spoke with a marked provincial accent, but it was pleasantly natural. She wore a short imitation fur coat; she had no hat.

"Does that fur coat belong to what's her name... your girl friend?"

"Of course not. It's mine. I got it long ago, before I finished school, very long ago."

Beside the absurd childish seriousness with which she emphasized this "very long ago," there was another kind of seriousness in her voice. Damjáni threw her a sharp glance and decided not to laugh at her. Long ago he had noticed how defenceless she was. And how shyly she surrendered her sensitiveness to the world, almost provoking the rude jokes made at her expense, so that even tactful people were ribald towards her. He had noticed how worried she was even by the most innocent jokes against her. Obviously she could not bear the lack of sympathy behind sarcasm, the high-brow heartlessness behind smart witticism. So much was clear from the painful self-control with which, at any price, she tried to conceal that she was hurt. Lona did not like to talk about herself; indeed, she was not talkative at all. Damjáni did not mind this, in fact, it pleased him. He himself was taciturn; and so long hours and days and weeks were passed in pleasant quietness with this strange young girl.

Damjáni soon noticed that, as far as he was concerned, her exaggerated touchiness disappeared. He could not hurt her; his chaff did not touch her. He could have been unblushingly rude to her and she would not have minded, maybe... What sort of a girl was she? What was she really like? As far as appearance went, she had a good figure, though her features were scarcely developed—she looked a mere fifteen or sixteen. The soft, undecided line of her nose, for instance, was not in harmony with the expression of her grey eyes, which varied between suspicion, sadness, and intelligence. He watched the clumsy charm of her movements as if he were a painter of animals. What would become of her? He had encountered so much talent in his life that he knew it was one of the cheapest of things. Talent determined a person's fate as little as their will. Only luck. How many circumstances had to combine in one's favour! Perhaps, after all, one's fate did depend on the stars. Damjáni could observe a face well. He had much fine sensitiveness in him. Often he was frightened away from people by something he observed on the talking lips of grimacing faces. But on Lona's forehead he had seen no evil fate. What would become of her? He did not know. He did not even know what was in her. Nor did he know her name.

His profession as an actor had trained Damjáni's mind to great economy. He never memorized anything that was not essential, and names least of all. Thus he did not recall the name of the former occupant of the flat where they had lived for weeks. He simply spoke of Lona's acquaintance or friend as 'what's her name.' He had never seen this woman, nor her husband: they had both fled to the west. He read their name on the door of the flat every day, and every day as diligently forgot it. With an unconscious deliberateness which was trained into him, he forgot the name of the street in which the house stood. And he forgot the surname of the girl who had become his mistress two weeks ago.

II

Kerekes? Fazekas? mused the actor. Or Hegedüs, or Faragó? Some insignificant name. It had told him nothing new about Lona. There was no reason to memorize it. And as they were constantly together, he had had no reason to give any thought to the girl. But how was he to think of her in the future without name? Cruelly he racked his brain until he remembered, quite definitely, that it began, undoubtedly, with an L. Then he corrected himself. Positively, there was an L in the name somewhere. Then he wasn't so sure, but perhaps there was an L in it? They passed by the hotel. Damjáni threw a glance towards the bridge. A substantial piece was missing from the middle. But he was so deep in his meditations that he did not grasp what he saw.

He had got stuck in Buda nearly two months ago, one evening when he had crossed this bridge by tram. In October it had become a general habit for everybody to sleep away from home. There were those who did not dare to spend the night in their own homes, terrified that the political police would ring the door bell and drag them from their beds. So they acquired the habit of sleeping first at the flat of one friend, then at the house of another. And these friends, in turn, followed their example, and began to seek strange beds. And then the friends of these friends caught the habit, and so it spread. Perhaps because it gave them a feeling of importance, perhaps because they were envious of the fun.

Damjáni had no particular reason to hide. But in December the war, with its adolescent soul, breathed so close to their nostrils that it was Marica herself who suggested that, for the sake of caution, he should sleep somewhere else, though only a few weeks previously, when he had broached the idea, she would not hear of it. She had packed pyjamas, towel and toothbrush in the zipper brief case. They had had an early supper, kissed, and then she had remained alone in the flat. One evening Damjáni went over the Danube to Buda to sleep. His host was a judge and his name was Agorasztó; he lived in an outlying and wooded district of Buda called Hűvösvölgy, Cool Valley. The next day he could not return. The fighting had jumped forward, by-passing them, and stopped at the western slope of the Hill of Roses, the Városmajor and the Swabian Hill.

On Christmas Day, strangely enough, he could still talk to Marica over the phone; he had assured her that in a few days, they would be together again. But the siege dragged on.

Then the phone went dead, the electric current was cut off. The water mains dried up, the gas pipes were empty. There was no bread. Artillery men came, infantry came, tank men came. Guns were dug into the gardens, then dug up again and dragged forward. The fat and sugar supplies ran out. Officers came, army drivers came, some of whom gave them cigarettes and wine; the guns rumbled day and night. Tracer bullets cometed across the sky and rifles cracked. A huge tank gently touched the iron railings and the posts collapsed into the hedge. The floors and carpets became muddy. The rooms were filled with the reek of damp leather, petrol, and oily coal.

In January, Damjáni started out to get back to the Pest side, and although he was turned back twice, succeeded in reaching Budagyöngye. Here he was captured, put in a line, and, after some queueing, they were made to march back. But he had got away from the group and the next day again made his way forward. He collected much quite unreliable information about the chances of crossing the river. It seemed most likely that he would be able to get across further down at Csepel Island. So at noon he set off, wearing Agorasztó's blue striped shirt, and carrying his zipper brief case under his arm. This time he chose a different road, with the idea of reaching the district of Lágymányos over the hills. It was not yet dark when in a little street of gardened villas he heard the sound of shots and explosions. A shell struck a flower-bed not far from him, throwing up a smoky, dusty column which, as it collapsed, formed a huge cloud of dust and dirt. A splinter wounded his knee. He fell, terrified. Then, seeing that he was still alive, he thought he ought to cry for help. But he was ashamed to do so, so, as he lay there, he looked about him for his glasses and tried to get to his feet. He found the glasses, but as he tried to put them on, one of the ear-pieces broke off and remained in his hand. He threw it down and began to curse.

"What happened?" a voice asked just behind him.

It belonged to a girl, a hatless girl. She was breathless, as if she had run to him hurriedly from some nearby house.

"I'd like to help," she said.

"My glasses are broken," said Damjáni, still sitting on the ground.

The girl grasped him under the armpits and began to pull him to his feet.

"Wait, wait!" he said, annoyed. "I don't need any help, thank you."

But he could not rise without assistance. She stood silently beside him. She watched him struggling, but did not dare to come nearer.

Damjáni stopped his efforts and looked up.

"Where are you hurt?" she asked.

"The ear-piece of my glasses is broken" he replied angrily.

"Broken?"

The man sighed. "Well, help a little," he said.

"That's what I wanted to do," she replied.

Again she grasped him under the armpits, and, by their mutual efforts, he somehow managed to rise. He limped into a nearby house.

"Can you climb the stairs?" asked the girl. "Or shall we go to the shelter?"

"No, let's go up."

"Place your arm around my shoulder."

It was a new house with pea-green walls. She led him to a nicely furnished two-room flat. The furniture seemed undamaged, but the windows were patched up with paper and pieces of wood. Damjáni sat down on a sofa and put his feet up. He began to roll up his trouser leg and then suddenly remembered that he ought to apologize and introduce himself. He scarcely looked at the girl, he simply noticed that her flat-heeled brown shoes were tied with string instead of lace.

An old woman and a man appeared in the flat. Damjáni's fright had quite gone, now he was only angry. He looked up.

"I shan't be able to go on for at least two days," he said. "But I certainly can't hang around your necks."

"We don't live here," said the man. "We're in the flat opposite. If you like, we could probably find room for you."

"There'e no sofa, you know very well, Béla," the old woman cut in. "But for the time being we are in the shelter anyway, and until..."

"Nonsense!"

Damjáni looked around, wondering where the girl had gone. Darkness was falling and the outlines of the furniture were becoming blurred. The sofa stood beside the tile-stove and along the other wall, at right-angles to it, a green divan tried to jostle against the stove.

"Don't be ridiculous," said the man.

"Go to hell," said the old woman.

Damjáni leaned back and gazed at the ceiling. The strangers' heated argument rose and fell. Suddenly they stopped. The girl had reappeared with a doctor. She leaned over Damjáni as if to wake him.

"I'm not asleep," he said.

The doctor fingered his knee and Damjáni gasped in pain. Then the room was empty, except for the girl. Again there was an explosion outside.

"I'm thirsty, dear... what's your name?" said Damjáni.

"Lona, I'm called Lona."

She got up and brought some water.

"Dear Lona," said Damjáni. And he drank. "Lona, thank you, Lona."

He was feverish. He whispered to himself, talking in a low mumbling voice.

He could not move on in two days' time, nor yet in two weeks. It was not until the fourth week that he got out of bed for the first time.

Meanwhile Lona had mended his trousers and his glasses. She lighted the fire, did some washing, dressed his knee. She slept on the green divan. Damjáni got used to all this, but he did not like it when the girl went away; she had to go for water, however, and this always took a long time. They had a lamp contrived out of a glass filled with oil, a piece of wire and a shoelace for a wick. It burned with a pale but clear light.

Slowly the other tenants moved back from the cellar to their own flats. The siege was still going on, but the fighting had drawn a little further away.

Then one evening three soldiers set up a terrific banging on the door. Lona let them in. They grinned.

"We need quarters, just for one night," they said.

"No beds," said Lona, shrugging her shoulders.

"Of course there are."

"Your 'Daddy' isn't ill, is he?"

"Is she your wife?"

They all talked at the same time.

Damjáni nodded. "Yes, she's my wife."

"Well, you two sleep there. I'll sleep here," said one of the soldiers. And he sat down on the green divan. The smile fell from his face. The two other soldiers put down their kit in the other room and lay there on the floor. Damjáni saw for the first time how deadly tired this blond young soldier was.

Damjáni got up so that Lona could have his sofa. The girl protested. They argued in whispers. The soldier grew attentive and clearly understood what the argument must be about. He got up and gestured towards his bed. "Here you are."

He took a bottle of rum from his knapsack and offered it to Damjáni, then he lay down heavily on the carpet.

The actor angrily pulled him up, and indicated with gestures that the soldier should go back to the divan.

"And you two, there on the sofa," said the soldier, forcing a smile upon his tired face. "O. K.?"

"I shall sleep on two chairs pushed together," said Damjáni.

"No, you sleep with your wife, or I sleep on the floor," retorted the soldier with word and gesture. "We go away in the morning."

In the morning Damjáni awoke to hear footsteps and a door slamming.

"What's that?" But all was quiet again. It was not yet properly light. Lona was sleeping deeply beside him, her face turned towards the wall. The soldiers had gone.

On the edge of the table they had left a loaf, a big piece of bacon and the rum bottle of the previous evening, still half full. He crept from under the eiderdown the better to see what was on the table. He was delighted.

An excellent breakfast! He seized the bottle and climbed back into bed with it. But he could not draw the cork and was forced to get out of bed again to fetch his pen-knife. Lona woke up then.

It was cold. Damjáni lay back beside her and sleepily they began to eat the bread and bacon. The rum, too, was delicious. A little remained in the bottle and Damjáni put it down gently on the floor beside the bread. They decided to sleep a little longer.

When he awoke again he realized that he was embracing the warm body of a woman. His right arm had gone dead from the girl's weight and their knees touched. Lona opened her eyes and closed them again. The man slipped down lower so that their chins should be on a level and leaned over her mouth.

He was a little ashamed of exploiting with such stupid simplicity such a stupid simple situation. The girl did not object. Her lips concealed a startled smile. She protested a little, then she smiled again, gently, sleepily, strangely.

That he should say something like "I love you" or "Do you love me" never occurred to Damjáni for one moment. He would have liked to say something nice, but he was unable to find the right words. So they were quiet. He stroked her naked arm. Women, as a rule, embarrassed him, and, on other occasions, he was apt to hate them for this. But now, afterwards, he felt not a trace of anger towards her.

Truth to tell, Damjáni had little experience of love. Not counting the professional butterflies, Lona was perhaps only the fifth or sixth woman in his life. He suspected that in hers he was the first man; but he could not be certain. Happy, daring sensations mixed with the violence of his sense of guilt. Rather ridiculous emotions. The sort of thing an adolescent might feel when rejoicing at having lost his virginity; or the sensation of an aging man who, having learned the exact value of love, is happy that he can bear the sense of loss which accompanies this knowledge. No transcendental music haunted them, nor were their nights aflame with passion. Clumsy, commonplace, unexciting nights these. They went to bed early because the nights came early, too, and because the terror grew with the shadows. The warm oily smell of the extinguished lamp pervaded the darkness. Even when the guns did stop for a few seconds, inevitably they almost immediately shattered the unreal silence. A motorcycle a few streets away imitated the sound of a machinegun, without deceiving them, for by now they could distinguish the noise of any weapon. They would listen, afraid, for the opening of the front door. Then Damjáni would adjust his bandaged knee and their mouths would seek each other. Lona once embraced his neck, and then the gesture became a habit with her. "So, that's what a girl is like," thought Damjáni.

He marvelled at first, then resigned himself to the situation. During the night they never talked, and in the day-time he continued to address her without familiarity. He never thought about her; he had other things to think of. A hundred worries, concerning the present and the future, constantly harassed him. One of the most disarming things about her was that one did not have to treat her as if she were important. Besides, he thought her ugly.

What interested him was whether one could cross the Danube. Someone said that a pontoon bridge was being built across Margaret Island. And there were small boats plying from Old Buda to the opposite bank. Rumour said that the Érd way was easiest. Someone set out in that direction. Damjáni entrusted him with a letter bearing the old Pest address.

At least he would have liked to talk to someone about Marica, about his worries. Once, after lunch, when he was tidying the things in his brief-case, he showed Lona his wife's picture.

"My wife," he said.

The girl looked politely at the photograph but said nothing. Damjáni returned it to the brief-case and began to talk about something else.

He no longer wore a bandage on his knee. In the morning he chopped wood in the courtyard; sometimes he went for water. News came that it was safe to walk about the streets. And someone actually arrived in the house who had come from Pest.

Damjáni became excited. The ferry run by the shipyard had, it seemed, brought the man over for twenty pengoes. The next day, after saying good-bye to the neighbours who had sometimes visited him during his illness, he set out. Lona, at the last moment, decided to go with him, as far as Old Buda, "for safety's sake," as she put it.

III

In the neighbourhood there were one or two houses whose roofs had collapsed and whose partition walls had disappeared.

But by the time they came to the bridge, Damjáni's eyes had become weary of the unchanging scene of destruction. He felt no despair, no shock; yet, in his impatience to reach home as soon as possible, a kind of nervousness fell upon him without his being aware of it. The girl wanted to stop him.

"Let's go, let's go!" he exclaimed, grasping her arm. He was not to be stopped.

"This was the...?" She hesitated, not remembering the name. "What was the bridge called?" she asked after a moment.

The centre of the bridge was missing; it looked like a broken toy. A huge chunk—railings, roadway, pavement, everything—had been bitten out of it. They walked along the embankment and were able to see it better from the quay. Lona craned her neck.

"What was it called?"

Damjáni pulled himself together at this strange question but looked at the girl, not in the direction she was pointing. He looked at her curiously. He was still holding her arm and hurrying forward, following their shadows. He was going to answer her question, when he noticed the next broken bridge, while on the opposite bank a huge burnt-out block of flats stared at him like a death's-head. He caught his breath. He stopped so suddenly, clutching her arm excitedly, that Lona almost lost her balance.

"Ouch!"

"Sorry," he said in a choked voice and released her arm.

He had known that the bridges were down and that over in Pest many buildings had been gutted and shelled. But now that he saw the reality, it went with a slow coldness down his throat and gripped at his heart. He felt his heart contracting and becoming rigid.

From the castle a thin stream of smoke rose toward the sky. On the Pest skyline—there!—a steeple was missing. Where they were standing the stone balustrade had been carved into lace by the shellfire.

From this point—hundreds, perhaps thousands of times—he had gazed at the city. He had passed along here as a child on his way to school, sometimes by tram, sometimes on foot, and he had seen the bridge and the big block of flats without really looking at them or paying them special attention. But this had never been man-made work for him, a transitory or changeable thing. No! It was a landscape into which he had been born, ancient and eternal, a vision which could not be cast away, an aspect of the sweet face of the land of his birth. A picture, fraught with measureless significance, which was fixed in his eyes. Could anything destroy this picture? Could time eradicate the landscape of his childhood and his life?

He felt like one who had been cast out of his own existence. He could not believe what he saw, and he could not drag his eyes away from the scene. If this could be destroyed, he thought, then everything that existed was unimportant. Everything was unstable, ready always to be surrendered to the sordid whims of a self-willed human race.

Thinking about Lona's surname a little while ago, he had almost put the ruins out of his mind. That was why they now struck him with such unexpected force. Or, perhaps, he had secretly imagined that it would be different, down here on the banks of the Danube. This was the city in which he had been born, in which he had lived for forty-five years. There was scarcely a street, a square, even a corner, whose picture he did not guard in his memory, and the mutilation of any one of them would have produced in him the same anguish. Perhaps, during their long walk, the sight of all this destruction had to accumulate in him first to make possible such an outbreak of unbearable despair. Only now did he suddenly awake to the realization of how many plans of his had been inextricably interwoven with this city. He had indeed never made any plans which were not connected with Budapest. The hidden hopes, the misty expectations, all lay in ruins with the city among whose stones, the setting of his past, he had visualized his future.

How stupid! He strained his eyes beyond the roofs towards the Fifth District where they lived. What could have happened to their flat? Of course from here he could see nothing. But he had an absolute trust in what, during moments of extraordinary perception, he sensed. Suddenly he shook his head.

"Come on!" he said, turning to Lona. "Let's go back."

And so, to her astonishment, they turned back. He put his arm through hers, leaning upon her a little, for he was limping more than usual. He knew that Marica was no longer alive.

IV

Hardly a fortnight later he learned that his flat, the whole house, had been gutted. All day long he lay on Lona's green sofa. The man to whom he had entrusted the letter returned. He said that the neighbouring house had received a direct hit, that his block had been completely burned out, and that of Number 7/C and Number 9 also there was no trace.

Damjáni nodded and thanked him for his kindness. Sometimes at night he woke and lay sleepless for hours. Lona breathed evenly beside him. What had he to do with this untidy, immature, strange girl who laced her shoes with string and had to ask the name of the Francis Joseph Bridge? On these occasions he felt that he could only go on living if Marica could be raised from the dead. He remembered their flat, then the previous flat, which had been on Calvin Square, and their very first flat on Bálvány Street. How they had loved their first radio, that strange collection of boxes. A black wire led to the screeching horn-shaped loud-speaker. And how they loathed their over-large, ice-cold bathroom in Calvin Square, which could never be heated properly by the wildly spluttering gas fire. And what excitement there was around the first night of the Crommelynck play, in which he hadn't even had a part! He remembered one Easter Sunday morning when they covered the whole bed with hundreds of pages of the holiday editions of the papers. They ate ham and hard-boiled eggs for breakfast as, for hours on end, they read. Once, as the train crossed the railway bridge, on their return from Vienna, and they caught sight of the first yellow trams, Marica and he had both been quite breathless with happiness to be home again. For Marica, too, was a native of Budapest, born on Verpeléti Street, and they had gone skating together on a frozen backwater of the Danube.

How grand it was, on mild April mornings, to walk down the narrow Bálvány Street, and how lovely to come out of a cinema on a rainy November evening and hunt for a taxi on the Grand Boulevard as the pavement shone with a million patches of light. Damjáni for a long time had lived an untidy, haphazard sort of life. And then at last he had moved into a tiny flat with Marica in Bálvány Street. And as a surprise on her name-day he had had the telephone installed, which, at that time, was a most expensive luxury. He had carefully saved the money in order to fulfil this greatest wish of hers. Later they saved up for a small two-seater car, but by the time they could have bought it, they didn't think it worth while because the military authorities would have laid their hands on it.

How lovely their flat was, and how tastefully Marica had kept it! On Wednesdays friends came, they had tea and played bridge. Among their friends there were very few actors or theatrical people. One was a lawyer, another a doctor, or a civil servant, or a judge, as for instance his friend Agorasztó—though they would occasionally invite one or the other of his colleagues for lunch or dinner.

But in spite of these gestures, Damjáni more and more cut himself off from his profession in his private life, which became thoroughly bourgeois. This life suited him—he preferred it that way. The orderliness of middle-class life had always attracted him. Only a trifle—though not such a trifle really—disturbed this sense of propriety, no matter how much his friends closed their eyes to it. Marica was not his wife. They lived in common-law marriage, because Marica's husband, either from meanness or to revenge himself, refused to agree to a divorce. They had been living like this for seventeen years.

In this, too, he was at fault,—Damjáni knew. She had told him, back in 1924, 'I'll wait for you, if you wish.' And if he hadn't signed that contract with the theatre, everything would have happened differently. And suppose he couldn't have found a job with that Doctor's Diploma of his. Nonsense! He would not have died of starvation. Something would have turned up, and Marica would not have married someone else. And even then he could have stopped the marriage on that early summer evening, if he had had the courage to say the decisive words, to take responsibilities upon himself. Thus had he wasted four years of his youth! Four years gone into limbo. And somehow, he had always hoped to recover these four wasted years from the future. Or rather the very years he had lived without Marica he wanted to live with her, in the same town, and as young as then. This was what he had asked of fate, this is what he expected of it.

And now Marica was dead. The town had disappeared from before his eyes. And where was his youth! Damjáni turned on his side and let the tears flow down his cheeks and along his nose. He sighed and felt relief. He wiped his eyes with the back of his hand, for the tears tickled his face. Of course, he could cry at any time for the asking. If necessary he could work himself, by his knowledge of the technique of weeping, into a state of genuine sensibility. It was part of his profession. But now this otherwise significant ability of his only irritated him. After all, his life was wrecked and he was filled with disgust towards the whole world; this was hardly the moment to let the tears gush forth in excited little rivulets, incapable as he himself was of distinguishing between the tears of the artist and the genuine ones. He had only one soul, for both theatrical and private use.

V

At the end of March, he could not put it off any longer. In the few newspapers which accidentally came his way, he saw that the theatres were again open, and it was common knowledge also that the patched-up Francis Joseph Bridge was available to pedestrians. He decided to go over to Pest.

Not even on St. Stephen's Day had he seen so many people on the streets. It was warm; he took off his scarf and unbuttoned his coat. He let Lona go in front of him, since they could cross the bridge only in single file. Newsboys were shouting in Custom House Square. Street-vendors stood or sat on the pavements, offering biscuits and nut crescents and Memphis cigarettes. Horse-drawn carts rumbled along in an endless chain. Lorries, tanks, and other vehicles of war clattered. A woman in a mink coat sold matches, candles and sweets. Men and women carried rucksacks.

In the windowless shops, the owners sat with their hats on, like barkers at a fair. On the doors were strings linked with invisible handbells, for, of course, the electric current was off. Now and then Damjáni stopped to read the posters.

Slowly the two of them moved on through this noisy street-fair. The jostling of the crowd annoyed Damjáni. But he had never seen Lona so animated. Her eyes sparkled, wide open. At the corner of Calvin Square she stared at a little table in a shop window and cried out suddenly:

"Chocolate!"

And really, chocolate it was! Damjáni stopped, took out his wallet and bought her a piece.

It was one and a half hours before they arrived at the theatre.

From then on, every morning they went over to Pest. Damjáni had much to do. There were rehearsals to attend. He was given a part and had only ten days to prepare for the first night. He received a lunch-ticket and at two o'clock went to the coffee house on Jókai Square. But what was Lona to eat? He inquired whether she could have a lunch-ticket also. But she could not.

"You know, old man, if she were your wife..."

"Hello, Damjáni!". A newcomer came towards them. "How are you? You look younger. Your wife, too. A little slimming cure doesn't do any harm, what?"

"My wife?" Damjáni looked with embarrassment towards the table where Lona sat.

"I mean Marica," said the other, somewhat confused, too. "I saw her this morning at the West station. Well, goodbye." He turned away and took his plate of beans over to his table.

Damjáni stiffened. Marica's uncle lived on Theresa Boulevard, near the West Station. Till now, this had not occurred to him. Three times he had been to look at the remnants of their flat-block, but never once had he thought of looking for her at Theresa Boulevard.

"Here it is, Mr. Damjáni. "The waitress had been holding out the plate of beans to him for some moments and now, in her impatience, pressed it into his hand. Damjáni hastily put the plate down in front of Lona for her to eat and said good-bye to her. In a quarter of an hour he was sitting opposite Marica.

Really she had lost a lot of weight, but for all that looked not a bit younger. She had thought, for her part, that Damjáni was dead, and with better reason. He pointed to the scar on his knee and told her of the accident. They were quite overcome with happiness at finding each other. But Marica wanted to talk him out of the theatre. She had other plans. She had written and also sent a message to her mother at Cegléd that, as soon as possible, she would move there. Or rather, they would simply go there, for, apart from two trunks of clothing they had nothing left in the world.

But Damjáni was filled with boundless hopes.

"Don't always be so disheartened," he urged her. She smiled. He winced and suddenly turned away. There was such dejection in her smile that he couldn't bear to look at her.

As for himself, all his strength returned with the knowledge that she was alive. For three days he walked about the town. He chatted with strangers, filled with a kind of childish happiness. At rehearsals his colleagues could not understand what had come over him. What, indeed, made him most happy, was the fact that all his gloomy premonitions were unjustified, that his remarkable sixth sense was not worth a fig. His happiness gradually mounted, and when, on the fourth day, he left Marica he could not explain to himself how it happened.

She was quietly putting things into her trunk when Damjáni, his face still soapy after shaving, came out of the bathroom. He had stopped whistling when he started to shave, and now, as he paused in front of her, though he had a vague feeling that he wanted to say something else, he said: "Marica, let's part."

He remembered later that he had wiped his face, dressed, put his shaving tackle and soiled pyjamas into the zipper brief-case, and walked straight over to Buda.

VI

Many years later, in a play that was running towards its fiftieth performance, Damjáni was waiting for his cue in the second act. He was sitting on the edge of his dressing-room sofa, in his dark suit, his trousers pressed to a knife-edge, his face made up, and inhaling deeply from a cigarette stump. Voices penetrated to his room from the narrow corridor.

"I swear it's true," said someone.

There was a murmured answer.

Lenke Oláh laughed loudly. He recognized the laughter.

"It ran into the engine room!" cried the first voice. "I've never seen such a huge rat in my whole life."

Lenke Oláh laughed again, even louder.

The stage manager rushed along the corridor, opened the door of Damjáni's dressing-room and waved to him. Automatically Damjáni glanced in the mirror, smoothed his eyebrows and started towards the stage.

At first he had no idea of the nature of the happiness that suddenly stirred him, the peculiar longing that possessed him. Then, all at once, he began to remember.

He remembered the big block of flats downtown where he had spent the first few months of married life with Lona. In mid-May they had moved into their 'flat'—the library of a huge eight-room apartment which had been partly demolished. There was plenty of furniture, but nothing to sleep on. So they put an iron bedstead, covered with silk cushions, in front of the fire-place. All the windows were missing, but the furniture remained intact. Heavy Persian rugs covered the parquet floor. There were deep, brocade-covered arm-chairs, empire tables, wall-brackets, book-cases which reached to the wood-panelled ceiling. Lona would put silk cushions on the balcony, lie on her stomach and read the whole day. They had guests every evening. Actors and actresses, who always pulled Lona's leg and loved to annoy her. Sometimes the guests brought their own coffee-machine and coffee, and the smell of coffee would fill the whole huge room. Sometimes they brought wine, too. In the afternoon, someone in the flat below would turn on the radio which poured speeches into the street. And the morning would find in the flat three or four guests who had not gone home, sleeping on chairs pushed together or on cushions spread over the floor. Below on the street lay heaps of rubble waiting to be carted away. In the place of a demolished glove-shop there was now an "Espresso", advertised by a huge poster. A solitary old man had for months been renewing the slates on the roof opposite. What made Damjáni remember all this?

A land-mine had fallen on the block, demolishing a few flats and almost completely destroying the main staircase. It was an ornate building, and the wide staircase had been of rose-coloured marble. But the backstairs, which were now in general use, led up a dark, narrow and incredibly sooty chimney-like shaft to the maids' rooms and the kitchen entrances of the flats. It reminded one of a damp, gloomy, grimy village steeple. Damjáni was constantly afraid of meeting rats, and to avoid them always went upstairs making as much noise as possible.

The talk of rats had evidently made him remember the dusty summer and long autumn; and at the same time he remembered Lona's amusing coolness amongst the temperamental actors, her young face, now serious, now soft and relaxed. He remembered her brown shoes, tied with a string, and how, that first time on the sofa in Buda, she had embraced his neck, uncertainly, but firmly. He remembered now the colourful bustle of the Custom House Boulevard, the narrow gangway across the Francis Joseph Bridge, built of unplaned planks, where the people, all carrying rucksacks, could only walk in single file.

Was it this which gave him such uneasy happiness? The memory of the Levantine harbour which had grown from this oppressive desert of ruins? He stopped just off-stage and listened to the dialogue. His cue came and he made his entrance.

And now he identified the emotion from which he always built up his entrance in the second act. The stage setting was a sort of hall or drawing-room, with a dining-room indicated back-stage. It was summer, and nine o'clock in the evening. Every evening Damjáni arrived here from the pre-war Budapest of his memories, having just crossed from somewhere in Buda; the tango which was played in the restaurant, was still ringing in his ears... the restaurant, where, lacking a better meeting-place, he had discussed with Marica something of infinite importance. Lost in thought, he had walked across Elizabeth Bridge, sauntered along Kossuth Lajos Street and Rákóczi Road, until at the Café Emke he had realized that he was invited for dinner and already more than half-an-hour late.

In accordance with his part, he spoke words of apology. Then, for a moment, he stared silently towards the walls of the scene, as if looking through a window. Actually, there was nothing but a white-washed bare wall, an open iron door, and a tin bucket. But Damjáni saw, quite clearly, the street, the evening lights of the boulevard outside, heard the hooting of the cars, the screaming brakes of a blue bus. He clearly felt the unspeakable sweetness of the old Budapest; of the city that had disappeared; the city he had unfaithfully survived, but which had once on the embankment become imprisoned in his suddenly constricted heart, and which existed more securely than all that had survived it and was still living and changing. See, pondered Damjáni, this was how the strata of life's alluvial soil was deposited within us, and whatever died was also alive—in a sense indeed, it was only what was dead that was truly alive. He turned back towards the footlights. He turned his brooding, sad face to the audience. For a moment he prolonged the pause, then he flashed a little smile and went on with his role.

THE PROGRESS OF HUNGARY'S ECONOMIC CONSOLIDATION FROM 1957 TO 1960

by

IMRE VAJDA

I recently read John K. Galbraith's book* on "The Affluent Society." This book gave me food for thought, and prompted me to compare the "affluent society" he describes there with our own, in Hungary. Not that there were many similarities between the two, for Hungary's cannot yet be called an "affluent society." Nor, however, is it any longer one of poverty, and the transition raises many problems to which Professor Galbraith is also seeking an answer—in his own American environment, in an "affluent society." The book itself is argumentative and combative, the work of a passionate scientist who applies scathing irony to the official economists for stubbornly advocating their conventional platitudes and refusing to take cognisance of changed conditions. At the same time he makes no secret of his disagreement with the Marxist criticism of capitalism. A discussion of this point will have to await another opportunity. This time in quoting him only with respect to certain problems I wish to express my esteem of his courage in defying conventional approaches, even though I do not agree with the solutions he recommends.

In my view the culminating point of Mr. Galbraith's criticism is where he reproaches American society for its unintelligent distribution of the resources at its disposal:

"The line which divides our area of wealth from our area of poverty is roughly that which divides privately produced and marketed goods and services from publicly rendered services. Our wealth in the first is not only in startling contrast with the meagreness of the latter, but our wealth in privately produced goods is to a marked degree the cause of crisis in the supply of public services. For we have failed to see the importance, indeed the urgent need, of maintaining a balance between the two."**

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* John Kenneth Galbraith, "The Affluent Society," Hamish Hamilton, London, 1959.

** Op. cit. p. 195.

Mr. Galbraith goes on to castigate the "American way of life" for neglecting the training of specialists, for its failure to appreciate intellectual work, for not organizing scientific research and technical development and for making a god of the consumer whom at the same time it dupes day by day through its advertisement and salesmanship technique. Galbraith rejects the persistently publicized myth of the advantages and superiority of the "free market," which is propagated most ardently by the very men who are themselves doing all they can to eliminate the free market and competitive struggle.

Our view, of course, is that all these features of modern capitalism that Galbraith, often very wittily and thoroughly, attacks are pathological symptoms of a whole structure—symptoms which can hardly be cured by superficial treatment. However, these problems also concern us here only in so far as they stimulate thought on our own progress. For both his theoretical knowledge and many years of experience prove to the Marxist economist that the most economical distribution and development of social resources can take place only within the framework of a socialist planned economy. Our progress during recent years, which Hungarian political terminology has modestly called "consolidation" and which we are going to analyze now, is also a proof of this fact. We shall here confine ourselves to following up the developments of the last years only, though we cannot occasionally, especially at the beginning, avoid mentioning earlier events.

THE ROAD WE HAVE TRAVERSED

The start was made at the beginning of 1957 amidst extremely difficult conditions. Apart from the political upheaval, the counter-revolutionary attempt of October and November 1956 also caused grave material damage and paralysed production throughout nearly the whole country for several weeks. Even in January 1957, State industry still produced 28 per cent less than in the previous year. There was a danger of inflation, for the hiatus in production was followed by a sudden increase in demand and it looked as though stocks might be exhausted. True, the Socialist countries rendered rapid and generous aid, but this would not have been sufficient if the people of the country had not themselves made an effort and restarted production. The acute difficulties were further aggravated by the mistakes in economic life which we had previously committed and whose harmful effects continued to be felt for some time yet.

We had achieved very considerable results both in augmenting production and in cultural and social respects since we had embarked on a socialist planned economy. The volume of products of the nationalized industries had increased enormously, unemployment had disappeared and the health and educational standards of our people had improved considerably. Development had, however, not been even. Power-production had lagged behind the overall development of industry, improvements in technical standards behind increases in quantities produced, and productivity behind the numbers of workers newly employed. The pursuit of quantitative results had led to the exaggerated exploitation and exhaustion of some of our raw material resources and, as a result of the neglect of agricultural production, we had been forced to import large quantities of foodstuffs whose cost considerably decreased, though it did not completely swallow, the foreign currency income from agricultural exports. There had been hitches in the supply of materials to industry and in satisfying the population's requirements. To overcome our difficulties we had been forced to obtain relatively short-range credits.

The exaggerated strain of our economic plans had prevented the consolidation of the results that could realistically have been attained, and while that part of the national income that had been earmarked for investments decreased the funds for consumption, the planned new establishments were only set to work with extraordinary delay, due to the frequent lack of proper foundations for the targets set. Year by year the number and volume of unfinished constructions had increased and the rate of housing construction had lagged behind requirements. All this had been reflected in a temporary decrease in the standard of living.

Radical steps were therefore needed, which would apply to every single part of the economy. The plans of the measures to be taken, the various solutions and methods of execution were elaborated by the Hungarian Socialist Worker's Party. This was indeed multifarious work. The equilibrium of the national economy and the confidence of the population had to be restored, and every working person had to be mobilized for the attainment of the new, inspiring and realistic aims that were set. War had at the same time to be declared on the earlier, mistaken views, and the planning, directing and executive organs at the head of the economy had to be armed with the spirit of the new approach.

Efforts to increase productivity, to evaluate and enhance man's performance in labour, to save materials and power, rapidly to raise the technical level and quickly to apply the new results of science, were everywhere brought to the fore.

The aim now is to achieve new results primarily not by increasing the numbers of machines and jobs but by using more up-to-date and more productive machines in place of those that are obsolete and by decreasing production costs. The aim is to increase production in those spheres where the economically most favourable conditions exist or may be created, where the necessary materials, power and markets can be made available. The aim is, with a clear appreciation of the small size of our country and at the same time of our possibilities, organically to fit into the economic cooperation of the socialist countries, to find, and at the same time to occupy, our worthy place on the world market and to establish lively trade relations also with countries outside the socialist camp. And above all, our aim is constantly and considerably to raise the real standard of living, to improve social services and afford facilities for the development of cultural life, specialist training and science, thus to enable man once he has been liberated from his economic ties, to unfold his talents. To secure these aims, new methods of leadership have been proposed and introduced by the Hungarian Socialist Worker's Party. Power has been decentralized, the heads of the various plants have been given far-reaching independence and have been prompted to strive for profitable operation, for thorough economic weighing up of their decisions and for realistic drawing up of their plans.

INDUSTRY

What have we achieved? The figures below are based on 1949=100, and for purposes of comparison we present the index figures of industrial production of the European capitalist countries belonging to OEEC for 1959 and the first quarter of 1960.*

Hungarian net industrial output **

1955	226
1956	205
1957	234
1958	264
1959	292
1960 June	337

The figure for the first 6 months of 1960, expressed as a percentage of the equivalent-period of the previous year, is 115. The corresponding figure for 12 OEEC countries in total industrial otput in 1959 over 1958 amounted to 107.

Within the Hungarian industrial output:

Electrical power

1955	215
1958	261
1959	293
1960 March	327

Six months of 1960 compared to 1959 = 113. No figures for OEEC.

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* Economic Bulletin for Europe, Geneva, 1960, Vol. 12, No. 1.

** Figures for Hungary are taken from the publications of the Central Statistical Office.

Engineering

1955	260
1959	386
1960 June	486

Six months of 1960 compared to 1958 = 121. OEEC countries in the first quarter of 1960 compared to 1959 = 112.

Chemical industry

1955	269
1959	458
1960 June	514

Six months of 1960 compared to 1959 = 119. OEEC countries in the first quarter of 1960 compared to 1959 = 113.

Food processing industries

1955	243
1959	281
1960 June	306 seasonally adjusted

Six months of 1960 compared to 1959 = 109. OEEC countries in the first quarter of 1960 compared to 1959 = 101.

Net production per worker in State industry rose from 131 in 1955 (1956=116) to 149 in 1959, i. e. by 14 per cent, and in the first six months of 1960 there was a further increase of 8 per cent. The greatest improvement took place in engineering, but in a number of industries production was increased only at the cost of augmenting the number of workers employed, which is not an economically satisfactory method. The number of workers employed in the State sector rose from 2.3 millions in 1955 to 2.5 millions in 1958 and of this the increase in industry was from 1.35 millions to 1.54 millions. (Population: 10 millions).

Within industrial production the transformation of the structure has begun. The role of oil as a source of power is increasing although a really big shift can take place only when the large-diameter pipe-line from the Soviet Union—whose telecommunication instruments are incidentally being supplied by Hungary—will have been completed. The fact that the output of electric power has increased more rapidly than the average of industrial production, is an indication of a rise in the technical level, for between 1955 and the end of 1959 industrial production as a whole increased by 29.5 per cent, while power production—excluding imported power—rose by 36 per cent. The change-over in industrial structure did not, however, mean that the rate of growth of output in the consumer-goods industries exceeded or even reached that of the producer-goods industries. Here too, a peculiar fact should be pointed out. The European Economic Committee of UNO for example, in its Bulletin for November 1959, remarks in critical tones that "the traditional gaps between rates of growth of output in the producer-goods and consumer-goods branches have reopened this year." It does not, at the same time, notice that it is in fact dealing with the very same phenomenon that it mentions a few pages earlier, in the same report, in its analysis of the industrial output of the OEEC countries under the title of "Economic Expansion in Western Europe." Is it not high time to recognize that this is one of the general phenomena of our age and a sign of healthy development?*

This is especially so in the case of Hungary, whose industries—including her light industries—present an enormous demand for machinery as a result of their modernization and expansion, and whose export markets are also mainly interested in engineering products. Changes in the structure of industrial production have therefore not affected the ratio of light to heavy industries but have concerned the ratios within the main groups, and primarily engineering itself. More will be said of this process later, in our analysis of foreign trade.

WAGES AND CONSUMPTION

The following table provides information on the average monthly wages per earner among Hungarian workers and salaried employees, on the index of consumer prices and on the index of real wages:

	Average monthly wage in forints	Index of consumer prices	Index of real wages
		1955 = 100	
1955	1,080	100	100
1956	1,194	99	111
1957	1,443	102	132
1958	1,479	102	135

Consumption has shown a correspondingly large increase. Retail trade increased from 44,000 million Forint in 1955 to 55,500 million in 1958 and rose a further 10 per cent in the first ten months of 1959. The housing situation has improved, though at least another 15—20 years will be needed finally to liquidate the chronic, and in many places tragically grave housing problem which is the heritage of many decades of neglect.

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* According to the latest survey by the Federal Reserve Board the following shift in the industrial production of the USA took place between 1947/49 and 1959: The output of consumer-goods fell back from 35.87 per cent to 31.13 per cent, while that of investment goods rose from 11.65 to 15.62 per cent. (The Economist, January 9th, 1960.)

Consumption by the population accounted for 72.6 per cent of the gross national income in 1958, whereas the figure for 1955 had only been 68.3 per cent.* Communal and welfare investments (including housing construction) took 28.3 per cent of all investments in 1958, compared to only 20.7 per cent in 1955. Where the "affluent society" of Mr. Galbraith has failed, socialist society, though still far from "affluence," has succeeded— although we should add that we ourselves do not by any means consider these results adequate. The number of those participating in social insurance has also increased. In the first half of 1959, 71 per cent of the country's population enjoyed the benefits of general social insurance, compared to only 60 per cent in 1956.

We have outgrown the period of austerity. The appearance of our cities has been rejuvenated, Budapest has regained its metropolitan look and the shops greet the customer with a wide selection of goods, tastefully and beautifully arranged. Throughout the country modern forms of retail sale are being introduced and so far a thousand self-service shops have been opened to the public. Since this transformation is taking place here within the State sector, it does not meet with the same resistance as is shown by shop-keepers in the West. As for the customers, they welcome the change in the countryside and in the smaller towns, too.

Of course, this process is not without its hitches either, for there are not yet enough packaging plants. Here, however, we must again state that we shall not imitate the "affluent society" as far as "make-up" is concerned.

Traffic has also increased. Between 1957 and 1959 the number of motor vehicles on the roads has increased by some 90 thousand and nearly a thousand new buses have been put into service in Budapest and in the country. Television only 4 years old here is spreading rapidly; in the last two years 60,000 sets have been sold. The Hungarian radio network has 2 million subscribers; 600,000 receivers were sold between 1957 and 1959.

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* The percentage share of individual consumption in the gross national product is decreasing in all the Western European countries. According to the figures of the Survey of Europe 1958 (U. N. Geneva, 1959) this took place as follows:

	1938	1948	1950	1957
Austria	76	76	73	62
German Federal Republic	60	—	64	59
France	76	75	69	68
Holland	74	69	64	59

These are, of course, modest figures and will not particularly impress readers acquainted with the comparative figures of the older industrial countries. Nor is it our wish to conjure with index figures and thus to obscure the actual facts. Nevertheless, we do not think we have been unjustified in presenting these modest figures as achievements. We first had to solve a number of other social problems—to clothe our children and build nursery schools, children's day homes and schools. The author returned to his country in 1938 after an absence of several decades and was able, with the sharper sight of one who had come from abroad and was interested in the lot of his people, to see how shocking the masses of rag-clad people and children and the suburban slums really were.

Conditions such as this could only be liquidated if new standards of value were courageously adopted, if we accepted the fact that we would today have to bear costs which would only show returns after the passing of a number of years and if we made a break with the capitalist primacy of profitableness. We accepted a new order of priorities—a world in which there is less brilliant light, but in which there are also—and to an extent that should not be underestimated—fewer shadows. It is true that the number of motor cars in this country is relatively small and slow to increase, but infant mortality is low, the number of juvenile delinquents is insignificant and there are virtually no homeless. And Mr. Galbraith has strengthened me in the conviction I have so far held, that the wealth of a society cannot be measured according to the number or size of its motor cars.

I shall deal wich agriculture, that other great economic sector, later.

FOREIGN TRADE

Foreign trade faithfully reflected the process of consolidation. The development of the turnover is shown by the following figures:

	Import	Exports
	(in millions of dollars)	
1938	122.0	155.0*
1949—55 (annual average)	423.2	451.0
1956	466.5	493.5
1957	683.0	476.4
1958	630.2	680.2
1959	731.5	711.7

* Le Réseau du Commerce Mondial, S. d. N., Geneva, 1942.

The extraordinarily large import figure for 1957 is a reflection partly of the interruption of production caused by the events of October 1956, and partly of the greater demand resulting from the wage-increases of 1957. So great a growth of imports was possible only due to the credits and aid offered by the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries. By 1958, however, the balances of trade and of payments had again regained their equilibrium and, in fact, the favourable development of foreign trade relations and the foreign currency credits extended by the friendly countries enabled us considerably to reduce and to consolidate our foreign debts. The most tangible proof of the correctness of the view adopted in the formulation of economic policies after 1957 is that only two years after the grave upheaval inside the country, its external position was much more firm than before. This favourable trend continued in 1959, which we were also able to close with a favourable balance of payments, though, under our present conditions, the balance of extra-commercial services always shows a considerable deficit. This result is all the more noteworthy since the volume of transactions on the world market in 1958 was considerably smaller than the year before and did not, in 1959, despite some improvement, reach its previous level.

An investigation of only the quantitative aspects of development is not, however, sufficient and a qualitative analysis is also indispensable. I shall attempt to satisfy this requirement in three ways—by examination of the terms of trade, the composition of exports and the geographical distribution of our foreign trade.

The examination of terms of trade is a comparatively young branch of economics and we have no exact computed figures available retrospectively for any length of time. It is only a few years since Hungarian statisticians started to do calculations on the terms of trade. We shall therefore confine ourselves to a discussion of their development during the period under consideration. The peculiar distribution of Hungarian foreign trade does not permit the terms of trade for the whole of the turnover to be considered together, for the terms of trade within the socialist camp may—due to the policy of the greatest possible stability of prices—only be examined over periods of some length. This policy was between 1950 and 1956 generally favourable for Hungary, since her imports of raw materials from the socialist countries were not affected by the price increases resulting from the Korean boom. Between 1957 and 1960 the constant level of the terms of trade was again no cause of loss. Our trade with capitalist countries on the other hand reflects shifts in the terms of trade on the world market in the same way as in the case of other industrially developed countries that import mainly raw materials and export finished goods. Let us, as a matter of comparison, have a look at the British Board of Trade's figures. The terms of trade in Great Britain's foreign trade for 1957—1959 were as follows:

	Import prices	*Export prices*	*Terms of trade*
1957	100	100	100
1958	92	99	93
1959 September	90	97	93

In respect to Hungary the comparative figures of our foreign trade with capitalist countries were, according to calculations of the Central Statistical Office, as follow:

1957	100	100	100
1958	93	99	94
1959 January-September	90	96	94

It should be taken into account here that machines and equipment account for hardly one third of our exports of finished goods to the capitalist countries, the other two thirds being industrial consumer-goods, including a significant proportion of textiles whose price level was last year very depressed throughout the world. If our exports to capitalist countries contained the same proportions of industrial finished goods (75 per cent machines and equipment, 25 per cent consumer-goods) as our overall foreign trade, then our terms of trade would undoubtedly have been even more favourable. Britain's terms of trade show, apart from the part played by Sterling Preference, that the share of engineering products in the export of finished goods (56 per cent in 1958) has in recent years been on the increase.

Nevertheless we might be permitted to remark that the maintenance of these terms of trade on the "buyer's market" of 1958—59 refutes the accusation of dumping that is often levelled against us too—even if the possible margin of error due to the nature of these investigations is not left out of account. Our trade policies have been guided by the endeavour to secure better terms of trade and this effort was not—as the figures show—wholly without its results.

Turning now to the composition of exports, the author feels he must set out some considerations to justify the approach which he has adopted in this paper. This is all the more necessary since economic policies in socialist countries make use not of indirect means of exerting influence—whose efficiency* is then retrospectively evaluated from statistics—but mainly of directly effective measures. The approach is therefore not "academic."

The modern circumstances of industrial development have enhanced the importance of foreign trade for all small and medium-sized countries. A contributing feature is the fact that we have now in every branch of production exceeded the limits set by the domestic supply of raw materials and are everywhere processing materials obtained through imports. This form of the international division of labour, whose essence is the import of raw materials and the export of finished goods by the advanced industrial countries, was evolved over a century ago. This traditional form, however, is no longer characteristic of recent decades and in particular of the years following the Second World War. This is partly because a number of generally imported raw materials are being gradually displaced in world trade by synthetically produced materials, and partly because the introduction of industrial methods of production in the agriculture of the industrially advanced countries has brought about profound changes as a result of which the importance of food imports—apart from those of a few tropical products—is decreasing. The most important factor, however, has been a development within industrial production. The characteristic feature of the modern international division of labour is the mutual exchange of finished goods and in particular of machinery and productive equipment between the industrial countries themselves. Up-to-date production now requires specialization and this cannot be conceived without endeavouring to produce larger series of goods. The motor car industry provides an internationally known example of specialization and the mutual inter-penetration of markets.

The key problem of Hungarian foreign trade is how far it can provide a firm basis for the up-to-date realization of an international division of labour. The first ten years after the war had already brought a considerable structural re-grouping of our foreign trade, but the last three years have wrought qualitative changes that can only be imperfectly interpreted from statistical figures. Planned international cooperation among the socialist countries in numerous fields of industry has now commenced and is rapidly taking shape within the Council for Mutual Economic Aid. The numerical ratios have changed only very slightly. In 1958, 48 per cent of Hungary's total exports to the socialist countries consisted of machinery and other productive equipment, while the figure for 1956 had been 46 per cent. The ratio of imports belonging to this group of commodities was 20 per cent in both years. Within the group, however, the share of complete factories has increased, specialization is marked, and this principle has been extended even to the semi-finished goods of the metallurgical industry. Year by year the range of machinery and equipment produced for the socialist countries and in particular for the Soviet Union in accordance with harmonized production plans is being extended. This makes it possible to create up-to-date conditions for production, to increase productivity and enormously to expand the narrow market boundaries of small countries.

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* This efficiency is frequently very low, as the Radcliffe report on British money and credit policies published a few months ago points out. American economists, including the previously mentioned Prof. J. K. Galbraith, have similar worries.

Let the author for a moment be permitted to discard the economist's obligatory caution and express a definite opinion. The feature of economic development which we have just outlined and whose advantages Hungary could not have obtained by any realistically conceivable means other than the planned cooperation of the socialist countries and the harmonization of their long-range plans, is the most important factor in Hungary's entire economic development. No other social system, and participation in no other international formation, would have made it possible in so short a time to eliminate the innumerable obstacles that the course of our history had erected in the path of our advance and prosperity. It was only the solidarity of the socialist countries and their mutual aid based on common interests that made it possible and will continue to make it possible for us to maintain our position in the ranks of the industrially developed countries and to achieve the most favourable rate of productivity in all those fields in which the vast, open and guaranteed market of the socialist countries permits us to specialize. Inequality among the capitalist countries has, in the last few decades, not decreased, but increased. Nearly all the best-known economists of the capitalist world agree with this statement. The Indian delegation to the Commonwealth Conference at Montreal in September 1958 declared that the differences in standards of living, e. g. between India and Canada, were "the gravest international problem of our age." Who would gainsay that, but for socialist development, Hungary would be among those countries who suffer from this gravest problem of our age —such as India or, in Europe, Greece or Turkey?

A few words now on agricultural exports. Foodstuffs and processed products at present account for 20—24 per cent of Hungary's exports and their composition is strongly influenced by the random favours of nature. Yet here, too, there has been considerable progress in the export of intensive cultures and the products of industrial processing, while the export of cereals has practically ceased. The share of tinned goods, ready-made dishes, bottled wines, edible oils and processed meats is increasing, while that of raw products—except for beef cattle—is decreasing. Although it provides no basis for generalization, the development of the export of trade-marked bottled wines is nevertheless characteristic. The figures are:

1950	1,100 hectolitres
1955	14,300 hectolitres
1958	19,800 hectolitres
1959	24,700 hectolitres

These numbers are at the same time indices of the increase in the demand for quality goods on the socialist market, for some 95 per cent of our export of bottled wines is directed towards the socialist countries.

An examination of the geographical distribution of our foreign trade will also strikingly show the outstanding importance of the Soviet Union, with its share of 25—28 per cent. Second and third places are taken, with 10—12 per cent shares, by Czechoslovakia and the German Democratic Republic, followed by China and the German Federal Republic. Europe accounts for 90 per cent of our foreign trade; overseas territories for 10 per cent. A favourable feature of this distribution is that trade with the socialist countries on the basis of long-term agreements makes up 72—73 per cent of foreign trade, facilitating thorough planning and preparation. But the relatively small share of the countries outside Europe is undoubtedly unsatisfactory. The past three years have not brought any real progress in this respect.

Hungarian foreign trade may—even if some of its weaker aspects are taken into account—look back generally speaking, upon a successful three years and has contributed greatly to supporting the process of consolidation.

CONTRADICTIONS—SOLUTIONS

We could not, of course, achieve the progress that has been described without the emergence of contradictions which occasionally exerted a disturbing influence. One important factor of the success of consolidation was that since 1957 we succeeded in considerably increasing the financial incentives to workers, engineers, employees and managers, making them interested in the economic results of their work. The sums paid out in profit-sharing during the last three years amounted to 6—8 per cent of wage incomes, and these bonuses contributed to the general rise in earnings. Indeed, the average monthly wage of workers and employees increased by some 27 per cent between 1957 and 1959, while the index of consumer prices rose by only 2 per cent. The real value of wage incomes is thus nearly 25 per cent greater today than it was three years ago.

This rapid and energetic increase in incomes gave a new impetus to work. Those working in the State sector—and this includes the overwhelming majority of the working people outside agriculture—were able directly to see, to touch and to feel the results of better, more careful and more economic work and to enjoy its fruits. The system of profit-sharing thus turned out to be an undisputed success. But it also had its drawbacks.

Factories that aimed at the greatest possible share of profits, showed preference for the production of goods that would show results in terms of greater incomes immediately, in that particular year, and tended to neglect tasks that would show returns only in the more distant future. The system of profit-sharing thus helped to mobilize today's reserves, but not infrequently led to neglect of those of the future. The system did not in every case exert a favourable influence on raising the technical level, though this is one of the most important and most generally recognized aims. It did not encourage new, expensive and risky experiments even if their ultimate success could more or less certainly be predicted and they would in a few years' time be augmenting the profits to be distributed. Technical development is in the forefront of our economic aims and policies, and the government is making in this respect considerable and by no means unsuccessful efforts which have led to favourable results mainly in the development of new products. The retrograde influences appearing in some places therefore had to be counter-balanced by other means, but this could only be done once the directing organs had accumulated a number of unfavourable experiences.

The unilateral incentive force of profit-sharing led to a similarly harmful effect in the mutual cooperation of factories with one another and with the economy as a whole. The smooth operation of the central plan and of central State direction is, in consequence of the highly developed structure of industry and the close interdependence of the various elements of production, to a large extent dependent on the closeness of the links between the tasks to be performed in different factories. Though we have learned—and this, too, is one of the important results of the period of 1957—60—that continuous production cannot be secured without adequate reserves, closely linked cooperation is a factor of today, when nearly all factories are assembly shops for the products of numerous other factories. In a scheme of cooperation, however, the interests of each participant are not always apparent with equal intensity and contemporaneously. A ball-bearing factory, for instance, is vitally interested in the synchronized harmonization of steel deliveries from the metallurgical plant with its own rate of manufacture. It is, however, much less interested in seeing a similar harmonization of its own deliveries with the program of the engineering works that incorporates the bearings in its products. This is at the same time the most urgent interest of the engineering works because its entire work may be impeded by the belated delivery of relatively cheap but indispensable component parts.

The price system of a planned economy, which must necessarily be especially stable in respect of continuously manufactured producer-goods, does not make it possible to ensure priorities through price concessions, while the effort to obtain larger profits may disturb the sequence of cooperation that is desirable from the point of view of the entire economy and may lead to an order of urgency which does not correspond with the interests of the economy. Experience here too has led to the application of new methods.

Higher real wages and the increase in purchasing power also led to a regrouping of consumption. The planning of consumer supplies could not always keep step with the rapid change that took place. Between 1956 and 1958 retail turnover increased by 12 per cent, incorporating an 8.5 per cent increase in the purchase of foodstuffs and 16 per cent in industrial products.

In the first ten months of 1959 retail turnover was again 10 per cent higher than in the corresponding period of the previous year.

Due to a lack of similar experiences, the sudden rise after 1956 made details of the expected development of consumption and demand unpredictable. The turnover of clothing, textiles and leather goods was thus 2 per cent lower in 1958 than in the previous year and hardly 4 per cent higher than in 1956 (the big increase in the turnover of clothing occurred between 1955 and 1956). The turnover of miscellaneous industrial goods—including the particularly important consumer's durables—was 13 per cent higher in 1958 than in 1957 and nearly 40 per cent more than in 1956.

The increase in housing construction was undoubtedly a contributory factor in this development. In 1957, through 1959, 138,000 homes were built, whereas housing construction over the average of the previous eight years had been just over 20,000 homes a year. The number of homes built was thus more than doubled. The completion of new homes everywhere increases the demand for consumer's durables. The decrease in the demand for clothing led to an unexpected accumulation of stocks. In 1959, however, the situation was the reverse, and in the first three quarters of the year —for which figures are available at the time of writing—the turnover in clothing again increased rapidly (by 25 per cent compared to the same period in the previous year), while active demand for other industrial products increased only by 15 per cent, accompanied by a 6.5 per cent increase in the sale of foodstuffs.

The statement may perhaps be risked that the increase in real wages in 1957—59 sent consumption soaring to a level never so far attained in the history of Hungary's economy, at which level other laws are valid than those prevailing when the satisfaction of the absolute necessities of life was the only requirement. Keynes, in a work entitled "Essays in Persuasion," pointed out that "the needs of human beings fall into two classes—those needs which are absolute in the sense that we feel them whatever the situation of our fellow human beings may be, and those which are relative only in that their satisfaction lifts us above, makes us feel superior to, our fellows." The development of demand appears to show that broad sections of the Hungarian consumers have in these years crossed the threshold of the latter class, avail themselves more freely of the opportunities to choose between the goods and services offered to them, and are progressing to a new consumer pattern that they themselves have not yet clearly formulated. The satisfaction of the requirements involved in this pattern will be secured by the increasing output and growing range and choice of industrial products and—to a smaller and as yet far from adequate extent—by increasing imports of consumer-goods. The fact that the share of foodstuffs,* tobacco, drinks, and so on, has already, in retail trade and according to findings of household statistics, decreased to 48 per cent of all consumer expenditure, is an indication that this qualitative change has already commenced. The projected increase of real incomes over the next few years may considerably speed up the rate of change. Nor has this been achieved by advance commitment of purchasing power over remote future periods through the deceptive persuasion of buyers, by the artifices of high-pressure salesmanship as is the case in the United States and Great Britain. We are reminded of Prof. Galbraith's arguments in this context, too. Much as we share his concern over the artifical creation of requirements that can only be met by artificially created indebtedness, much as we are struck by the figures he quotes, that 42 per cent of America's average-income families spend more than a fifth of their incomes on purchase by instalment and that in the case of 12 per cent the hire-purchase collector takes two fifths of their income every month, we nevertheless do not share his anger against production that produces new requirements.

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* In Hungarian Statistics, as opposed to those of many other countries, the figures of food consumption by the population include the consumption of drinks and the supply figures for the catering trade and works canteens, thus comprising much that is in the nature of services.

True, we are not yet living in an "affluent society." But we are certain that the requirements that have been born of the formerly unsuspected development of industrial output—born because they can be satisfied and at a time when they become satisfiable—frequently appear in Hungary too, at levels other than the absolute needs of life. Absolute needs could be met even before the introduction of the great innovations. But we, in Hungary, feel the effect of the new requirements on the lives and cultural level of the people and are fully aware that the development of mankind is a story of progress from the small to the larger requirements. Our aim is to promote this development by all the means at our disposal. It is true that the new requirements—for the enrichment and beautification of homes and households, for wireless and television sets and many other items—are in our case of marginal utility. The effect, however, which they can exercise on people, on their cultural requirements, aesthetic tastes and humanist outlook, is of much more than marginal utility.

We do not have to create demands in order to give work to our factories, for that is not the way by which we intend to create economic security through maximum employment for the working people. We are glad that new requirements are born, because what we see in them is Prometheus stretching his limbs atfer he has cast off the shackles of poverty and is coming to realize his power of creation—and because we know that we shall possess the resources to satisfy the new requirements. The perspective of an "affluent society" does not scare us, because we think that it can be attained by a different path and by different methods from those described by Prof. Galbraith.

"Poverty," said Pitt, "is no disgrace, but it is damned annoying." Professor Galbraith adds that "in the contemporary United States it is not annoying, but it is a disgrace," for after all today the United States have an "affluent society." In a socialist society, poverty would, even before the absolute abundance of products had been attained, be a disgrace not to the individual but to society.

The Problem of Agriculture

An even graver contradiction developed between the advance in industrial production and the backwardness of agriculture. It is true that in 1957 the compulsory delivery of farm produce at fixed prices was abolished and the government established purchase prices that considerably increased the money incomes of agricultural producers, thus augmenting the incentives to production. This could, however, not bring about a radical change where the arrears were greatest—in the sphere of the productivity of agricultural labour. Here the structure of agricultural production, the adherence of small farmers to the old methods of production and the failure to apply large-scale farming techniques presented an insuperable obstacle. While production per worker in industry showed an increase of about fifty per cent between 1949 and 1959, agricultural production more or less stagnated and crop averages hardly rose. This may clearly be seen from the following table:

Crop averages (quintals per hectare)

Averages for the years

	1931/40	1946/55	1956/59
wheat	13.9	13.3	14.7
rye	11.4	11.6	11.4
barley	13.7	14.2	18.0
maize	19.0	18.0	21.2*
sugarbeet	205.4	161.8	196.0*

The situation is somewhat more favourable in respect to livestock, but only the numbers of pigs and of sheep show a marked increase. Cattle and poultrybreeding increased the stock by only some 4—5 per cent, though the output of milk and eggs rose by about 30 per cent between 1938 and 1958.**

In considering the problem of the backwardness of agriculture, it should be borne in mind that about half of Hungary's working population is engaged in agriculture and that this ratio is but slightly modified by the fact that peasants in many places take seasonal jobs outside agriculture. The relatively low efficiency of agricultural output acts as a brake on increases in the national income, confines the export of agricultural produce to narrow limits and in unfavourable years does not even cover domestic needs, thus at the same time narrowing the home market. The low level of productivity moreover means that the effort made by individual farmers to cover their own needs plays an anachronistically important role, while commodity production is relatively small. Small peasant farms that strive primarily to provide for their own requirements, do not exploit even the most favourable gifts of nature and grow cereals and fodder where all the necessary natural conditions for more intensive culture exist. Economical mechanization presents insuperable problems on the minute plots, for the machines cannot be profitably exploited, and specialized machinery cannot be used. This is amply substantiated by the experiences gained in the highly mechanized agriculture of Denmark. While, however, Danish agriculture, which produces mainly for export, feels the full weight of the pressure of world prices and of the violent fluctuations of the market, which can at best be attenuated but not eliminated by the policy of State protection for agriculture, the socialist economic order provides complete isolation for agricultural production from the storms of the world market. The socialist State buys up all that the peasant produces, irrespective of whether he is in a cooperative farm or farming on individual property. An unsalable crop—a very frequent occurrence amidst the capitalist conditions prevalent in Hungary up to 1944—has been an unknown phenomenon in this country for the last fifteen years. The purchase prices are adjusted to production costs and do not therefore compel those working in agriculture to adopt more rational methods and to reduce costs of production—though, combined with the operation of the tax system, they do not provide opportunities for becoming rich either. Under such circumstances it was not surprising to find relative stagnation in agriculture, even if the mistakes committed in agrarian policies before 1956 were not considered. It will also be readily comprehensible to foreign readers, even to those hardly acquainted with our conditions, that where industry, transport, credit and wholesale trade are completely in the hands of the State and operated on socialist lines, it is not possible in one sector—that of agriculture alone—to grant full freedom for the laws of the capitalist market to exert their influence.

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* Averages for the years 1956—58.

** It should, nevertheless be pointed out that the number of those engaged in agriculture according to incomplete data decreased by 7 per cent between 1949 and 1956, so that production per head showed increase.

The solution of the contradiction inherent in the outdated form of agriculture thus became an inevitable necessity. The peasantry also felt the existence of this tension and reacted to it in its own way—principally by migration. Between 1956 and 1959 a total of 800 thousand people left the villages for good or temporarily and moved to the towns—mainly, of course, the young who are the most dynamic and mobile part of the village population. This, however, was evading the question in a merely individual way, and was by no means a solution. The latter can only be brought about by the large-scale method of farming in the only form that is possible in Hungary since 1945—that of the agricultural producers' cooperative. For a return to large estates is in Hungary just as impossible as in any other part of the world once the revolutionary acquisition of the land by the peasantry has taken place. The transformation—initiated by the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party—began in spring 1959 and continued at the turn of years 1959—60. The data of January 31, 1960 show that 55 per cent of the country's total arable area was being farmed by cooperatives with a total of almost 900,000 members, while about 30 per cent of the arable land is still in the hands of individual farmers.

The State provides full support for the newly formed cooperatives. The use of artificial fertilizers went up by nearly 60 per cent in the first three quarters of 1959 compared to the corresponding period in the previous year. Thousands of new tractors, harvester combines and other machines and also thousands of new tractor-drivers were sent to the new farms. The task is no mean one. The task of reorganizing the villages and shifting the most conservative part of society from its centuries-old ties must be solved simultaneously with a considerable increase in crops. In all countries where, as a result of historical circumstances, capitalist development was late in starting, the liquidation of the ancient forms of agricultural production took place amidst painful birthpangs. Socialist society, with its concentrated means and purposeful policies, is endeavouring to shorten and palliate the pangs of labour and to save the peasant masses from the sufferings of transition. It may not, however, stop progress itself.

THE OUTLOOK

This year, our plans and targets aim at continuing along the road we have traversed, but also of accelerating the rate of progress. The year 1960 derives particular significance from the fact that the proper preparation of the Second Five Year Plan that is to begin in 1961 depends on the successful attainment of this year's targets. In order to achieve these aims, much still remains to be done and the brunt rests on the year 1960.

Power resources will have to be considerably expanded, for without them there can be no technical progress. The modernization of industry must be continued at an accelerated rate, by exchanging unproductive machines and tools for new ones and raising the level of technical culture. The emphasis, while continuing to insist on saving human labour, must again be on thrift with respect to power and materials and on the rational and economic use of our resources. In engineering we shall probably attain our planned target of achieving a 55 per cent increase in output over three years (1958—60), while only using some 30 per cent more steel. This means that by the end of the period our engineering industry will be producing nearly 20 per cent more value from the same amount of material than in 1957. In the course of transforming the structure of production the share of the most modern branches that require the greatest amount of brain-work,—the communications and instruments industries—is to increase from 16.7 to 19.3 per cent in three years, while the share of diesel engines, diesel locomotives and motor trains in the output of vehicles is to rise from the 9 per cent of 1957 to over 25 per cent in 1960.

Accumulation is also on the increase, and our planning bodies are particularly careful to see that the greatest of the faults so far committed, the lack of concentration and the technically unjustifiable length of time that elapses before new establishments are put into operation, should be eliminated in respect of the new building now to take place. There is no doubt that this has hitherto been one of the most striking negative traits of our economic work. In theory it does not seem incorrect to suppose that central direction of a plan can be very much more fruitful in rationally concentrating the available means than any decentralized method of management. Practical experience—the frequently inordinate delays in building, the disproportionate increase in the number of uncompleted investment projects, the many beginnings and little continuation—has, however, shown that no type of system can automatically ensure the fulfilment of plans. This depends not only on the material conditions but also on the people concerned, on the level and authority of management. Much still remains to be done and learned in this respect. We have heard of the "affluent society," that it is able to produce more goods than it can—under its present social circumstances—make use of. Under our conditions the problem is that we have been able more rapidly to develop the forces of society and of production than the intellectual and moral qualities necessary to control them. The process of its development obviously needs some time, during which a new scale of values corresponding to the new conditions will have to become generally accepted. Much could also have been done already to apply the new technique and science of control using electronic data in processing and programing, if we had recognized in time its inherent possibilities for a planned economy.

The path of consolidation, upon which we embarked in 1957 after overcoming the greatest of our mistakes and difficulties, leads us further ahead, and every milestone is a mark of progress achieved in the creation of an affluent socialist society. The stretch ahead of us is long and arduous, it may have its twists and turns and it will require a tremendous and persevering effort by our whole people. If, however, as far as the perspectives are concerned, we presuppose the existence of socialist social relations, then we can agree with the vision of Keynes:

"Assuming no important wars . . . the economic problem may be solved, or at least within sight of solution, within a hundred years. This means the economic problem is not—if we look into the future—the permanent problem of the human race."

A COOPERATIVE VILLAGE

by

JÓZSEF TANNER

At the beginning of 1959 *Egerszalók*, like many other places, became a cooperative village.

The village lies about four miles west of Eger, some hundred miles north-east of the capital, in the valley of a small stream, the *Leskó*. Its population was 1,711 people according to the census of 1949. The boundaries of the village include 5,748 acres of land, extending to the north and south over the flat, wide valley and the numerous bordering hillocks. The region is a chessboard of rich arable fields and sumptuous meadow pastures. The vineyards of *Eger* have spilled over on the hillocks on its eastern side, where huge walnut and cherry trees look down on the valley. The western side is even more varied, for the summer sun ripens rich harvests of wheat and maize on the undulating fields. In valleys between the fields—gulleys washed by the rains over thousands of years—there are fine pastures. Acacia groves have been planted on the steeper slopes, and here and there small copses of bush and trees, the last remnants of the primeval forests of the *Mátra* and the *Bükk* that once stretched down towards the Plains, adorn the scene.

LOOKING BACK

At one time the village was the property of the ancient clan of the *Szalóks*. Hence its name. According to the Letter Patent of the abbey of Szászty, Egerszalók was already a village in 1065. The last progeny of the founding family sold the remnants of their estate at Egerszalók in 1506.

The tax records for 1546 show that the village was then owned by the Cathedral Chapter of Eger. From that time onwards, except for the bitter years of the Turkish occupation, the people of Egerszalók were the serfs of the Chapter.

The Chapter was a collective landlord and did not reside in the village. The people of Egerszalók were, therefore, not obliged to feel that they were always under the landlord's gaze and to debase themselves before the lords. Nor was it necessary, in the administration of the village, always to keep a weather eye open for "what the landlord'll say." Once they had fulfilled their obligations they were able, within certain limits, to consider themselves free, and this had a stimulating effect on the economic, cultural and political life of the village which has lasted to this day. The tenant farmers of Egerszalók learned how to run their village themselves and how to find joint solutions to serve common economic interests. A self-assured people, they became the founders and guardians of a peasant culture of their own.

In Egerszalók, as elsewhere, the 1848 revolution brought a change in conditions. The peasants here were not given more land, but according to the Reform Acts 122 serf families and 126 cotter families were released from their feudal obligations.

By 1848 the number of serfs had increased, though mainly not through the occupation of new land, but by dividing up the existing holdings. This part of the population formed a hard-working, progressively minded "farmer society," interested in political problems and showing a peculiar measure of solidarity in the conduct of the affairs of the village.

Beside them the majority were landless cotters. Not farm-hands, but day-labourers, agricultural workers who had their own little cottage and garden, possibly a cow, a pig, and a tiny plot of land somewhere in the vicinity. They thus had something to lean back on, but the basis of their living was what they earned by agricultural labour. Their large numbers and peculiar conditions of life were, in the next hundred years, to exercise a considerable influence on the life of the village. Due to their social position they were, from 1848 onwards, to be the main "restless elements" of the village.

The hectic developments after the turn of the century also helped to widen the narrow confines of the inhabitants of Egerszalók. At that time there was a great deal of emigration from the vicinity of Eger, and 73 people left for America from the village. But this was no true emigration, for a large proportion of those who went came back, sooner or later.

The main effect of these journeys to America was to be felt in the political life of the village. Beyond the Atlantic many of them made their acquaintance with the labour movement. Several became trade union members, and there were also some who joined one of the workers' parties. Later, in 1936, two of them volunteered to serve in the International Brigade and fell in the battles around Madrid. Thus their acquaintance with conditions in America opened the eyes of the villagers to the roughness and injustices of life in Hungary.

Thus did the eventful past engrave its deep patterns in the thinking of the peasants of Egerszalók.

SOCIAL PATTERN BEFORE THE SECOND WORLD WAR

The policies of the counter-revolutionary regime in Hungary between the World Wars continued to aggravate the situation of the peasantry. In Egerszalók too, the proportion of middle peasants owning sufficient land to make a living compared to the landless or small-property poor peasantry shrank heavily. In the years preceding the Second World War the social composition of the village became as follows:

	Numbers	Percent of village population
rich peasants	10	0.5
middle peasants	300	16.8
poor peasants:		
smallholders	490	27.5
agrarian proletarians and semi-proletarians	700	39.8
farm-hands	160	8.5
intellectuals, craftsmen	26	1.4
gipsies	100	5.5
Total	1,786	100.0

Every peasant family in the village worked hard.

The middle peasants were a prosperous, economically firmly based section of the population. They generally managed their farms well. The majority had fine houses built of stone, with proper farming equipment and sufficient livestock. They regarded farming as their occupation and spoke of their work and their peasant life with self-assurance.

It was the lives of these middle peasant families that remained the most uniform throughout this period. But the hardest years, especially the economic depressions, forced them to do with less, so that they would undertake autumn and winter carting jobs. They did not leave the village for long periods. They could, despite some difficulties, live as they were accustomed to do, so that folk traditions, the elements of peasant culture were preserved longest among their ranks.

The administration of the village was in their hands. They held practically every leading post at the village hall, in the early consumers' co-operatives, in the church assembly, the association for stock-raising, the reading circle and so on. Their every act was inspired by dissatisfaction and hatred of the Horthy regime. Frequently they were diplomatic and elastic, but they always persevered towards the end they had set themselves. Their experienced, militant leaders set the pace for the development of the village.

At Egerszalók the small peasants who owned little land were called "half-a-quarter" men. These were farmers with 4 to 8 acres. Theirs was a needy life. Their number increased as an occasional poor man would—by the time he was past the zenith of his life—rise to be one of them, or, more frequently, as the children of middle peasants were forced by the distribution of heritages or for some other reason to join their ranks. The more enterprising among them continued the traditional Egerszalók trade of carting. They carted stones to building sites, timber to the plains, or traders from Eger to country fairs. In the village they ploughed the land of those owning only 1½ to 3 acres of land and no draught animals, carted in their produce, took their flour to the mill, their sick to the doctor.

Those engaged in carting were quick of movement, loud of speech and courageous at tackling new tasks. They liked doing a bit of trading, were not averse to some speculation now and then, and were willing to toil hard when it seemed worthwhile.

Their social position was characterized by a life of need, a permanent lack of money, an inability to move ahead in life. Their land was poor and their farm would collapse at the slightest impact. Their family life was blighted by the custom of having only one child. The old regime, however, considered that even they were "men of property," and so, beside the middle peasants, they too had a share in the management of the village, representing the left-wing tendency there.

The largest group of the populace were the poor, the propertyless cotters. Some of these had 1½ to 3 acres of land, a cow, a house, but the basis of their living was what they earned by agricultural work done on someone else's land.

The old folk say that in the years prior to the First World War it was easier for poor people to make a living. Of a summer they would hire out in gangs to work even in distant parts of the country. Then they would undertake to do the harvesting on the archiepiscopal, diocesan or other estates nearby. When they had to come home from their work, they would, in the autumn, go to cover the vines in the vineyards of Eger, and in the winter they would split stones in the neighbouring quarries or fell timber in the forests.

In the winter many a poor man went to the estates in the southern part of the country as a tobacco-worker, to supplement his summer's wages. The local shepherds, watchmen, swineherds and some of the estate farm-hands also came from the ranks of the poor peasantry.

After the First World War life became more difficult. Road building came to a standstill and the vines of Eger no longer provided work, for the farmers did not plant new vines and even ceased covering and uncovering, because wine was so cheap. The tobacco work also seemed somehow to slump. The estates grew less wheat every year, so that harvesting was as good as nil. Many again set out for America. But there too, the gates were closed. People said in those times "We're caught in a trap all right!"

So, for many years the most general way for a poor man to earn his living, was to become a *summás*, a contract labourer, to undertake seasonal agricultural work in distant parts of the country.

In this period the life of the villages in the vicinity underwent a peculiar development. Their boundary areas were small and a large proportion was occupied by big estates. In *Deménd*, for instance, the archbishop, at Egerszalók the Chapter, at *Felnémet* and *Felsőtárkány* the archbishop, at *Ostoros* the Seminary and at *Kistálya* a private landowner had extensive holdings.

Between the two wars hardly a quarter of all the peasant farms in these villages was large enough to maintain the farmer and his family

The narrow limits, the multitude of 1½ to 7 acre "farms" imparted a peculiar character to the way of life in these villages. The land owned at home and the seasonal agricultural labour undertaken in distant parts of the country shaped the lives of the poor peasantry in such a way that a part of the family would work at home, while the rest would go on contract work. Thus the village, besides being a community of small farmers, also became a home base for seasonal agricultural labourers.

In this respect Egerszalók was typical. Several groups of contract workers, each 80—120 strong, left the village every year. The people would flock to the large estates of *Transdanubia*, mainly to counties *Fejér*, *Somogy* and *Győr*. "We used to leave the village like migrant birds," say those who remember those times.

The anti-democratic nature of the Horthy period was especially obvious in the treatment of the contract labourers. On arrival at the estates, they were quartered in dirty, vermin-ridden sheep-pens and stables, which was especially offensive as these people all had simple, but clean and tidy homes of their own.

Now, remembering these events of the past, they will tell you: "When we arrived on April 30th, they turned the animals out to graze and accommodated us in their places. We chucked the dung out ourselves and were given fresh straw, which they dumped before the barn. Each took as much as he could, spread the straw on the damp earth, and drove in small pegs to hold it and give some shape to our litters. Hordes of vermin, mice and rats disturbed our peace."

The estates did all they could to evade the obligations they had contracted. The food especially caused a lot of trouble. They gave the labourers rancid, verminous, foul bacon, which caused no end of bitterness because bacon was the staple food which might have been given fried and boiled if they had had the heart.

Nor was bread given according to contract. In place of wheat, they baked it of brown rye flour, which was not what the people of Egerszalók were used to. Little care was taken in its preparation, for when it was cut up it would often fall out of its crust as though from a piece of earthenware.

The meat was another frequent cause for anger. It was usual to give the labourers the beef, the mutton and the pork of sick animals which the estate owners had been compelled to slaughter. Even of this, the best was taken by the estate officers and the domestic servants, and only the sinewy, bony bits were left for the labourers. Frequently there were larvae on top of the soup, for it was cooked of bad meat that had been infected by flies.

Lunch was cooked for the labourers by their own cooks, in big cauldrons and when it was ready it was taken out in a cart to those working in the fields. Mealtime was when the church bells tolled for noon. In many estates they could begin their lunch only when they had reached the end of the row in their hoeing. On a large field, however, they might finish a row by 11, then turn and begin another, which might take them till 3 o'clock to complete, and they were not permitted to eat until then. Though some were faint with hunger, the foreman would remind them they had not been taken on for the sake of promenading back and forth.

Nowhere was any thought given to providing a varied diet or making circumstances more human. The labourers took their meals at the edge of the field, sitting on the grass and dipping their spoons in the common dish, or, if the food was portioned out, seated on a mound on the edge of a ditch, with the receptacle on their knees while they ate.

In other respects too, the heads of the estates displayed inhuman behaviour towards the labourers. One of the men, for instance, made to lift a sick horse, collapsed and died. His wife and four children were left without support. When she asked the supervisor to help her to some sort of a living, he answered, "I won't hear a thing, clear out of the office!"

On the estate of the Chapter of *Heves* they thought Sundays were an unwarranted luxury for the labourers. Generally these toilers continued to work in the open even if it rained. If they complained, they were told: "Outside is the place for dogs and *summás!*" or "He who drenched you, will also dry you!"

To this day, the former labourers still talk of the intolerable treatment they received and tell how because of it they frequently did not stay until the end of the period stipulated in the contract.

They vividly remember how a group of 350 labourers from Egerszalók was treated on an estate at *Jakabszállás*, leased by András Barta in 1929. This leaseholder had a year earlier had his labourers beaten up by the gendarmes. The men of Egerszalók knew of this, so they agreed beforehand that they would maintain complete solidarity and, whatever happened, would not put up with this sort of treatment. One of the labourers was József Szabó, an experienced man and head of the group. After they had been there a fortnight, the gendarmes took him to the office to beat him up. But the others, armed with scythes and pitch forks all went to the office, opened the door and shouted:

"Come on out, brother, we're all here!"

He came out of the office between the gendarmes, who just stood there pale, without making a move, because they saw that these people meant business.

Later, as the situation deteriorated still further, they decided to put up with it no longer and terminated their engagement. They came home with empty pockets, but with the proud knowledge that the landlord had not been able to get the better of them.

Of a summer there would be in nearly every group of labourers a number of couples who took their children, aged 2 to 10 years, with them, as there were no relatives left behind to take care of them. While their parents worked on the distant fields in the daytime, these children were left alone to wander about the farmsteads. Their food came from the remnants of that given to the labourers. People called the children "kitchen piglets," and this fairly summed up their position. They suffered badly from hunger and neglect, from the day-long solitude and the verminous quarters.

In this way the greater part of the villagers lived and toiled. They composed many a folk-song about their lot as labourers, giving voice to their feelings and what they thought of their social position. Here are some of them:

Heaven punish him that made the train
And laid its rails so endless on the plain!
Why must I all this distance come from home
Oh, bitter labour's endless paths to roam?

*

Hoar-clad fields of sugar-beet
Chill the labourers' hands and feet.
But toil they must, despite the cold
For theirs is suffering untold.

*

If I could be the fiery thunder
I'd strike the bailiff's room asunder
And kill you, Mr. Bailiff, dead
And all the loafers we have fed!

*

On the outskirts of the village was the well-conducted manor of the Chapter of Eger, where 34 farm-hands worked and lived with their families. The farm-hands of the Chapter were only a small part of the population, but the villagers nevertheless showed keen interest in what was happening at the manor, which was managed by a bailiff.

The situation of the farm-hands was best expressed in the relations between them and the bailiff. For them, he was "the lord," for he was the personal representative of the landlord. This was also evident from his income, his home (a "castle" of 6 rooms, furnished with valuable pieces) and the fact that he kept a maid, a cook and a German governess to look after his children. He rated the farm-hands as nothing. Year after year he would never exchange a word with them, and if he had to address them it would be with a curse. Their aches and troubles were no concern of his and he never entered their homes.

Later, as the Second World War approached, he would once a year, nevertheless, show some humanity. On Christmas Eve he had the farm-hands' children called to his home, where he distributed to each a small present of a cheap pair of socks, a handkerchief or something of the kind (purchased by the estate), allowing the poor children to stare for a time at the vast, richly decorated Christmas tree that "little Jesus has brought for my children."

The bailiff required the farm-hands working in the fields to stand up and greet him bareheaded if he passed nearby. If a canon came out from Eger they had to kiss his hand. If any of them forgot to do this, they were a few days later summarily dismissed.

The full labour-power of the farm-hand was at the estate's disposal and he was bound to the farm for the entire year. He could not leave the manor without permission, and his family was under permanent surveillance. The position of the farm-hands, which differed little from that of the serfs of the Middle Ages, was still regulated by Act XIII of 1876. Thus their working time was unlimited, and the estate could avail itself of their services whenever it chose and for whatever purpose.

What did these farm-hands receive? The "convention," that is, a few quintals of produce and 5-10 *Pengős* each quarter, enabling them with painful thrift barely to maintain their families on the edge of starvation. They were also given accommodation, a small, earth-floored room which could be entered through a dirty, so-called common kitchen.

Provision for their health was only for appearance's sake, if indeed there was any at all. Whatever their ailment was, all that the "convention" doctor could give them was one or two tablets of aspirin, or some cheap spoon medicine, but far more frequently he recommended a wet bandage, a packing on the chest or a "steaming".

If any of the farm-hands became ill in the course of their work or were crippled, they had to go. The saying went among them: "That's how it is—the dead dog's place is in the ditch."

Some measures, ostensibly to improve the lot of the farm-hands, were indeed taken towards the end of the thirties. It was ordered that those who had served in one place for ten years could henceforth be dismissed only with a pension. The estates then saw to it that they should have no such hands and, if the period of service of any of them approached ten years, dismissed them on some fabricated charge or other. The bailiff could always find one, for nobody defended the farm-hand. If, in his desperate plight he humbly begged the bailiff to keep him on as he had nowhere to go, then he was perhaps "pardoned," but was told that his term of service would be counted from the beginning again.

ECONOMIC LIFE BEFORE LAND REFORM

The economic life of the village was in the past shaped by many influences. These included the old patterns and habits, the proximity of the town and also the geographical conditions, for Egerszalók lies at the juncture of the Plains and the Highlands. The main feature influencing the whole life of the villagers, however, was their landlessness, or rather the scarcity of land.

The distribution of the neighbouring lands according to branches of cultivation was before the 1945 Land Reform as follows:

plough land	2,980 acres
meadow	437 acres
pasture	1,505 acres
garden	70 acres
vineyard	15 acres
forest	317 acres
fallow	423 acres
Total	5,747 acres

The soil in the environs of the village is varied, ranging from rich, fertile, alluvial humus to barren, stony slopes. This variety in the soil also had its effect in shaping the economic life of the village. It made it multilateral.

The inhabitants of the village had, in the days of serfdom, divided up the arable land so that the holding of each serf included a better and a worse quality plot—one that was near, and another that was further away. The plots of land belonging to a single holding were thus scattered all over the district. Since, however, the people of Egerszalók engaged not only in crop growing but also in live-stock breeding and used the stubble after the harvest as grazing ground, thus requiring a certain degree of uniformity, they made use of the three-field system, which had been evolved for arable land in Western Europe in the Middle Ages. With some alterations, this system was maintained on the lands of the former serf farmers, right up to 1959. This, among other things, is in itself a sign of the backwardness of the peasant way of cultivating the land.

The basis for farming in Egerszalók is open-field crop growing, consisting of wheat, rye, barley, some oats, vetches, lucerne, clover, maize, potatoes, cattle beet, sunflowers, hemp and the vegetables necessary for the peasant households.

Another important branch of farm activity is live-stock breeding, in which the old methods, intermingled with the new, have also still survived. One of them is that of half-wild breeding, when the young cattle, the heifers and the young oxen are driven out to graze in herds at the beginning of spring and only stabled again late in the autumn. The dominant feature of their livestock breeding was the keeping of cows, because due to the proximity of the town, the peasants were easily able to sell the milk.

Under such circumstances village life encourages people to help each other. The peasants had long recognized their mutual dependence, and the principles and practice of cooperation and reciprocity had struck early roots at Egerszalók. Thus not everyone can buy a hay chopper, a grape mincer, a wine press, a jam cauldron and the like, as this would require too many investments, so one of those living in a particular street would buy one item, the other another and they would use it in turn.

A more advanced form of cooperation was the common use of the pastures. Between the two wars, three pasture associations operated in Egerszalók, that of the former serf farmers, of the labourers and of the landless. In 1936 they joined the National Green Meadow Federation, which drew their attention to the importance of tending the pastures.

The good work of the pasture associations led to dual results. It made the village more prosperous and at the same time it taught the members how to promote their economic interests together, in cooperation.

In the meanwhile, the peasants of Egerszalók had by 1909 already set up a Consumers' and Marketing Cooperative, which at first operated independently, but later, in 1920, joined the then nation-wide development of the *Hangya* Cooperative Society. Between the two World Wars the Cooperative at Egerszalók, contrary to the general practice of the *Hangya* organization, became an important base for the cultural and political education of the peasantry. The leadership in the Cooperative remained throughout in the hands of the middle and small peasants. Thus many intelligent peasants learned how to keep books, to handle a cash-book, to set out and keep a stores record, to deal with cheques, and so on. This was very important for the producers' cooperative movement that started after the liberation.

The managing committee never put business considerations first, but aimed at using the income of the Cooperative to serve the economic and cultural interests of the villagers. They gave financial aid to the school, the reading circle and the burial society. With due consideration for the economic needs of the village, they had, by 1930, set up a collection of small agricultural machines, consisting of several sowing machines, grain separators, a few spraying machines, wine presses, grape mincers, etc. Anyone could, upon paying a small fee, use these machines.

The managing committee came into conflict with the Head Office of *Hangya* over this, so in 1940 they decided to leave the organization, but were unable to do so, owing to the outbreak of the war. However, in the summer of 1945 they were the first in the county, at the will of the membership, to become an Agricultural Consumers' Cooperative.

Another and even finer manifestation of the idea of cooperation, was the Association for Stock-raising at Egerszalók. The many mottled cows easily came to harm on the uneven, pitted pastures, and the sensitive animals were also prone to frequent disease, so, amid no end of argument and planning, the farmers of Egerszalók organized the Association, to cover the whole village and function according to a well worked-out set of rules. The basic idea was that the loss caused by the death of an animal should be borne in common by all the cow-owning farmers. The value of the fallen cattle was repaid from the membership dues the Association collected.

In 1926 they set up the Egerszalók Burial Society, which also operated independently and did not join any national organization. Its rules were laid down in writing by the peasants of the village themselves, and the aim was that the costs of burial should be a common burden.

All this goes to show that the idea of cooperation and association is an old one at Egerszalók and was carried into practice in a number of ways between the two World Wars. The initiators were mainly the middle peasants. Thus if this problem was mentioned in the course of conversation with people from other villages, the people of Egerszalók could proudly declare that if anybody's cattle should fall, the village would buy them another, and if anyone should die, the village would bury him!

After the Land Reform

That was how the Hungarian peasantry toiled and struggled till 1945. After what has been said it is easy to see that, for the peasants of Egerszalók, as indeed for the whole of Hungary's peasantry, the defeat of fascism brought about a liberation from poverty and servitude. The main feature of the change was the liquidation of the system of large estates and the transfer of the land to the peasantry. That was the case in Egerszalók too.

In November 1944 the Soviet guns were roaring a bare 20 miles from the village, when the last gang of labourers managed to get home from Transdanubia, leaving their summer's earnings behind, while the bailiff fled from the village.

The war reached the village on November 21, 1944. The situation was grave, for the front swayed back and forth across and around the village for a month. But when life once more became normal, the village rappidly recovered. By February 1945 they had started the spring farming operations, beginning, as an experiment, on the Chapter's estate. On March 15th, 1945 the Provisional Government issued its Land Reform decree abolishing the system of large estates. The poor peasants forthwith set up their Village Land Claims Committee, which proceeded to prepare the final distribution of the land. They drew up a list of claimants, determined the available area, and then decided how much land each was to receive. They compiled a list of beneficiaries and displayed it publicly. At first many objections were raised to the planned distribution, and while productive work proceeded undisturbed in the fields, the corrections were completed by the end of August, 1945.

The Land Claims Committee had under consideration

1,038 acres of arable land
88 acres of meadow
320 acres of pasture
108 acres of acacia woods
making a total area of 1,554 acres of land

The number of claimants was 343 families
land was given to 274 families
of these the completely landless were
54 claimants
while some land had been owned by 220 claimants

Thus the 450 year-long dominion of the land-owning priests of Eger came to an end at Egerszalók.

Amid the new conditions brought about by the liberation, the new farmers of Egerszalók, and the old ones too, set to work with a will. Soon their efforts began to bear fruit, for they gained strength economically, obtained the necessary equipment, set up farm buildings and raised a sizeable amount of livestock.

The peasants of Egerszalók, however, wanted to rid themselves not only of the overlordship of the large estate, but also of the sweat and the backbreaking labour with scythe and hoe and the backwardness of village life. In successive years this, too, gradually came about. Many found industrial work in the mines of Eger and its district or in State factories, while others took jobs with the Railways or the Post Office. Today these number 197.

The men of Egerszalók, if they now work outside the village, do not do so in the way they did when they were hired labourers, or earlier, when they emigrated to America. They work in nearby mines and factories, are handling modern machinery and have become skilled workers. Another thing that no peasant could previously so much as dream of: many have won commissions in the Army and the Police. Several are in leading jobs, in county and rural district councils, even in ministries. Some of the young people of Egerszalók have obtained teachers' diplomas, others have graduated, one is a university teacher and several have become mechanical engineers and agronomists—in fact everyone does what suits his talents and abilities. There is no longer any need for the peasants of Egerszalók to emigrate to America in search of a job.

Then, in 1949, seventy-three of them, mainly those who had newly received land, formed a cooperative farm, being among the first in the country to do so. This was a pioneering venture at that time, to which they were spurred on by their belief in the truth of socialism. These courageous men pooled their land and, operating on 457 acres of arable land and using the old farm buildings of the Chapter's manor, they started farming in common.

At the beginning they had to overcome tremendous obstacles, partly because they themselves were not experts at large-scale farming and partly because the State bodies were also inexperienced and their aid frequently caused more harm than good. As the years passed, however, the cooperative farm at Egerszalók got into its stride. Its crop results were far above those of the individual peasants, and by now it has even eclipsed the best yields of the Chapter's former estate. Where, for instance the Chapter reaped a record crop of 23 quintals of barley per *hold* (1.42 acres), the cooperative farm in 1959 gathered in 25 quintals. It has a good dairy herd, a pig farm and three flocks of sheep. It also operates a highly lucrative quarry—where tufaceous stone is produced for building—a sand quarry, an electrically driven grinder and 31 acres of vines.

Apart from the collective farmland, each cooperative farm member also has a garden, a farmstead plot consisting of about 3,200 sq. yds of arable land or 1,600 sq. yds of vineyard, a cow, several pigs and innumerable poultry.

The net income, after subtracting costs and taxes, is distributed according to the work done in the collective farm.

In the course of years these peasants have acquired genuine skill in large-scale farming, their cooperative has become stronger year by year, and the membership, too, has prospered, as is well shown by the fact that many of them have already built neat new houses.

Nor does possible disease or the coming of old age cause as much anxiety as it once did, for cooperative farm members receive medical treatment and medicines. Those who have worked at least ten years in a cooperative farm are given decent pensions by the time they are old, the monthly sum increasing with the number of years spent at work.

By recent decree, special funds have been set up to assist those old people—especially in the newly created cooperative farms—who have been members for less than ten years.

However, the majority of the villagers, who until very recently stuck to the accustomed ways of farming, continued as individual peasants after 1949. Their situation also improved considerably. A good indicator of the change is the new way of milk marketing. Owing to the proximity of the city, the people of Egerszalók have for a long time been keeping cows and engaging in dairy farming. Between the two wars the women took the milk to the market at Eger. Up-hill and down-hill on the long road, in rain and mire, with a heavy load on their backs, this was hard work indeed. The women of Egerszalók aged early in those times and many were ill. Now the situation is different. A bus passes through the village every hour and those who take their produce to market can travel comfortably. In the morning hours, on the way in, and towards noon back homewards again, the bus is full of the gay chatter of the women of Egerszalók. Those, moreover, who do not wish to spend their time selling their milk, can hand their produce over to the milk collecting station in the village itself.

In other respects, too, life has changed. In olden days, when a girl from Egerszalók married, she was given merely a bed and a cupboard. In many cases she had difficulty even in obtaining these for a dowry. The girls of today only know this custom from hearsay, for the modern bride receives a complete set of bedroom and of kitchen furniture. "What would people say?" the modern bride would cry, if someone were to depart from this new custom. Nor do the women of Egerszalók rock their babies in cradles any more; instead they buy "windowed prams" in which the baby reclines like a Turkish pasha.

The outward appearance of the village is also changing, with ever more houses being built. Since the liberation 72 new houses have gone up and 123 have been rebuilt or renovated. The low, earthbound thatched cottages with their small windows are finally disappearing, and their places are being taken by tall houses, more like villas, with large windows and tiled roofs.

The cultural developments in the village are also striking. Between the two wars, for example, there were three teachers in the village, who taught in two poorly equipped, crumbling classrooms. Due to the poverty of the villagers, 38 per cent of the children did not complete even the 6 forms of the elementary school, as they were put to work at an early age. Now eight teachers, working in four bright, well-equipped classrooms. teach the children of Egerszalók, many of whom, after completing the 8 forms of the general school, proceed to further studies. Since the liberation 57 of the young people of Egerszalók have been given secondary or university schooling. Development in this sphere is still being hampered by the fact that here, as in the neighbouring villages, there is as yet no housing available for all the additional teachers, so that after school hours many take what the villagers call "the teachers' bus" (the one that brings them from, and takes them back to town) and leave the village. This position is now to be remedied in the course of the nation-wide housing campaign that has been initiated.

In every way then, the life of the village is changing and developing. Nevertheless the older people have often asked:

"What is to happen here, if everyone turns his back on the land?"

Society as a whole is also worried by this question. For as a result of the liquidation of the system of large estates, Hungary's agriculture became a sea of small farming units, and, though the peasants worked diligently, they were able to achieve but low yields on their small plots, cultivated with manual implements. They produced little and expensively. As a result, while the State Farms in 1959, for instance, harvested average crops of 14 to 15 quintals of wheat per *hold* (1.42 acres) the national average was only 9.2 quintals. This, moreover, is the reason why, though 45 per cent of the population are engaged in agriculture, production is nevertheless insufficient to cover domestic needs or satisfy possible export markets. Because of the low yields, food crops have to be grown over large areas and little space is therefore left for industrial cultures.

These problems in their entirety have made it a task for society in general to see to it that the small farms should, through cooperation, that is, the voluntary pooling and common cultivation of the lands of the peasants, be reorganized into modern large-scale units.

Hungarian peasants, however, like peasants throughout the world, are conservative and stick to the accustomed patterns. The problems arising in the economic situation of the country must therefore be explained from every angle. This involves education towards the idea of cooperation, which is difficult not only because of the conservatism of the peasants, but also because of the mistakes committed over the past years.

That was the case in Egerszalók too, when in February 1959 town workers and intellectuals went out to discuss the position of agriculture with the peasants of the village. It is easier for the mass of the industrial workers and for various strata of the intelligentsia, in particular the agricultural experts, the teachers and administrative workers, to understand that the cheaper production of foodstuffs and thus the rise in the standard of living depends on the reorganization of agriculture. They therefore readily undertook to explain to the peasants that the formation of cooperative farms is in the best interests of the whole country, including the peasants themselves.

This work of education was a veritable trial of strength between progress and reaction in each village. At Egerszalók, for instance, the rumour was spread that things would be like in the Soviet Union, where old people over 70 were supposedly "exterminated" as trouble makers; or that those too old to work would be taken to the "poorhouse" where, under the old regime, the absolutely destitute and poor old people spent their last days.

The argument, with its pros and cons, took many weeks. Many said right at the beginning: "We see that we cannot escape from the machines, so with God's help, let's join." But those who thought they would wait and see were still in the majority.

Their reluctance was manifested in a number of ways. Those who had previously been labourers and servants, but had acquired a measure of economic independence after the liberation through acquiring land, said: "I was another man's dog for long enough. Now I want to remain independent."

Several of the former serf farmers were reluctant to pool their ancient family holdings, and their attachment to their land is understandable, for in Hungary the lands of the village community were transferred for use to the serfs in the form of serf holdings in 1715, nearly 250 years ago. Instead of having a piece of land measured out to them in a different part of the surroundings every year, as had been the case previously, they had used the same land, from father to son, ever since that time. From 1730, the date of the reorganization of the village, this had been the order of things at Egerszalók, and it had greatly deepened the peasants' attachment to their land.

Those who joined first went to see their relatives and friends and advised them to reconsider the matter and follow them: "Think it over and then join us, for after all, we are your relatives, neighbours, and fellow villagers, and we'll all be one family."

The many-sided and patient work of propaganda bore fruit with the great majority. Most of them—304 in number—joined the existing cooperative farm which had been founded in 1949, and another group, particularly the old holding farmers, 84 in all, founded another unit. They decided, however, that since they had done the autumn work individually and also embarked on the spring work that way, they would only start in common farming in the autumn of 1959.

In the summer of 1959, after the harvest, there was a great deal of movement in the village. Surveyors arrived from Eger and completely rearranged the boundaries. The land of the two cooperative farms was merged into large fields, and a suitable place was found for the allotment of land to the seven families who still wanted to farm individually. The roar of tractors now filled the valley, the boundaries disappeared, and Egerszalók became a cooperative village.

It is characteristic of the cooperative villages that the greater part of the land (70-100 per cent) is cooperative land, that the majority, of the agricultural population work on these lands, using large-scale methods, modern machinery and a rotation of crops and that, despite initial difficulties, they do their farm work in common. In the region of Egerszalók, for instance, 95 per cent of the land has become cooperative.

To reach large-scale production prolonged, systematic work will be needed, backed by the material resources of the State. The start is an enormously significant progressive change, which opens the path to a vast development of productive forces.

The people of Egerszalók are, of course, only at the beginning of all this, for they have merely taken the first steps. The change gives rise to innumerable problems and these hinder progress. One of these is impatience. The membership would like all of a sudden to have a well functioning cooperative farm that has a high income and gives the individual members good earnings. They find it difficult to understand initial difficulties that are bound to be plentiful. There is little expert knowledge, there are few machines, not enough farm buildings, the livestock is not all it should be.

On the other hand they see their old stables, sties and sheds becoming superfluous and their formerly valuable equipment, carts, hand driven machinery, hay-choppers and various grinders becoming just so much worthless scrap. Observing this, some lose their heads: "What a mess we're in! Too bad we ever started!"

Then too, a part of the peasants, men who were previously full of initiative and diligence, now began to let themselves go and become passive: "Let the managing committee trouble their heads,"—they say—"that's what they're there for!"

Amid this atmosphere, fraught with many problems, anti-cooperative propaganda also finds soil. For instance, in the summer of 1959, some people whispered to the cooperative members of Egerszalók: "Don't accept a State loan, because you won't be able to repay it and then all you have will belong to the State." The reactionaries thought that if they could prevent the acceptance of a State loan, this would impede the consolidation of the cooperative farms in the village. They did in fact achieve some result, for the uncertainty they caused hindered development for several months.

We could go on listing the difficulties arising from the process of development, but I think this much will suffice to show the growing-pains. Let us, therefore, rather devote a few moments to seeing whether the people of Egerszalók can overcome their multiple problems?

They can, because they are not alone. The whole of Hungarian society is on their side, and they receive help from every quarter in their work of building a new agriculture. From the State they get machines, improved seeds, artificial fertilizers, long-range building loans. Agricultural experts help them prepare their production plans. The workers of the neighbouring factories come along in summer, to help them with the harvest. It is therefore a matter of time for them to get used to the new situation and overcome the initial difficulties till everything is in its place and functioning properly in the Egerszalók cooperative farms.

Thus, before our very eyes, the life of the people of Egerszalók changes and improves. They still have many problems to overcome, but they are nevertheless progressing at a growing pace towards a more cultured life, while slowly even the memory of the old life of the contract labourers and farm-hands fades away.

THE FAMILY HEARTH

A Short Story

by

IMRE DOBOZY

Esther had put the children to bed and was just going to wash when her husband entered the kitchen. He was stubbly, grimy and unkempt, with strange twists on his face and strange smells in his clothing. He spoke, blatantly and impatiently, as though he had left home only that very morning. He threw his hat on a distant chair:

"Here I am!... Got something good for supper?"

Esther just looked at her husband—his short and crumpled felt coat, which hung on him as if it had been pitched there with a fork; his restless, thin face marked with tangled lines, his hungrily glowing black eyes with the small pupils; his reddish hair which hung in sweaty wisps into his forehead; and his narrow chin which poked the air sharply and stubbornly even when he was smiling.

She just looked at him, and did not say a word. Not because her husband had come unexpectedly. As a matter of fact, she never expected him, and yet he could never have come unexpectedly.

Esther had long regarded their life as a repetition of rare meetings which had the flavour of the accidental, something that could be borne only without desire and expectation, only sadly and sternly, with untiring patience.

She did not think of her husband, she did not tremble on behalf of him or for fear of him. If he came, he was at home, if he did not come, he was somewhere else. That is how she trained herself, that is how the pain of loneliness mellowed to dull resignation.

Yet... she loved this man. Somehow, for some reason, she nevertheless loved him, silently and aimlessly; or perhaps she loved merely the dreams of her girlhood, which, though they were never fulfilled, were in themselves still sweetly and movingly beautiful...

"It's six months since you went away..." she said at last, really not in reproof, but only by way of keeping track of the passage of time.

Tóth looked at his wife. He grinned awkwardly, and his eyes avoided her scrutiny in confusion. But this unconscious embarrassment, this painful and visible little twitch of his hardened conscience, did not last for long. Tóth took out a cigarette, lighted it, and now looking his wife in the eye, he asked curtly:

"So what?"

His wife turned away slowly. She threw twigs on the fire and busily blew at the rosy embers. And even the sooty mouth of the fireplace seemed to echo swiftly and sneeringly "So what? So what?"

True, she could not have expected anything else. When her husband first set out a good six months after their wedding, saying that he would have to look for a job because they could not live on three acres of land and a tiny vineyard, she had, in her fear and childish obstinacy, begged him not to go away. She would be willing to do anything, but she did not want, she could not bear to live alone, and they were going to have a child and the child would look every day for its father with wide little eyes... Then her husband had gruffly interrupted her with a "So what?"... And the next day he had left. From then on Esther knew that her presence in her husband's life was only like the light in a lamp: if it was needed it was turned on, if it was not, it was turned off...

Later she found out that it was not even for the sake of earning money that her husband would leave home. His blood drove him. His roving, vagabond, restless and greedy nature, which led him from district to district, in pursuit of new scenes, new roads, seasonal jobs and seasonal loves... By autumn, when the weather began to get a sting in it, he usually found his way home. He was thin, unkempt, weatherbeaten and rude. On these occasions he would bring some money and, holding it in his fist, would slam it on the table.

He would settle down at home, scrub himself clean and gradually become corpulent and heavy. But only till spring. Then he would be off again, and be absorbed by the great big world. He would vanish and not even write... Esther had often thought to herself that if she should once begin to cry and sobbed away all her loneliness, her nights of worry, her eternal and bitter struggle for the two children, that flood of tears would wash away the foundations of the house. But she did not cry. There was no one to cry to.

Her husband squatted down beside her. He rubbed his stubbly face against her cheeks, placed a smacking, loud kiss on her ear, and asked her:

"Aren't you glad?"

He laughed hoarsely and pinched her breast.

"I'll scrape the hair off my mug in a jiffy... and I'll be as handsome as they make 'em. You'll feel like having me then, I bet."

At such times, during the rare and ambiguous moments of his rough advances, Esther was accustomed to feel a sort of girlish fullness of the heart.

In the great inner silence which she had imposed on herself, her heart would begin to ring out. Then she could forgive everything, and she wanted to be good, hoping that something of her goodness would cling to her husband.

But now she waited in vain for that inner sound. She remained calm, and somehow even strong. It did not occur to her that she had gradually severed the remaining weak threads of her former capricious and loose dependence on her husband and was now able to stand on her own feet even if her husband did not come home for two years on end. Nothing occurred to her, she merely sensed that the usual emotion failed to come over her, and when she straightened up flushed from blowing the fire, she stood there like a statue.

Tóth was by now rummaging in the wardrobe, looking for his razor—but all at once he stiffened like a dog picking up a scent. For some time and without comprehension he kept gazing at the neat rows of cups and glasses as if he were seeing them for the first time. Then he plunged his hand into the cupboard and took out a deep china bowl that he did not remember at all. He turned it about, looked at it and put it back. But he did not speak. He fished out other dishes from the cupboard and then replaced them. Suddenly he slammed the door of the cupboard and then, turning around, began to look about him in the kitchen. He noticed everything. The new cover on the table, a new cardigan on the hanger, a sack full of nuts in the corner, a new alarm-clock on the window sill: the signs of a new little germ of prosperity within the old bounds of the accustomed and unchanging poverty.

An angry twitch jerked his face.

"You!" he said to his wife and slammed the razor-strap he held in his hand on the table.

Only now did he take a closer look at his wife. She was not as she had been. She was not so worn and was not quite so timid. She had filled out, she looked calmer and perhaps even prettier; she had blossomed out. Her forehead was smooth, her usually dishevelled hair that used to look like a tousled stack of hay was now neatly arranged. In her eyes there was no trace of the former long-suffering meekness her glance was indifferent, a little lazy and almost satiated.

Tóth bit his lips. He swore to himself. Somebody has entered this woman's life... At the building sites where he worked he had known lonely women whose natural reserve had been worn down by loneliness and who gladly threw themselves into, or rather fled to, a man's arms for a kind word, for a caress. You did not even have to call them, only to listen skilfully, and cleverly to let them complain of their loneliness. But his wife, who had been left very much to herself at home and who had loved him very much, showed no desire to throw herself into his arms.

He stepped close up to her.

"Speak!" he said cracking his fingers in rage.

"What about?" she asked.

She did not understand her husband's anger. Nor was she afraid of him.

"You whore, you!" he yelled. "D'you think I'm blind? But I'll get it out of you!"

Esther turned pale. No..., her husband did not know what he was saying. Perhaps he was drunk. Or perhaps something was the matter with him. Or did he want to leave her for ever—and had he come home only to begin an ugly and unbearable quarrel? She did not know what to say. She stood by the fireplace, almost as if she had had a stroke. Her husband grabbed the razor-strap from the table, swung it, and yelled so that his thin face was one big twitch from the roots of his hair to his pointed chin:

"Who did you lie with, you bitch, you! Who consoled you while I was away? Answer me!"

The children woke up at this shouting. They did not dare open the door but they peeped in, clinging to the curtain. Through the close weave of the cotton fabric they did not recognize their father. All they could see in patchy images was that a man was threatening their mother in the kitchen. The older tore open the window of the room and jumped out, his short underpants a white patch in the darkness. He waited a little, terrified, then rushed to the neighbours for help...

Esther shielded herself with her arms.

"Don't you dare..." she said dully. "Put down the strap."

"I'll kill you!"

"Don't... What do you want? What should I talk about? I'll tell you everything, everything... but stop this..."

"Who is your lover?"

"Don't say things like that about me... God will punish you if you say such things..."

"Do you deny it?"

He raised the strap in towering fury. The rage of the swindler who all at once, screaming for revenge, feels that he too has been cheated. As if it had not been he who had left his wife penniless for long months, amid grinding worries and with children, but someone else; as if it had not been he who had tumbled with any woman who came his way. He now wanted to pronounce sentence as a judge and to beat and lash, to see red stripes on the white skin of the woman, to hear her repentant wailing, and to break her world into fragments.

Esther backed away.

"You've never hit me before", she pleaded. "Your heart has never let you do this..."

"His name! Let me hear his name!"

"But whose? What do you want of me!"

"Stand still! You wretch!... You'll tell me!"

Then the neighbours arrived. The Halász family, three of them. The old man in the van, his clothes just slung on unbuttoned, behind him his son, and farthest back the old woman, who was wailing painfully although she could not see into the kitchen: "Oh, my God, holy Mary, what a body lives to see, they are killing each other..." Her husband did not even speak to Tóth first, but snarled at his wife: "Quiet, you, or I'll strike you dumb!"

And so they invaded the kitchen. They were just in time. Nothing had happened yet. Esther was white as the wall, terrified, but as yet unhurt.

Tóth's anger turned against the intruders.

"Get the hell out of here," he screamed. "What do you want here?"

By now the neighbours from down the street had also come, with their two strapping young lads, one of them swinging a cudgel as big as a fence-post. And hardly had they squeezed into the kitchen, when others came, three at a time, and others again as if the whole end of the village had been ordered out here to extinguish a fire. They came with picks and clubs and pushed and pressed themselves inside, so that Tóth was completely cornered and unable even to move his arms. He yelled:

"Get out! Get out!"

Nobody answered. Nobody moved. Stern eyes watched him. Only the breathing of the people and the ticking of the new alarm-clock was audible in the kitchen.

There was silence for a time, a heavy and electric silence. Then old Halász spoke:

"Put down the strap."

Tóth did not put it down. It was none of their business what he held in his hand, what he did with the strap. This was his house and even if he beat his wife to death in it that was none of their business. He did not put down the strap, but gripped it hard. These people would leave, they would get tired of staying, and then, then he would show her.

But they did not leave. Those farther back began to push those who were inside. The ring around him was getting tighter, the Halász boy was pressed against Tóth and their chests touched. And then from the back someone spoke out, dully and with disgust:

"You vagabond!"

Tóth flared up.

"Who was that?"

Madari stretched up his arm—a dark-faced, sinewy, sullen peasant.

"I", he said. "Don't worry, I won't run away... But I can tell you that if you touch your wife with a single finger, you'll be sorry for it."

"That's my business," said Tóth.

Madari worked himself forward with his knees and elbows. This sullen man was in such a sudden murderous rage that his face almost blackened. He yelled so hard that he bit the words.

"You, you roam and wolf about... and leave your wife and two kids to howl in misery..., that *is* our business".

"What do you mean 'our'?"

"Ours, the co-op's! The Petőfi co-op's! We took her in... She has bread and peace... If you've come home just to make trouble, get out!"

He had now come to the front, pulled aside the Halász boy, and grabbed Tóth's arm as in a vice.

"Drop that strap. For..."

Tóth would have raised his arm, but he could not. In Madari's cruel grip he felt his arm, shoulder and his very heart grow numb. This black-faced peasant had such a strong grip that it was impossible to withstand. Tóth gradually let the strap slip out of his hand, and as if his strength had flown with it, his body crumpled.

Madari did not say any more. No one spoke, all those people just stood there quietly in the dark for a long time. Then, as they gradually began to withdraw from the kitchen, they all winked assurance to the woman, as if to say, don't worry, we'll be back if you need us.

Esther picked up the strap from the floor and hung it up in its place. She said nothing. Somehow she was even sorry for her husband. But when he sat down on the chest and leaned his head on his hands, she could not remain silent.

"I'll make your bed here," she said, "in the kitchen."

Tóth looked at her.

"We'll see," he said gloomily.

But he knew already that he would sleep in the kitchen, and that he would not cross its threshold after the light had been turned out, perhaps for a very long time to come—he would not have the courage. And when he stretched himself on the bed made on the bench, gazing through the window at the darkness outside, a long unknown, painful little fear stole into his heart. The kind that used to worry him when as a child he did something wrong and was scolded, "you'll either mend your ways or leave this house..."

It was long past midnight when he was able to fall asleep.

THE TWO BOLYAIS

by

LÁSZLÓ NÉMETH

When the first biographer of the two Bolyais, prompted partly by interest displayed abroad, wrote his book sixty-five years ago, he pointed out in the preface that of the names of some 700 scientists—which he had obviously gleaned from the Index of some contemporary history of science—that figuring on the title-page of his work was the only Hungarian one.

The situation is not much better today, though the histories of science now carry a greater blame. The name of Bolyai, however, is not one which can ever be avoided. János Bolyai, the founder of non-Euclidean geometry, marks the outset of the revolution that was to change our conception of space. Combined with the name of Lobatchevsky, the professor at Kazan (just as that of Mendeleyev is linked with the name of Lothar Meyer, or of Joule with that of Robert Mayer), the name of Bolyai represents a fine symbol of the simultaneous maturing of scientific ideas, of an epoch-making discovery arrived at independently by two or more people.

The two Bolyais—Farkas, the father, and János, the son—are, however, of concern not only to Hungarians who cherish their national traditions, nor even to mathematicians, out to trace the development of their science, but to all educated people interested in the secrets of inheritance and talent, in the maturing of scientific ideas, in matters of education and the tragedies of human destinies. For the fact that, at the height of the fashion for biographic fiction, the great European masters of that art have not yet discovered the romance of the Bolyais, there can I think, be no other explanation than the isolation of our language and the difficulty of access to the appropriate documents.

Our aim is not to substitute this essay for their work, but merely to draw attention to the destinies of these two great men, which in some respects reflect those of their nation.

Farkas Bolyai was born in 1775, under the reign of Maria Theresa, in a small village in Transylvania, which was then under Hungarian rule and governed as a separate Province of the Hapsburg State. The village bore the name of their family and Farkas's father was a nobleman of the poorer set, who also held some sort of office in the county's administration. He had his son educated at Nagyenyed, which was then the students' town of Transylvania. In accordance with the customs of the time, the extraordinarily talented lad was engaged as a studying companion to the son of Baron Kemény, a Transylvanian aristocrat. The two boys struck up a friendship that was to last till the end of their lives. They studied together at Nagyenyed, then went together to Kolozsvár, where they savoured the somewhat more lively air of the rule of Joseph II. Together they went to the German universities—to Jena, where Farkas attended lectures by Fichte and admired Schiller, and to Göttingen, where his interest finally turned towards mathematics and where he became a friend of Gauss, who was two years his junior.

The two young men, the staid and reserved Gauss and the flamboyant and communicative Bolyai, held each other in high esteem. "You are a genius", said Gauss as he listened to his friend, while walking along the bastions. "Your son will become the world's greatest mathematician", Bolyai reassured the old peasant woman, when he visited Brunswick and she interrogated him about her son's prospects. When Bolyai left for Hungary in 1799, the two young men presented each other a pipe and agreed to think of each other when smoking those pipes on the last day of each month.

We do not know how long Gauss smoked his pipe. Bolyai preserved his as a souvenir till his old age, though the thoughts that the smoke conjured up must have made a comparison of their two careers ever more painful. In one or two years' time Gauss was to finish his *Disquisitiones* and to achieve world fame by computing the course of the planet Ceres. He was appointed to a Chair at Göttingen, and not even the Napoleonic age could permanently interrupt the upward trajectory of his path. Bolyai, who first worked as a tutor at Kolozsvár, married the daughter of a surgeon-barber, farmed on his mother's estate at Domáld, then in 1804, after some hesitation, sacrificed his solitude and became for nearly half a century the professor of mathematics, physics and chemistry at the Calvinist College of Marosvásárhely. His marriage was not a happy one. His wife first embittered his life with her tempers, and later required nursing as a pathological schizophrenic. The devaluation of the currency in 1811 and the subsequent wave of high prices, the loss of value of his salary plunged Bolyai into grave financial difficulties. The ambition and the scientific plans he had brought with him from Göttingen were frittered away in the drudgery of money-making.

His only pride, of which he could boast to Gauss, was his son János, whose talent he recognized at an early stage and carefully fostered. After the lad had completed his secondary schooling (this then took place at the age of about 16), he had wanted to send him to Gauss. The correspondence of the two friends had, however, flagged for some years then, and Gauss failed to answer two consecutive letters. Finally Farkas, with the help of his aristocratic friends, sent his son to the Military Engineering Academy at Vienna. This was the place where, in that period, mathematical education reached its highest level in the Monarchy. At this school for the *élite*, János was among the very best, and it was here that he took up the problem that was ultimately to lead to the elaboration of non-Euclidean geometry. Of the discovery itself, he wrote to his father in 1823, while serving as a sub-lieutenant at Temesvár.

János spent no more than ten years with the army. During this time he roamed from one Hungarian or Galician garrison to the next and though this was the period during which he matured and shaped his absolute geometry, he acquired a name at home mainly through his duels.

Meanwhile his health failed him and in order to gain the peace required for his research work, he had himself pensioned off. His father had married a second time and again been left a widower. The quieter years and the livelier intellectual atmosphere of the Reform Era in Hungary, of which something had also reached Transylvania, now presented more favourable conditions for the father's mathematical investigations and he wrote several textbooks, including his main work on the fundamentals of mathematics, the *Tentamen*. It was to this book that his son's paper, the *Appendix*, was published as a supplement. A separate copy was, on János' request, sent by Farkas Bolyai to Gauss, who recognized its significance, but did not call the attention of the scientific world to a work that would thus have preceded the results of his own research.

In 1832 János, as a retired Captain of Engineers, returned to Marosvásárhely and spent two years under his father's roof. These two years were quite sufficient utterly to ruin relations between the two men, who spent a part of each day before the blackboard in the father's study. Their relations became particularly tense when János wanted to marry against his father's wishes and the latter was not able or not willing to put up the sum which it was then necessary for officers to deposit when they married. Finally János absconded with his sweetheart and, upon the intervention of his uncle, was given the estate at Domáld as his refuge. He lived there for twelve years, with his illegitimate family and his Saxon serfs. Among one completed and several unfinished mathematical works, it was also here that he conceived of the plan of his *Science of Salvation*, which aimed at educating people for a more rational and a happier life by means of a religion of science, reminiscent of that of Comte.

In 1846 Farkas, declaring that his son was plunging the estate into ruin, let it to a tenant, while János had a house built at Marosvásárhely. This was where he led an ever more eccentric life, of which only the scandals of his family life became public knowledge. Giving the state of his health as an excuse, he did not participate in the Hungarian War of Independence of 1848—49, though, according to one source, he offered at an officers' meeting to stake his life on the fact that he would drive the Austrians out of Transylvania—provided he was given full powers.

After the defeat of Hungary's struggle for freedom the lives of the two Bolyai's became darker still. For two years Farkas had to administer all the affairs of the College more or less by himself. Many of the students have been killed in battle, many were in hiding, of the five professors one was in prison, and another was hanged. Later he retired and at the age of 82 died of a cerebral haemorrhage. János tried to restore his own health with Priessnitz's impossible cures. He devoted all his remaining energies to the hopeless work of preparing his *Science of Salvation*. His family life was terminated by mutual agreement, in which he ceded his house and a part of his modest pension to his wife and children, and himself lived in a hired cottage on the fringe of the town, where a serf girl looked after him. It was this simple girl who was, a hundred years ago, to notify his younger brother of János's death, and she was to be the only person able to give information when foreign travellers, many years later sought for the grave of the author of the *Appendix*.

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Those who are interested in tracing the biological conditions for exceptional feats in the histories of highly talented families, will find it particularly exciting to peruse the sources on the two Bolyais. The very fact that two such people could have been father and son, is itself noteworthy. Political history contains numerous instances of this kind, the history of art fewer, but that of science has hardly one or two—the only one that comes to my mind now is that of the Bernouilli family.

That this was an extravagance of nature that recurred in two generations is shown by the very fact that Farkas and János both were child prodigies. Farkas was taken from room to room by the senior students at Nagyenyed, when he was a boy of eight or nine, to astonish the rest. He spoke fluently in Latin verse, extracted square and cube roots from fourteen-figure numbers in his head, and after studying Greek for six weeks recited Homer by heart. These performances had their detrimental results in that the overstrained brain started to create hallucinations and the little lad had visions of Achilles and the other Greek heroes in his chamber.

János was, perhaps, an even more astounding a prodigy, though not quite so spectacular. In him his father recognized the gifts—at a very early age—which were later to give birth to his discovery. He was only five years old when Farkas, in a letter to Gauss, enumerated some of the signs which led him to suppose that his son had an exceptional bent for geometry. He inscribed geometrical figures in the pictures of the constellations, deduced that Jupiter must be very far indeed, if it appeared to be in the same place from both Domáld and Marosvásárhely, cut out geometrical shapes from paper and in so doing noticed the relation between a square and a right-angled isosceles triangle. From his exclamations while carving up a potato it turned out that for all his father's warnings to proceed more slowly, he was acquainted with the concepts not only of the angle but also of its sine.

Farkas, the wiser for his own childhood experiences, endeavoured rather to retard his son's intellectual development and took care to see that his body should also have its due. The little boy hoed by his side in the garden. When, however, he entered College and his father also began to teach him, János progressed very rapidly. His instant comprehension ("swift as a devil", his father wrote) enabled him to cut ahead of explanations and demand that they proceed further. As a lad of twelve or thirteen he was familiar with higher mathematics and there were instances when he delivered lectures to the older students instead of his father.

Even more interesting perhaps from the genetical point of view is a comparison of the two talents. Whether Farkas' talent for mathematics equalled that of János is a matter of dispute. The achievement of János stands clearly before us, while the approaches and guesses of Farkas, which were definitely in advance of his times, have not yet been satisfactorily examined against the background of the history of nineteenth-century mathematics. János himself, who was his father's severest critic, never doubted the equality of their rank and spoke in terms of praise of the magnificent ideas in the *Tentamen*. If, however, it should prove that as a mathematician he was inferior to his son not only in his achievements, but also in his talent—it is certain that he not only surpassed but was able even to depress János with the variety of his knowledge, the breadth of his compass and the overall qualities of his mind.

Variety does not in this case imply his simply being a polyhistor who had expanded his memory's capacity to the detriment of his other intellectual powers. Farkas gave evidence of his creative power in nearly all the fields in which talent is wont to develop. Not only was his literary learning very broad, but also his letters, plays and even his mathematical works are full of most powerfully composed sentences that could be quoted as maxims. He not only understood a number of foreign languages, but spoke and wrote in Hungarian, Latin and German with equal ease. He spoke Rumanian like a native and had been conversant with Greek, Hebrew and French from childhood, translating—and quoting freely—also from English. When he was forced by financial difficulties to think about building a stove, he constructed one that was so excellently designed that architectural literature to this day carries descriptions of the "Bolyai stove". As a technician he amazed the people of Marosvásárhely by constructing a self-driven machine and a holiday home that could be erected on a cart. As a farmer he planted a model orchard and conducted a stream across his estate, while corresponding with Gauss about a mechanical means for installing a waterfall. He not only had prescriptions for all sorts of diseases, but discharged sparks through melancholy patients, had his deceased wife dissected in his own garden and sent the detailed findings to his son. At one time he had prepared to become a painter, learned to play the cello as a grown-up, and even gave lessons in the theory of music.

Farkas was what could be called a "great brain", while János was the embodiment of that favourite word of the nineteenth century: a genius. His scale of talents was, however, far from being so wide. He composed his *Appendix* in terse Latin, as an officer was perfect at German, read French, but was never able to attain the linguistic knowledge of his father. His complete lack of interest in literature had struck his father in his childhood—later it was to become a veritable antipathy. He considered the poison of romantic literature to be a public catastrophe, for it made the overdue rational reorganization of life impossible. He took a volume of verse from the hands of the student who was keeping vigil by his father's bed when he was about to die (the lad was reading one of our great national poets who had then emerged). Walking up and down in the snowy garden he passionately explained to him how literature had spoiled and frittered away his father's talent. Though he was an engineering officer, his record sheet says that he solved even smaller technical problems imperfectly. His only architectural construction, the house at Marosvásárhely, appears to have had more eccentricity than architectural merit about it. As a farmer, his father said, he ruined the estate at Domáld; and there is no sign that he had ever been particularly interested in other branches of natural science.

Of the gifts of his father two remained, and were augmented in extraordinary measure in the son; those for mathematics and for music. By the time he was twelve or thirteen, János was playing the violin in orchestras, and on one occasion even took over the part of the leader of the orchestra during the performance. In Vienna even the Emperor is said to have asked who had played the solo part. It was especially his virtuosity that aroused amazement, for he achieved his greatest successes with the pieces of his diabolically clever contemporary, Paganini. His father recommended him even towards the end of their lives to perform at concerts if he wanted to make money. The third, the most spectacular and fearsome of his accomplishments was of fencing. His temperament and moral sensibility saw to it that this amazing gift should not remain a mere sporting activity. He fought numerous duels, including some that were fatal, without receiving so much as a scratch. It was especially his serial duels that became extraordinarily famous. According to the legend perpetuated at Marosvásárhely he would consume only a glass of ice-cream between two duels.

This narrowing and at the same time sharpening of his father's faculties directs attention towards the mother. We do not know much about János' unfortunate mother Zsuzsanna Benkő, but that little is enough to give us an idea of her intellectual stature. The daughter of the surgeon of Kolozsvár did not stem from a dull-witted family of Philistines. Of the nine children of her mother she was the last to die. The rest included a convert to Catholicism who became a friar; a renegade to the Turks; an officer who made his fortune with the Prussians; a brother who committed suicide and another who was a drunkard. She herself, before she went mad, tormented her husband with her jealousy. Farkas' jokes irked her profoundly and the lack of money, which was frequent in the house, made her shrewish. She was otherwise a chaste woman and a good housewife who, as a young girl, had sung from scores and played the piano. Her husband, as a matter of psychological interest, recorded her words when she had become insane. These too go to show that the quarrelsome woman was no mean intellect. The smooth-flowing poetic sentences obviously had their origin in her previous sentiments, and her life with her husband had also left its mark, for she developed her megalomaniac ideas in geometrical pictures.

Farkas had a son also by his second marriage. The father, who had been disappointed in his genius son, did not find it difficult to make an honest average man of Gergely, his second offspring. His mother's heritage in

János, however, not only left a part of his father's faculties intact, but also seems to have furnished them with more impetuous and at the same time cooler reflexes. It is a striking fact that the characteristic feature of all three of his gifts was speed: quick comprehension, musical virtuosity and rapid movements. There is no doubt that János inherited the core of his talents from his father, but the modifying effect of the maternal part swept the two men so far asunder that they became more or less typological opposites of one another.

What were the main differences?

1. Farkas's physique, too, was powerful, suited to constant activity and a long life. When his father died, János wrote with jealous irony that if he had not been so temperamental he could have lived longer even than Methuselah. His father wrote of János as a strapping young lad, and there was no trouble with his health while he was young. By the time he was thirty, however, he fell ill and during the struggle for freedom in 1848 he wrote of himself as of a completely crippled person.

2. Accordingly, the talents of the two men reached their peaks at different ages. Farkas was past fifty when he wrote his most mature works, while János took the step which was to bring world fame to his name at the age of twenty-four (we have no reason to doubt this), while serving as a sub-lieutenant at Temesvár. He was thus one of Abel Galois' "young" talents, who later endeavoured with desperate discipline and little visible result to maintain the level he had achieved with his first brave leap.

3. His versatility made Farkas too inconsistent. A new task would require the use of new faculties and he enjoyed exercising them. When he was of the age when he had to choose a vocation, he decided within a single year's time to become a theologist, then a painter of historic scenes, an actor, an artillery officer and finally a mathematician. Later, when he was in financial straits, the incentive of a literary competition prompted him to write five plays; he built stoves; and, in the hope of a well-paid job, acquired a forester's qualifications. János was able, not only at the time of his great discovery but also later, to concentrate in a nearly maniac manner on a single purpose, even if that purpose was erroneous or hopeless.

4. Farkas was, despite a certain tendency towards melancholy, which was apparent more from his statements than from his way of life, a man with a healthy mind. In János, his mother's schizophrenia was latently present from his twenties, and though it was never able completely to overcome him, his many eccentric habits, his apparent cruelty, his frigidity can also be interpreted as symptoms of the struggle between a well-ordered geometer's mind and the latent disease.

5. Farkas loved company. The former tutor became the entertainer of an *élite* Transylvanian circle, he also had brainy and travelled colleagues at the College of Marosvásárhely; moreover he enjoyed universal love and respect as a man who was glad to help, to explain things and to keep the interests of the small town stimulated through his telescopes, machines, and so on. In his childhood, János too, visited the chambers of the students to play chess, but his duels were the first indications of his mother's eruptiveness and when he came to Marosvásárhely and later to Domáld, his contempt for both the Count and the Philistines, his illegitimate marriage, his reputation for duelling and later his eccentric way of life served increasingly to isolate him from the country society, which also condemned him in his law-suit against his father and continued to speak of him as an ungrateful monster even after his death.

6. Farkas was a favourite with the women. His son wrote about how he displaced the bored and boring youths in the graces of one lady after another, even in his old age. The youthful János was cautioned against women by his father, and we may well presume romances behind his duels too. The fact that he could get a nobleman's daughter, Róza Orbán, to abscond with him and descend to what was surely considered by her family concubinage indicates that he possessed considerable masculine charm, or at least besieging passion. Then, however, he remained for nearly twenty years in this constantly deteriorating liaison and finally died under the care of a simple serf girl.

7. Farkas was fond of asserting his stoical principles, but this was, in fact, more like a part that his romantic, histrionic personality liked to act. János lived a truly stoical life. Money dissolved in Farkas' hands in the same way as time did, in the course of a lifetime spent in conversation. János, with his ascetic selfsufficiency on the other hand, took care to see that financial worries should not distract him from essential tasks and preserved his time for his world-saving ideas in jealous seclusion.

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These two men, however, were linked not only by the chemistry of inheritance, but also by the father's tremendous passion for teaching, which determined both their fates.

In the years when his son's talents became increasingly obvious and inspired rising hopes, Farkas had ever more reason for feeling that he himself was a failure. The letter in which he tells of his son's surprising gifts came only a few years before that in which Gauss demonstrated the fault in his reasoning over parallel lines, upon which he had staked his youth. When János was already studying Vega's *Higher Mathematics* and stunning the audiences at concerts and the aristocratic friend who had come for the grape harvest with his violin, Farkas, hemmed in by his wife and the mother-in-law who had been forced by circumstances to come and live with them, was building stoves, improvizing plays and sinking ever deeper into debt. When he was receiving the best news about János from Vienna, including a statement full of admiration from the Archduke who was at the head of the Institute, he had to listen to the chanting and cursing of an insane woman, so that even decades later his sleepless head was filled with the recitations of those nights. It is understandable then that the father, who had been contemplating suicide and whose son was the link that bound him to the world, gradually transposed his own ambitions into his son. In one of his letters he called him his *Continuatio* through whom alone he could now triumph.

The letters which he wrote to his son in Vienna give an idea of the relation between the two men. Like the erstwhile friends at Göttingen, they too numbered their letters. The last pair of numbers, during the third year of the period in Vienna, was 31—20. The father had written thirty-one letters, the son twenty. We must not, of course, imagine short little notes. The postage fees were sums that were not too easy for the professor at Marosvásárhely to pay, so that he rather wrote more infrequently, then, however, sending off lengthy epistles with tiny letters that strain the eye, though even so the postmaster would disapprovingly weigh the thick packets. If this correspondence had been preserved in its entirety, it would be one of the most significant documents of Hungarian literature. Unfortunately only about ten of the father's letters and a few fragments have been found, but even these are enough to permit us to recognize his feelings in the advice, the apprehensions and the information sent after his far-away son.

It is rare for one man to care for another, in so many respects, particularly in the case of so exceptional a personality. Relations between János and his mother were very poor indeed. The insane woman's thoughts were later frequently preoccupied with her distant son, but she was never able to get on with him when they were together. Farkas wrote of her that she was a bad mother; at the same time he considered that his son's worst fault was that he was disobedient with respect to his mother. It was, in fact, highly probable that the two impetuous characters would not get on with one another. The woman, even if she loved her son, was incapable of lasting tenderness and care for him, while the son took the side of his more convivial and impressively witty father in the quarrels between his parents. The father thus also took over the mother's part with regard to his son. His letters are full of advice of a kind that is generally only to be found in the injunctions of worried mothers, who feel they are one with even the bodies of their offspring. (On what to eat and drink, how to make his bed, that he should put out his hands ahead of him if he gets up at night, and so on.) Here, of course, they are set down by a professor, frequently in the style of text-books on hygiene. The spectrum of injunctions then ranges from maternal anxiety to paternal advice on how to exploit the new and great opportunities ahead of him; on the fact that if he proves his mettle here, he can count on rapid advancement in life; on how to obtain favours from his patrons in Vienna. Then there is the professional part: which works by Euler and Lagrange he should borrow from the library and from which of the professors who taught him he should try and profit. Finally there was the mathematical content of the letters: the son's problems and his father's answers.

An institute of the sort to which János was sent, naturally has its own arrangements and spirit which far more closely determine the lives of the pupils than letters from a father who is several hundred miles away. It is, however, from these advices, sent by the lonely father to his son, that we can understand how his passion for education, how yearning for the subject of which it had been deprived, must have filled his whole life. Particularly moving are the letters in which he tried to protect his son—whom he imagined as though traversing a battlefield, crossed by bullets his son could not see—from the dangers of his new environment and inherent in his own quick temper. These dangers became ever more concrete as the years went by. They were: duelling and women. The fact that his son completed his studies and proceeded to Temesvár as a sub-lieutenant only served to increase the father's anxiety. Hitherto he had, after all, been in a garden whose wall it was difficult for thieves to scale, while now he would every day have to stand steadfast unaided. The father would have liked to preserve his son's youth for his mathematical career, and set before the young officer the image of the chaste Newton. To frighten him off, he sent him to visit a hospital for venereal diseases, and in his letters he even described marriage as an impediment to genius.

It would be interesting also to see the counter-letters and read how the student at the engineering school and later the young officer received these counsels. Unfortunately only one fragment has been preserved—that in which János announced his great discovery. The picture, however, which the father drew of the officer who paid a visit to his family in the winter of 1825, has been left to posterity. When he had gone up to Vienna he was sixteen—now he was twenty-three. Farkas was then newly married, only a few weeks had passed since the no longer quite young daughter of the local ironmonger had become his wife. His real love, however, and this his letters also showed, was still his son, about whom he now wrote with the triumph of a father and of a teacher to an intimate friend of his years of gloom.

"He is a well developed, tough, handsome youth, in whom the courage of the adolescent has blended well with the bashfulness of innocence. He does not play cards, drink wine, liquor or coffee, and does not shave, for he only has down. He is an extraordinary mathematician, a real genius, an excellent violinist and likes the army very much. The only thing he likes better is leisure for his work, although he has already done much work in his spare time". In other words, he had not been mistaken in his earlier feelings and had not wasted his efforts to educate his son, he had not written his many injunctions by candle-light in vain. He had brought up a son who was adored by the Countesses at the carnival and in whom the flame of genius burned under the glass cover of innocence. It is true that there was also a storm in the course of his few weeks' visit. The son did not receive what he had counted on from his father as to the most important point, the matter of his discovery, and it may be that it was his anger over this that prompted him to embarrass his father by demanding his mother's heritage—small as it was. This, however, did not make the father suspicious. "My volcano of a son went away pacified", he wrote to the same friend, making even the volcanic temperament seem more like something to be proud of.

Another seven years passed, during which father and son only met once, when János travelled from his garrison in Southern Hungary to his new station at Lemberg. During these seven years nothing happened that would have forced the proud father to abandon the idealized conception of his son, in favour of that of the considerably changed man he had become. The news of duels and love affairs that reached him was counterbalanced by the fact that these were the seven years during which the idea born at Temesvár matured into the crystal-clear theses of the *Appendix*. Their relations to each other were unchanged even in that it was the father, preparing to publish his *Tentamen*, who extracted the paper from his son with the prophetic warning that there is a time for the maturing of every idea and that if he did not hurry, others might precede him.

All the bewilderment, resentment and indignation that this teacher's love was to cause the father, overwhelmed him in the two years which the son, after his return to Marosvásárhely, spent in his widower's household. At the outset he was startled by the fact that János had so lightly abandoned his career in so promising a vocation. The young man was, however, obviously ill and had arrived with a touch of the ague. Farkas also understood that János needed peace for his work. Perhaps he was also attracted by the scientific adventure that was proferred him, by the old blackboard, on which they could now set out their problems as mathematicians of equal rank, for apart from his own pupils there was no one in Transylvania with whom he could talk about mathematics.

His disappointment was rapid and profound. The fault may, apart from their quick tempers, also have lain in the unhealthy fixation of the teacher-pupil relation between them. Though Farkas now in principle recognized that his son was an adult, the inertia of his parent's heart nevertheless made him feel he was still a teacher responsible for his pupil's intellectual progress, who must prune his son's exaggerations and protect him from taking false steps. János, on the other hand, perhaps precisely because he was vexed by his instinctive respect for his father, answered the attempts to teach him by adopting a tone of superior professional knowledge and striking his father to the heart with his criticism. The fourteen years they had spent apart from each other had trained János not only to become an excellent swordsman, but also always to be "on guard." Now he practiced upon his father the power of his sharp eye and his reflex-like strokes at defenceless spots. And there were plenty of undefended spots about Farkas: his inconsistency, which prevented him from concentrating his talents on one point; his romantic play-acting, his histrionics; the wooden urn in which he preserved the ashes of the poems that he had burned; the coffin that was always there in his room; the ostentatious foundation he established for the poor at a time when he was engrossed in debts and his family was in the sorriest plight. János also looked upon Farkas' company with a different eye. To the plebeian mind of János the Keménys, Telekis and other aristocrats of whose friendship Farkas was proud and towards whom he felt a deep gratitude which he thought his son ought to share, were parasites living upon the people who only returned, through their charities, a hundredth part of what they had taken, while his father was their cheap entertainer and clown.

This criticism, with its mask of geometrical objectivity, was of course also nurtured by profound grievances. There is written evidence of what János Bolyai thought of himself at this time. He considered that he was the regenerator of mathematics who had, by his first step, solved a problem over which the greatest brains of two thousand years had failed. Farkas, who did not recognize the full scope of the *Appendix*, tried to put the brakes on this tremendous self-esteem. When János was carried away by his fancy, Farkas would interject that after all he and Gauss were also mathematicians. János attributed this to jealousy and envy. The fact that he chose a bride who was not to his father's liking introduced further explosive material into the household of widower and bachelor. Farkas had in any case liked to caution his son against that in which he had twice been unlucky himself but this particular marriage he felt it was his duty to prevent. To the misfortune of both of them, János was, in more than one way, dependent on his father's likes and dislikes. An idea may be gained of the sort of scenes that took place between the two impetuous men from the belief that was general in Marosvásárhely, and which has also been confirmed by the younger of the Bolyai brothers, namely, that János challenged his father to a duel.

Farkas never forgot the blows which he received in this contest from the hand that hurt most and in the spots that were the most sensitive. When the Academy, many years later, asked for his autobiography among the troubles that impeded his work he alluded in the first place to the mortal wound "whose bandage cannot be concealed from the light of day, but which can also not be uncovered." He truly suffered more than those parents who place their transplanted ambitions in children that are unworthy of them. What he had so carefully and with such unparallelled success polished, had become for him a mirror that reflected only his own human weaknesses and his professional failure with deadly accuracy. At the same time he must also have noticed the resemblance between his temperamental son and the mother, who still haunted his nights—a resemblance that threatened to destroy all the fruits of his own pedagogical work. In a letter to Gauss he complained of the incredible ingratitude that had made a King Lear of him and also voiced the suspicion that his son would, perhaps lose his mind as the mother had done.

János did not exhibit his wounds in public, unlike his father who converted every difficult situation into a scene from a tragedy. The son, on the contrary, made it a matter of some pride that he thought of the affairs between the two of them as of just another geometrical problem. Under this cold surface, however, he was perhaps even more tormented by suspicion and injury. There was no one who knew his father better than he. The respect for him which had evolved in his childhood did not cease later. He considered him an excellent educator. In his biography he wrote that it was better that he had remained his student, rather than that he should have gone to study under Gauss. And this very same man, who had helped him develop, failed—for sheer envy—to recognize that in which the son had become his superior. In preventing his marriage, moreover, he had meanly made him a social outcast. János, in his youth, had become accustomed to identifying his father with fate and now that this fate turned against him, he looked for the older man behind it, instead of the circumstances, including even his own ill-health.

Nevertheless, however much they wounded each other, the two men could not break away completely from each other. The father still refused to put up the deposit for his son's marriage but was also unable to acquiesce in the pernanent entombment of the soul whose blossoming he had watched and helped, among his illegitimate family and his Saxon serfs. Of the two of them it was Farkas who was in contact with society, it was he who received the news of the scientific world that reached him after delays of several years, and passed all this on to his son. The notes passed between Marosvásárhely and Domáld, neither salutation nor final greetings, nor personal communications, but only problems and formulas, are touching mementoes of this scholarly link that transcended personal animosity.

It was also Farkas who let János know of the competition announced by the Mathematical Society of Leipzig, for the interpretation of imaginary numbers. And on this occasion, they met. János went into town, and father and son decided they would both compete. The New Year of 1842 brought an exchange of friendly greetings, with a wish that was characteristic of Farkas: before he died, he would like to see another *Appendix*. János now spent a longer period with his father. But even chance did not favour their peace. János discovered in his uncle's effects a letter which his father had written. It was about the competition, which was not won by either of them, but by a third, far less significant Hungarian. According to Farkas his son had lied to him, had said he was not, after all, going to despatch his entry, though the post office had already notified him—Farkas—of its receipt, while the entry itself was poor, and that was why it had not been considered. We also have a draft by János, in which he defended his work and his character—for the untruth had really been an insignificant one. The entry itself was excellent, but difficult to understand, and is now compared with the similar work by the mathematician Hamilton.

The relations between father and son once more deteriorated and perhaps this also contributed to Farkas's giving credence to the neighbours at Domáld, as a result of which János, with his wife and three children, had to leave the estate.

Now the two men were once more living in the same town, sometimes entering the famous library of Marosvásárhely at the same time; and what Farkas saw of the life of his son mingled more and more sorrow and pity into his long-standing anger. The illegitimate marriage, which had shocked the Philistines, deteriorated more and more completely. The children witnessed fights between the parents, and János, fearful of his wife's hatred, kept his manuscripts under lock and key. The father no longer had much hope of seeing a second *Appendix* while he lived. János became ever more engrossed in his *Science of Salvation*, of which Farkas did not know much, but which he obviously considered pure megalomania. Though he still wrote to his friends abroad that János was engaged on work of great promise, he himself no longer really believed in János's "announcements". He considered him a sick, nervously deranged invalid, whom he could only help in catering for his physical needs. He sent him glasses, for in the library he noticed that János was long-sighted, and also prescriptions against the skin disease that tormented him. To enable him somehow to order his family life, he finally put up the deposit—in 1848, the very year which was so decisive for all Hungarians. The authorities had, of course, other matters to attend to than to deal with marriage licences.

János, too, had put an end to their strife. If anyone happened to mention their quarrels, he would answer in surprise, alluding to the relations between the two brothers Bernouilli, that he had long ceased to know of any "Bernouillism" between the two of them. Nevertheless, we have several pieces of evidence to show how deep suspicion between them was. When Farkas, at the very time the Imperial General Gedeon was ransacking Marosvásárhely, sent him the German edition of Lobatchevsky's work perhaps in order to goad the mathematician in him, János wrote his reply in the conviction that the name of Lobatchevsky covered that of Gauss, to whom his father had given away his discovery. Or when the Commanding Officer at Nagyszeben, after the defeat of the War of Independence, rejected his marriage application and threatened to deprive him of his pension if he did not dissolve his illegitimate marriage, he even thought that the person who had informed the authorities could only have been his father. After breaking with his family, János was again homeless, but now he did not even consider moving to his father's vacant and spacious house. Instead, he preferred to live in a hired cottage out at the edge of the cemetery. And it was not only at his father's deathbed that he struggled with his spirit but, as his letters to his younger brother Gergely show, the Old Man, and the part he had played in their lives, continued to be his central theme later on. By now he considered that the Old Man had ruined not only his life, but also those of all who lived with him —of his two wives and his sons. Nevertheless, he intended when he once finished his *Science of Salvation*, to dedicate it to his father's memory.

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The bilateral chemical reaction started in two such different and yet, in their outstanding features, so closely related people by the love of learning, would itself merit a many-sided study. These two men, however, were bound together not only by the unparallelled intensity of the relations between father and son and by their identical vocations, which made them dependent upon each other, but by one and the same problem, perhaps the most startling of any that have germinated in man's brain, one whose solution is the most wonderful of all.

Science achieves its results by systematically counterpoising the imaginable, against the extant. Hypothesis casts out its net over reality, while the signals from reality modify or give a new impetus to hypothesis. The steps which have been the most difficult to take in science, and which are therefore the most significant, have invoked the transformation of hypotheses that have been absorbed most deeply by, and have become more or less a second nature to, our thinking. The first of these transformations in the modern age was the discovery of Copernicus. It was he who rejected the hypothesis then present in every human brain, i. e., that the stationary earth was the centre of the rotating universe. A similarly thoroughgoing change was wrought by the solution of problem to which the two Bolyais devoted their lives (especially if we also consider the work of Riemann and Einstein). The third has perhaps been the leap taken by Planck, who ventured to postulate the discrete, atomic structure of energy.

The leaps made by Copernicus and by Planck (and even that by Einstein) differ on a most important point from that taken by János Bólyai and, contemporaneously, by Lobatchevsky. Copernicus, and particularly Kepler, had been forced by the increasing complexity of astronomical theories, the epicyclic trajectories of the planets, Planck by the surprising energy distributions of radiating hot bodies, Einstein by the constancy of the velocity of light (in systems moving in various directions), to impinge on the basic postulates. In each case the imaginable was shaped by the observation of reality. The revolution of non-Euclidean geometry, on the other hand, took place *within the imaginable itself*. Reason became suspicious of its own postulate. The elder Bolyai was a tragic champion of this suspicion, of the uneasiness that arose from it, of the struggle waged against it. His son proved that the suspicion was justified and removed its cause.

The survey of land by the eastern peoples became a science—that of geometry—when brains trained in abstraction began to derive their theorems no longer from experiences but from a few basic truths that were obvious to the observer. This work was accomplished by generations of Greek scientists, the result of whose labours has descended to us in a closed system, drawn up in Euclid's volumes at the beginning of the Alexandrian Age. The building blocks of which he constructed his geometry are so simple and powerful, that even a mind that is determined to suspect cannot attack them. Euclid called some of these building blocks, postulates: "A straight line may be drawn from any single point to any other point." "All straight lines may be continuously prolonged." "A circle of any radius may be drawn about any centre." Others (the more quantitative ones) he called axioms: "Bodies that are congruent with one and the same body, are also congruent with one another." "The whole is larger than its part". There is, however, one among his postulates, the fifth (the Bolyais, on the basis of another edition, called it the eleventh axiom) which—as had already been noticed in ancient times—is not so simple and does not so forcefully impose itself upon one's visual comprehension. Let us recall the figure which was used at the beginning of our geometrical studies to explain alternate angles. Two parallel straight lines are intersected by a third. The sum of the two internal angles is then, as we were able to show by parallel displacement, equal to 180°. Euclid did not set up his postulate in this form, but rather the other way round: If two straight lines are intersected by a third and the sum of the internal angles is smaller than 180°, the two straight lines will intersect. However, when the sum of the two angles is only very slightly, say by some millionths of a degree, smaller than 180°, this postulate cannot be directly substantiated by visual experience. And if we nevertheless feel it to be natural, the reason is that we have become steeped in the hypothesis that the nature of space is such that this will be true.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, at the time when interest in the theory of knowledge had aroused something like systematic suspicion with regard to our way of thinking, the eleventh axiom of the Bolyais was ever present in the minds of mathematicians. They had built up a science, one of whose cornerstones was suspicious and unreliable. This was the "filth" in geometry, of which Bolyai spoke in a tone approaching passion. The geometers attempted to substitute for this feebler axiom a more obvious one, from which that on parallel lines could be deduced. It became the fashion to set up axioms of this type, and the problem, like that of squaring the circle, also attracted daring amateurs. The elder Bolyai obviously combined the two features: those of a scientist searching for the fundamentals and pained by the lack of them, and of a romantic, willing to try his luck at opening with a single movement what had been sealed for others. This was how he became one of the most determined, most obstinate fabricators of substitute postulates. A letter to Gauss, written in 1804, contains the very precise deduction of one of these substitutes. Gauss, who was himself interested in the problem, immediately pointed out the weak spot in the proof.

The many barren attempts finally convinced Farkas Bolyai that this blemish on geometry could not be made to disappear. We cannot, knowing his communicative nature, presume that he had kept his attempts secret before his son, during the latter's student years at Marosvásárhely. János nevertheless seems to have been prompted to an attempt at solving the problem not by his father, but by his friend, Károly Szász, then living in Vienna. The news of what his son was engaged in, caused the father to fall into a veritable panic. There is, in fact, no more beautiful part of their correspondence than that in which he warned his son against his own dragon. "Do not try the parallels along that path; I know that path to the very end. I too have looked into that bottomless night and all the light and the joy of my life were extinguished in it. I beg you, for God's sake, leave the parallels in peace, have a horror of them as of immoral conversation, for they can have the same effect in depriving you of all your time, your health, your peace and the joy of your whole life. That bottomless darkness conceals perhaps a thousand Newtonian giant towers... Nothing that is of the poor human species will ever be perfectly pure—not even geometry. This is a large and a perpetual wound upon my soul. May God preserve you from it ever penetrating so deep into you... I decided to sacrifice myself... I performed immense, tremendous labours that were very much better than those before, but I have not found a perfect solution."

And again: "Learn from my example, for I, desiring to know the parallels, have remained ignorant. They have robbed me of the flowers of my life and of my time and the root of all my later mistakes was planted here. If I had discovered the parallels, and if no one had come to know that it was I, I would have been an angel."

Obviously though the hand of the dramatist is in these lines, the wound of the scientist and, even more, the anxiety of the father were no less real. As a warning, perhaps also to stimulate increased respect for him, but at least to be able to talk of his favourite theme, he proceeded immediately to adduce examples of his unsuccessful attempts. In the meantime he kept inserting a sentence of warning after each. "This matter contains a circle that ever returns upon itsef. It is an ever treacherous maze. He who enters on it becomes impoverished, like the prospectors for treasure, and remains ignorant. And lest you try to supplement, to complete it, to proceed further, — — hereabouts are the Pillars of Hercules, so do not take another step, for you will be lost."

It is easy to imagine how an obstinate, tenacious and ambitious spirit such as that of János, which, even in old age, was attracted—by then falsely—to what was impossible for others, must have been spurred on by these tragically exaggerated warnings from his father. It was in April 1820 that Farkas wrote this letter and in 1823 that János, the engineering sub-lieutenant of Temesvár wrote the other, in which he announced his victory: "I have nade up my mind to publish a work on the parallels. At this moment the discovery is not yet made, but the path along which I have progressed carries almost certain promise of my reaching the aim. I have not yet attained it, but have developed such magnificent things that I have myself been astonished."

His companion in his first attempts had long dropped away from beside him and he was now sailing alone on the ocean of which his father had warned him. The Pillars of Hercules between which he attained the open sea stood there where, with a daring intellectual leap, he accepted the absurd as being serious. If we presume that the postulate is not true, that the two "rectae" do not intersect even if the "internae" are smaller than two right-angles, then an impossible, self-contradictory geometry must result. But what if it does not? Perhaps we may obtain a self-consistent, closed geometry or geometries with this assumption! The young man of 21 sailed forth on these geometries. It was of this that he wrote the famous sentence: "I have created a new, a different world from nothing. All that I have so far sent has only been a dog's kennel, compared to a steeple."

From this announcement to the publication of the paper on the parallels, the *Appendix*, eight years passed. The booklet of thirty pages gives an idea of the intellectual work which Bolyai had done in the meantime. For in it he set up not only a definition of parallels that was independent of the suspicious axiom and not only described the two systems in which the sum of the internal angles is smaller than two right-angles (this he called S), and the other in which the sum of the internal angles was just two right-angles (this he called Σ). He also worked out how the theorems of trigonometry, of analysis, planimetry, etc., would figure in the new system, what constructions could be performed in it, and what others could not. If we consider the brevity of the papers in which the great achievement of mathematics have been reported—this work, of crystallike lucidity, does not seem too short, nor the eight years too long. We do not, however, know how the pace of his work varied over the eight years. By 1825 he had set down his discovery, but this paper, which he handed over to his former professor, was lost. It is probable that the kernel of the discovery was already present in János's head during the first years, but his thoroughness, the unlimited perspectives of the subject, and his already incipient fatigue might have postponed independent publication to heaven knows when, if the preparation of the *Tentamen* and his father's injunctions had not spurred him to put his thoughts on paper.

Contradictory quotations and facts are available on how Farkas received and how much he understood his son's discovery. Even after János's visit to Marosvásárhely in 1823, he cautioned his son against the parallels. What is more, towards the middle of the thirties he still tried to divert him to the more rewarding field of the integral calculus. All this would go to show that he did not comprehend his son's discovery. The fact, however, that precisely during his sons's visit to Marosvásárhely he wrote in terms of extreme enthusiasm of János' mathematical talent, and that later it was he who forcibly ensured that it should be in his own book that his son should first present his absolute geometry to the world, seems at least to show that he did not consider it an aberration, a mania.

But even though he himself might have had some doubts left of the value of the *Appendix*, these were dispersed by the reception given to it by his friend Gauss, who had long acquired the stature of a "colossus" in his eyes. The correspondence between the two of them had then flagged for some twenty years, because Gauss had repeatedly failed to answer his letters. This time Farkas Bolyai must again have feared the same offensive silence. The fact that he nevertheless sent him the *Appendix*, what is more, since the first copy was lost in the cholera epidemic, that he despatched it twice, can be ascribed to both his paternal love and his mathematical judgement.

Gauss did, in fact, raise his head upon reading the "maiden work" of the young mathematician. Bolyai, who well remembered how he had received his own paper, and was soon to see what niggardly praise would acknowledge his *Tentamen*, must have been the one most intensely to feel the difference. Gauss began by saying that he could not praise János Bolyai's work, for he would then have to praise himself. He too had speculated on the subject and had arrived at similar conclusions, but had not dared to publish them because he feared they would not be understood. He considered, moreover, that János was a brilliant mathematician and even proceeded to give advice on a clearer method of notation. What Farkas, through his lyrical comparisons between the two of them, had never been able to achieve, János had accomplished with his first publication. Gauss spoke of him as mature old men (who are not too generous, but careful of appearances) are wont to do of young men who may become their rivals.

The way, however, in which the two men received Gauss' praise also carried within it the germ of their conflict. The father was content with the answer Gauss had sent and boasted of it to others. He now confidently wrote that the *Appendix* was a work, the like of which had never yet been written by a Hungarian mathematician. To him both the *Appendix* and the letter from Gauss were but links in the chain of paternal glory, similar to the occasions when his little János had outstripped the older students in physics, or when he had astounded the Archduke Johann, the patron of the Military Academy, and the news had been conveyed to the father by the Transylvanian aristocrats who lived in Vienna. Now, of course, the student was somewhat older, and though the subject was one of ill omen, the examination had been more brilliant and the professor was thus the greater. In the hope of further instalments, this praise made him happy and grateful.

Not so János Bolyai. He was by no means so delighted by Gauss' letter, when his father forwarded it to him to the desolate garrison at Lemberg. It is true that in a petition to the Archduke Johann, he referred to it as to the sole argument he could produce to substantiate his greatness. The praise from "Knight and Court Counsellor, Gauss" was, indeed entered upon his record sheet. But in his heart, especially when the letter was not followed by any further steps, and despite, or perhaps just because of, the respect he had learnt in his infancy, he was increasingly infuriated by Gauss' behaviour. If Gauss had, in fact, really trodden the hard but intoxicating path of these ideas, why had he not published them? What sort of argument was it to say people were not ripe for them? Could science subsist, if scientists only dared to publish what others were ready to receive? But if he had himself been startled by what he had been compelled to think, and—János was proud to reflect—there really was in these thoughts a whirlpool of the sort into which the Greek mathematician who recognized the significance of irrational numbers had fallen, then why did he require such caution of braver young men and why did he, as it were, shake his head, instead of admiring and trying to support this daring sally against the lack of understanding?

He had a scale by which to measure what he had done. His father, of whom he so often said that his was the greatest, the most versatile mind he had known, had written that he had buried all his youth, all his self-respect as a scientist in this problem. Yet the son had, with his first great bound, solved this problem for all time, and, as is the ambition of every young man, had vanquished his father, and in this respect even the great Gauss. At least from the letter from Göttingen it appeared that this thought, if he had, indeed, really gone so far, had proved to be too great, too awesome and overwhelming to the mind of even the great Gauss. The absolute scale for his idea was, of course, within himself—in the perspective toward which he had striven and which only he could have known fully.

The letter he wrote to the Archduke Johann in May 1832 has the self-esteem of youth about it, but is also a true appreciation of what he had done. "In the *Appendix* I have, with the greatest possible perfectness, founded, penetrated and elucidated a subject which has ever since the development of geometry by the Greeks, i. e. two thousand years, resulted in complete failure for the incessant labours of the most excellent, the sharpest minds...

"An absolutely new science has thus been founded; which has not even been suspected by any geometers so far, even in regard to its very concept... It seems that only Gauss has taken a few hesitant steps towards this aim, though he was very far from seeing that aim himself." Then, unfortunately, came some exaggeration: "I have, with similar success, analysed a number of other highly important subjects and have thus, so to speak started completely to reshape mathematics, which have so far, as statements by the greatest minds agree, been discussed in a very poor way."

Men, especially noble and excellent men, are often, or perhaps even the most frequently, set against each other, not by their hearts or interests or power of discernment, but by the approach from which they have to view events. To Farkas Bolyai, his own paternal approach dictated this: "When my unfortunate marriage and the financial troubles that accompanied it landed me in a tangle, I transferred my hopes of our two lives to my son. I did all I could, in due time, to train him to be a great mathematician and a pure man. I collected by begging the costs of his studies in Vienna and, not sparing the postage or my eyes, sent my injunctions in his wake. Having profited by my own experience I tried to direct him towards some less dangerous subject than that of the parallels, but when he became obstinate and even there managed to produce something wonderful, I encouraged him to publish it without delay. And if we had not, with letters we ourselves cut, had it set at our primitive printing shop here, who knows whether, with his bent for procrastination, it would ever have appeared? Thanks to my happy years at Göttingen I was able to obtain a critic for him whose encouragement would for me, at his age, have sufficed for two lives. He, however, instead of showing gratitude for all this, tries to make me feel that he has vanquished me, and is so conceited as to imagine that even Gauss envies him and wants to deprive him of his due."

János's approach, on the other hand, was this: "I have solved what he failed to do. And when I happily rushed to him with it, he shrugged his shoulders. He does not understand, or does not wish to understand, what I have accomplished. He would like me to continue to be an "Appendix" so he might set me my lesson, in which I would progress in a praiseworthy manner. He does not want to recognize that the *Appendix* is more than that to which it has been appended. He defends, and tries to present as my well-wisher obtained through his merits his colossus of Göttingen, whose one sentence would have sufficed to call the attention of the whole scientific world to me. But his great friend prefers that I should die here and that he should be able to discover my achievement for the world. That is why he insists that he, too, has progressed along the same path. And if he did progress along it, who knows whether it was not my father who, though he did not himself understand it, guided Gauss' more sensitive mind in this direction?"

Thus did the unfortunate parallels make the paths of these two exceptional men cross ever more acutely. The kernel of the tragedy and of their split—and this is one of the great beauties of the theme of the Bolyais—lies here, in the parallels. Then, of course, life and their divergent natures took over to give this abstract kernel a colourful, human shell and bitter, Hungarian juice.

THE UNKNOWN HAYDN

Haydn as an opera conductor at Eszterháza

by

DÉNES BARTHA

Ever since the industrious C. F. Pohl wrote the first two volumes of his splendid Haydn biography around 1880, the later Haydn biographies consist largely of nothing more than various adaptations of the data elaborated in Pohl's classical work. Research since then has barely produced any essential new additions to Haydn's life and activities.

In the study of Haydn's various compositions as source material, the fundamental research work done by Professor Jens Peter Larsen of Copenhagen yielded such rich results that since their publication (1939—1941) there apparently remained very little research work for posterity to undertake. According to musicological circles Pohl and Larsen both pored over the material of the former Esterházy archives—so rich in Haydn works—very thoroughly, and thus it appeared that the era of extensive Haydn research had come to an end. After the end of the Second World War, the Budapest National Library took possession of the material in the former Esterházy collection. Hungarian research workers, therefore, felt that it was their responsibility to sift through this valuable material once more, and make its treasures available to everybody.

From the standpoint of music history the part of the Esterházy archives which mainly interests us comprises three large groups:

(1) The material of the Haydn collection strictly speaking, which contains the world's richest Haydn autograph collection and which found its way into the prince's archives mostly as Haydn's personal legacy. (Pohl and Larson had thoroughly studied this material at the time, so that we could hardly expect any surprises there).

(2) The documentary collection of the Esterházy archives, which contains numerous interesting data on the musical life of the Esterházy household in the form of letters, official papers, receipts and so forth. (Pohl once dili-

gently delved into this material too, but as has been recently established, he far from exhausted the possibilities, particularly with regard to the operatic life of the Eszterháza theatre. In recent years fresh data have been unearthed in Budapest.)

(3) The musical material of the Esterházy operatic collection, which—in addition to less important earlier and later operas—includes first of all the scores and parts used in the performance of Italian operas produced at Eszterháza under Haydn's direction between 1775 and 1790.

Although the 1779 fire, which destroyed the building of the Eszterháza theatre, also inflicted a certain amount of damage on the operatic material, still the opera repertoire, which Haydn prepared, rehearsed and conducted over a period of more than 15 years at Eszterháza, remains largely intact. When we began to examine these operas more closely, we were amazed to discover that the masters of Haydn research had, thus far, apparently not even looked over this very significant material. Otherwise it would have been impossible for them to miss the startling fact that this whole operatic material fairly abounds in proofs of Haydn's creative work and of his personal interpretations as a conductor; abridgements, additions, improvements, re-orchestrations, and finally complete insert arias and whole new scenes mark the exceptional intensity of Haydn's conducting work. Since the spring of 1958 my talented former pupil and librarian of the musical collection, László Somfai, and myself have spent over one-and-a-half years in a thorough study and systematic elaboration of this material, which has not yet been seen by any modern research worker.

Our first task, naturally, was the chronological arrangement of the opera performances. What we knew about this question up to now was based almost exclusively on the evidence of librettos specially printed for the Eszterháza performances at the time. Pohl enumerated altogether 36 such librettos, but he did not mention either the chronology of the Eszterháza performances or other details. Haydn research workers, following in Pohl's footsteps more or less accepted this rather meagre result, although from the copies of librettos which occasionally came to light it can be concluded that the number of operas performed at Eszterháza under Haydn's direction was in fact much larger than the number listed by Pohl. When the former archivist of the Eszterháza collection, Mr János Hárich, prepared the complete catalogue of the libretto collection around 1940, he was able to list the titles of no less than 51 relevant librettos.

The libretto collection itself perished during the siege of Buda at the end of the Second World War, but the catalogue has survived and is today the source of rich information.

We gradually came to the realization that in Eszterháza, under the direction of Haydn, there existed one of the most important Italian language opera theatres in contemporary Central Europe. This theatre, with the diversity and richness of its programme, rivalled the theatre of the Viennese Court, and at times even surpassed it.

Our task now was first to compile the complete material (copyists' receipts, libretto printing receipts, costume budgets, plans of sets, purchases of operas, and so on), pertaining to the history of the opera performances, compare it with the material of the Esterházy librettos, known today mainly from a list of titles, and finally to compare the chronological material thus gained with the evidence of the musical material which has survived in the music library. By using the most complex methods, we finally succeeded in acquiring the necessary historical data for all the musical material surviving in the library, that is, in determining the exact dates of the performances and revivals. As the result of our year and a half of work we succeeded in obtaining a fairly complete picture of the opera workshop under Haydn's direction, which today constitutes the material of an extensive monograph and was one of the greatest scientific sensations of the 1959 Haydn anniversary.

Here are a few figures from our work: During the 15 years under study, Haydn, without obtaining any assistance worth mentioning from any musician, prepared, rehearsed and conducted no less than 88 *premières*, 6 revivals and countless repertoire productions constantly on the programme at Eszterháza. This does not include some 10 operas, the scores of which he carefully studied and prepared for performances which never took place. We found that at Eszterháza first two and later three opera performances were given each week. On the days in between, prose performances of various theatre companies were presented. There was one year (1786) when in a single season Haydn had to conduct no less than 125 opera performances. The number of *premières* was as follows: in three years (1779, 1782, 1786) there were eight *premières* each; in another four years (1783, 1784, 1788, 1789) there were seven each; whereas in the remaining years the number of *premières* varied between four and six each.

It is little short of miraculous how Haydn could muster the energy, alongside his unflagging work as composer, to accomplish this tremendous task. A practically unknown Haydn is revealed to us in this material which until now was not found worthy of anyone's attention. That Haydn research workers had really never seen this opera treasury is shown by the fact that not one of the scholars mentioned the countless musical alterations which Haydn made in the operas of the early Italian masters (Cimarosa, Piccini, Anfossi, Paisiello, Salieri, Sarti). He unhesitatingly abridged, re-orchestrated, re-fashioned and composed his own insert arias and scenes in scores of operas, and that mostly at a time when he had practically ceased to compose operas of his own.

Haydn research had already established that the composer occasionally enriched the Italian operas presented at Eszterháza with his own insert arias. The literature on Haydn had thus far recorded about a dozen and a half precisely defined insert arias. On the basis of the opera material we have studied, this figure will rise considerably. On the one hand, insert arias, composed by Haydn, have come to light of which research workers had no knowledge whatever, and on the other, an examination of the opera material has made it possible to determine the original purpose and date of origin of all insert arias whose origin had not been established as yet. Thus the great thematic listing of Haydn's works which is now under preparation in Switzerland will be able to profit a great deal from our results too.

In connection with the insert arias, it is curious to note the effects of Haydn's attraction to the Italian singer, Luigia Polzelli, then active at Eszterháza. It was found from a systematic comparison of the music material and the original assignment of the roles that the largest and most significant portion of Haydn's own insert arias were composed expressly for Luigia Polzelli. She was a woman of mediocre musical ability and with a relatively small tonal range. Still Haydn made almost superhuman efforts, by adjusting her part, to suit her register, or by adding an especially varied and rich orchestration, to bring her into sharp relief among her colleagues and draw the attention of Prince Esterházy to her.

An especially interesting episode of our systematic study of this opera material was the problem of Haydn's proposed performance in 1790 of Mozart's "Le Nozze di Figaro." The score and the vocal parts of this masterwork were already purchased in Vienna in July 1789 (exactly on July 14—an interesting coincidence!) for the prince's theatre, obviously for the purpose of having it performed at Eszterháza. In 1790, the instrumental parts were copied, and plans of the *décor* and costumes were also made. In the fragments of musical material that have survived, we find indications regarding the assignment of roles planned by Haydn. But a death which occurred in the prince's family dashed all these plans, so that ultimately (as revealed by our data) not a single operatic work of Mozart's was performed at Eszterháza. This fact gives some food for thought as to whether Haydn's esteem for Mozart's music was really as great as the biographers of the two are wont to believe. In this respect it is noteworthy, for example, that when Haydn, in preparing Anfossi's opera "Le Gelosie Fortunate" for performance in Eszterháza, came across a Mozart insert aria in the score which had been purchased in Vienna (Köchel 541), he did not hesitate very long and in his passion for abridgement ruthlessly wiped Mozart's aria from the score.

It has become evident, therefore, that in Eszterháza Haydn did not simply rehearse and perform the opera repertoire of his contemporaries but in a most far-reaching manner revised and re-arranged the scores obtained from so many sources to suit his own taste. And we need not even wonder at this. Around 1780, when the opera workshop in Eszterháza was in full swing, the *maestro*, who had already reached the height of his musical development, was not satisfied with the fashionable tunes and Mediterranean verbosity of loosely woven though often fascinating works. In this period Haydn's musical diction was already oriented towards high-level symphonic structure and he expected great concentration and conciseness in vocal operatic music too, which he was able to find only in exceptional instances, among contemporary Italian masters (perhaps mostly in the music of the foremost of his contemporaries, Paisiello; characteristically enough, the number of Haydn's arbitrary interventions is the smallest here).

An interesting feature of Haydn's revisions is the fact that the *maestro* consistently required quicker *tempo*s than prescribed by his Italian contemporaries. To mention only an extreme example: in one of the Salieri operas, Haydn with his own hand altered the *tempo* of the original *Andante Maestoso* to *Allegro Vivace*, which was almost tantamount to refashioning the entire character of the piece.

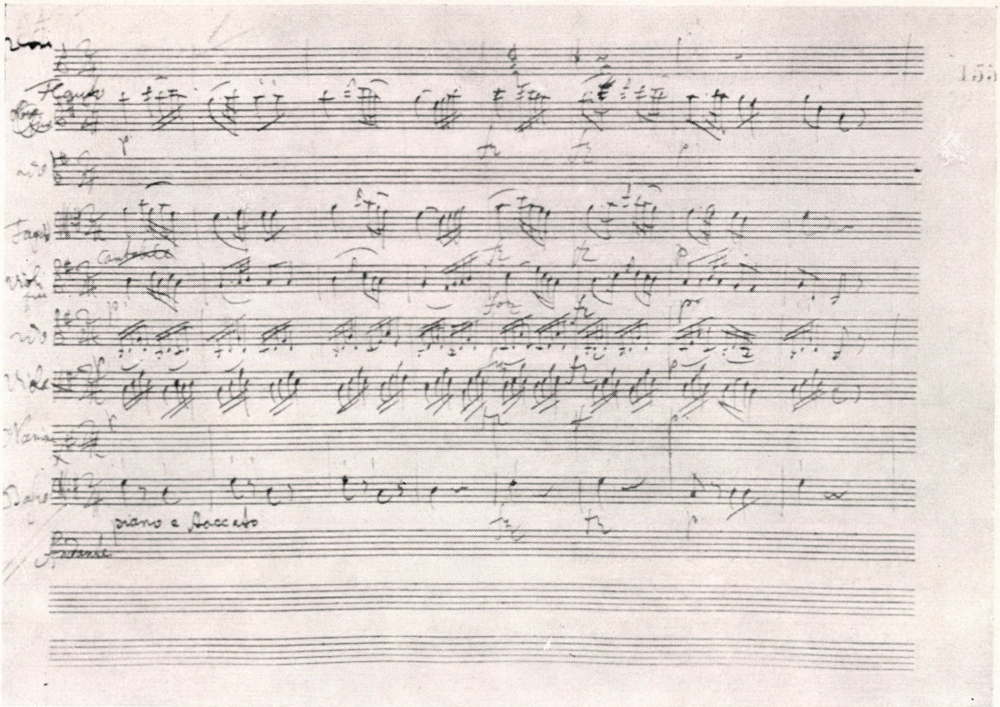
At the same time, Haydn was very often dissatisfied with the orchestration of the Italian operas, in which, as compared with the string *ensemble*, used virtually throughout without pause, the woodwinds were assigned an almost completely subordinate role. Haydn by now already had behind him some 80 symphonies and was just preparing the famous series of symphonic masterworks commissioned in Paris. It is no wonder that he found the constant predominance of the strings in the old Italian operas anaemic and monotonous. Therefore, whenever he could, and had the time—and especially where a Polzelli role was involved—he spared no effort in colouring and enriching the scores of operas performed at Eszterháza with new woodwind parts he himself copied.

These and a profusion of similar new findings constitute the substance of the large monograph now in preparation.

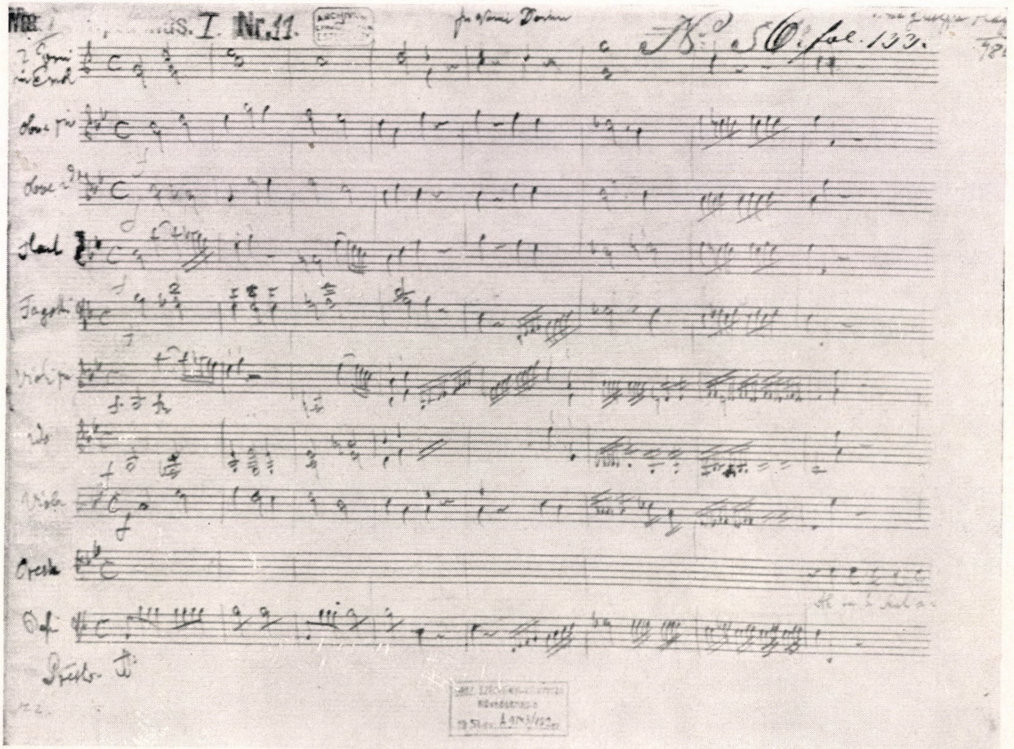
For the information of our readers permit me to add a few sentences about the method with which we succeeded in elaborating this complex documentary material. The difficulties we had to cope with may best be conveyed by pointing out that, even in a single operatic score, we often found as many as three different historical layers one on top of the other. The scores used as the basis for performances at the Eszterháza theatre were most often obtained abroad, from Venice or Vienna, less frequently from Dresden. Often already in the purchased material two variants of handwriting and musical material were mixed together. On top of this, still further changes were made by Haydn at Eszterháza: deletions, corrections, additions and insertions, done partly in his own hand, and partly in the hand of the professional copyists employed at Eszterháza. In a single opera it is not rare to find a mixture of five or six copyists' handwriting in the most colourful disarray.

In order to find our way about in this jungle of musical writing we again had to raise the question of the so-called authentic copyists with great emphasis. Professor Larsen's original research had already wrestled with this problem about 20—25 years ago, and we now feel that we have succeeded in taking a tremendous stride towards a solution of this problem. The uninitiated reader no doubt hardly understands at first glance the significance of authentic and non-authentic copyists. It should be known that only a relatively small part of Haydn's production as a composer, especially the works of his younger years, has survived in autograph form or in certified print. We know hundreds of his works exclusively from copies, made by his contemporaries. The authenticity of the copies, however, is greatly reduced by the unbelievable lack of conscience that prevailed in those days in naming the composer. In the seventh decade of the 18th century Haydn's name was already considered a good trade mark, and unscrupulous copyists wrote Haydn's name on compositions which had nothing at all to do with the *maestro*. This is the origin of the profusion of pseudo-Haydn works in archives and catalogues. How can original research succeed in surmounting this Babel of confusion? Only by being able to weigh most precisely the reliability and authenticity of the available copied sources. It is evident that a copyist who worked at Eszterháza directly under the eye of the master deserves incomparably more credence than someone who many hundreds of kilometres away irresponsibly wrote Haydn's name on some musical work. Professor Larsen's research already sharply differentiated between these two main categories and he only accepted the first group, the so-called "authentic copyists," as genuine. Professor Larsen's work acquaints us with the handwriting of five or six authentic copyists.

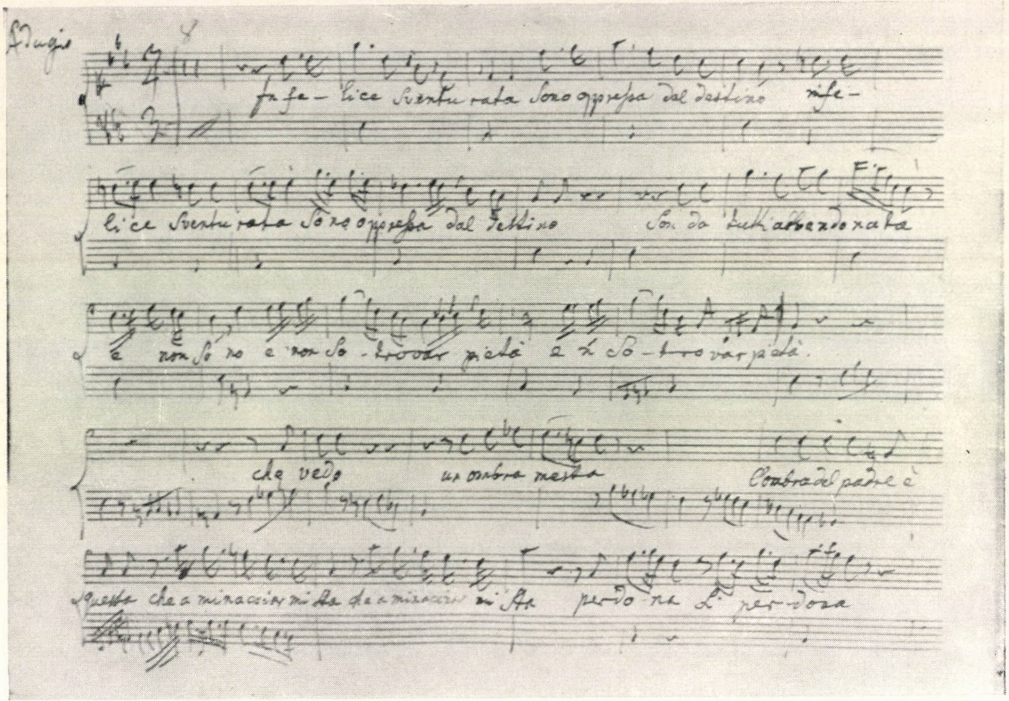
The difficulty arises from the fact that only a small fraction of the copies attributed to Haydn and scattered about the world were turned out by


Flauto
Fagotti
Violini
Viola
Basso
piano e staccato
153

1


Nr. 11
N.o 56 fol. 133
Fagotti
Viola
Oboe
Corni
Clarini

2


Adagio
In fe- lice Sventurata Sono oppressa dal destino infe-
lice Sventurata Sono oppressa dal destino
Son da tutti abbandonata
e non so no e non so trovar pietà e non so trovar pietà.
che vedo
un ombra mesta
L'ombra del padre è
questa che a minacciar mi sta che a minacciar mi sta
perdona perdona

3

1. "Quando la rosa", *insert aria composed by Haydn for Anfossi's opera La Matilda Ritrovata (Eszterháza, 1779). Autographed score, hitherto unknown.*

2. "Ah tu non senti amico", *insert aria composed by Haydn for Traetta's opera Iphigenia in Tauris (1786). Autographed score, signed by Haydn: "In Nomine Domini di me Giuseppe Haydn 786."*

3. "Infelice sventurata", *insert aria composed by Haydn for Cimarosa's Opera I Due Suppositi Conti (Eszterháza 1789).*

the five or six musicians belonging directly to Haydn's environment. Until today, we had no reliable criteria at our disposal to evaluate the remaining hundreds of copies, although there is no doubt that in the feverish musical work at Eszterháza far more persons worked under Haydn than these few musicians. The identity of these persons could not be established until now, because Haydn research relied almost exclusively on the copy material of symphonic music, and there the old copyists used their initials only on the rarest occasions at the beginning or end of the copy.

The opera material elaborated by us now brings a decisive change in this sphere. In the person of Johann (János) Schellinger we make the acquaintance of one of Haydn's most important copyists, whom Haydn esteemed so highly that he made use of his services in writing his first catalogue, his largely self-written *Entwurfkatalog*. In addition we dug up a whole staff of copyists employed at Eszterháza, whom we could largely identify on the basis of the copyists' receipts preserved in the archives. With this the number of copyists considered as authentic from Haydn's standpoint rises from the five or six names to three times as many (about 18), and as a result, the material at our disposal apt to authenticate Haydn's works increases considerably.

The question may arise: on the basis of what criteria do we regard this or that copyist working at Eszterháza as an authentic copyist? The course of investigation in this question was as follows. From the musical material and from its comparison with the old librettos, the original form at the time of purchase is clearly discernible, as are the changes, improvements or inserts made at Eszterháza. If in the latter even a single copyist whom we could identify as working at Eszterháza collaborated, it became evident that the rest of the copyists of that same insert piece worked in the same place, that is at Eszterháza, under Haydn's supervision. In order to preclude the possibility of any error we accepted the copyists working at the same time on various parts of the same piece as authentic only if, in addition to identifying the work, we succeeded in determining the identity of the paper used, on the basis of the watermarks. Then if but one of the previous copyists emerged again, in some other musical intervention of Eszterháza origin, we could once more localize several members of the group of copyists working together with Haydn. It is self-evident that all those musicians who worked at Eszterháza under Haydn's supervision in the copying of opera material are to be qualified as authentic copyists with respect to Haydn.

We have already mentioned the question of identifying papers, of examining watermarks. This is a border area whose investigating methods have just now, in recent years, begun to yield rich results in the study of source material relating to music history, especially in the instance of great masters of rich and varied output, like Bach or Haydn. When the copyist's hand alone yields no success in localizing, in qualifying as authentic or non-authentic a music autograph, the quality and watermark of the paper used often helps to advance the research work. Professor Larsen's research work to this end had already determined that there was a paper mill on the vast Esterházy estate, which distinguished its products from papers coming from some other source such as Vienna or Italy by means of a special watermark. When this special Esterházy watermark appears on a copy, it may be assumed, independently of the copyist's person, that it could not have been produced elsewhere than at one of the Esterházy residences, at Kismarton or Eszterháza. On the basis of the material examined by us we succeeded in qualifying and verifying as Esterházy paper, beyond any doubt, a whole series of new watermarks!

It is apparent even from these few sketchy remarks that the reconstruction of the Eszterháza operatic life was no easy task, and that only the most ingenious and complex methods of research made it possible to cope with the intricate task before us. Nevertheless, we feel that our tedious efforts were not in vain. We succeeded in reconstructing, in recalling the everyday life and the complete musical repertoire of one of the most significant, although, unfortunately, short-lived, opera stages of the 18th century, and, together with this, in casting new light on a period in the life of the great master of Viennese classicism, Joseph Haydn, concerning which the earlier Haydn literature could produce either nothing or only a few sketchily drawn lines.

We have now succeeded in proving that the 15 years of Haydn's life which he devoted essentially to the Eszterháza operatic stage were packed with a feverish activity hitherto unrevealed. At the same time, we have shown them as constituting a chapter of virtually unparallelled richness in the history of musical taste in the period of classicism. It shows Haydn's attitude towards contemporary operatic production—what he considered good and untouchable (relatively little), what he rejected or adapted, and where and when he saw fit to supplement or enrich the famous or less famous works of contemporary Italian masters with his own creative work.

BÉNI FERENCZY

by

ISTVÁN GENTHON

Béni Ferenczy, whose 70th birthday was celebrated this summer, is one of the most interesting and many-sided personalities of contemporary Hungarian art. Held in high esteem all over Europe as a sculptor and medallist, his graphic works have also attracted wide attention.

He was born at Szentendre, on June 18, 1890. His twin sister, Noémi, was an outstanding tapestry-designer. Theirs is a real artists' family: the father, Károly Ferenczy, was one of the leading figures of the so-called Nagybánya school of Hungarian painters.

Béni Ferenczy spent the better part of his childhood at Nagybánya. He was six years old when his father moved there, and was no more than four when he posed for a picture by the latter, showing a sulky face and wearing a red dress. He was thus immortalized in a work of art before he created one himself. In 1906, he faced the world long-haired and self-assured as the hero of "Béni", one of the best portraits by his father.

He began his career with drawing and with the modelling of medallions, and later studied at the Nagybánya school of painting. He made bronze medallions as early as 1907: the "Buffalo" and "Nude with Birds", the fore-shortened design of the buffalo being particularly successful. In 1908 and 1909 he spent some time in Florence, and in 1910 in Munich, where he acquired a thorough mastery of the technique of wood-carving. The year 1911 found him studying at Bourdelle's school in Paris and later at the school of the Russian Archipenko.

The outbreak of World War I ended the opportunities for travel. At this time the sculptural ornamentation of the Chartres Cathedral occupied his mind. He carved his sculptures from wood and these wooden figures have largely perished or got lost. Nevertheless, from his first period we know already a few works which are much more than youthful attempts.

The first of these is "St. George" (1913). The muscular young hero with the body of an athlete is standing on the back of the dragon and twisting back its mouth with his left hand to stab its throat with his short sword. The modelling reflects not so much the influence of French, Romanesque and Gothic sculpture as that of archaic Greek or Etruscan.

The second is the "Male Nude Standing" (1916), represented in a rather sluggish pose, with arms limply drooping, done in a smooth classical manner.

He first presented a fairly comprehensive material to the public in the autumn of 1916 at a Ferenczy family exhibition in the Ernst Museum—displaying the works of the father and his three children: Valér, Noémi and Béni. The latter participated with ten sculptures, sixteen sketches, one vase and a dozen drawings, the first group including the figure of St. George. The vase is still extant. Its nude male high-jumper and pole-vaulter, and its form, again recall the Etruscan style.

In a larger bronze figure, "Woman Stepping" (1917), a balanced, sense of statics is enhanced by classical draperies. The glorious series of medallions made its real *début* in the same year with the hatchet-faced portrait of Simon Meller, the eminent art historian. On the reverse side, the medallion bore a representation of a bronze equestrian figure, a proud possession of the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts, attributed to Leonardo da Vinci by Meller. Béni Ferenczy was tossed about between extremes. After the medallions he experimented with large-scale plaster reliefs of almost musical rhythm, achieving the beautiful "Lovers" in 1918.

Károly Ferenczy died after a long illness in 1917. The war was gradually stifling art life in Budapest. The commendation earned by the post-humous exhibition of his father's works, to which Béni Ferenczy also contributed ten statues, three vases and four drawings, was drowned out by the approaching noise of battle. He made a drawing of the fatally sick poet Endre Ady's magnificent head, and this early work achieved well-justified popularity in his unique series of drawings.

The proclamation of the Hungarian Soviet Republic (1919) found Béni Ferenczy living at Nagybánya, and after its failure he had to flee from this little town in Northern Hungary. In 1921 he finally caught sight of the high steeple of St. Stephen's Dome: he had safely reached Vienna.

Then followed a period of relative tranquillity in Béni Ferenczy's life—a period of twelve long years. He settled down in the former imperial city, got married, and became the father of two children.

Béni Ferenczy's first friends in Vienna were people connected with the museums. He came to know Ernst von Garger, the monographer of the

Stefansdom, making a sculpture of him in 1921; he met M. Swoboda and even Julius von Schlosser, then the greatest authority in the profession. By this time his style had inevitably become that of cubism. He had, while still living in Budapest, completed the huge "Male Nude" (1919). This figure, which is built up of kneaded bundles of muscles—like Garger's portrait, assembled of prisms—already marked a decisive step towards cubism. Then followed attempts at a still more abstract structure of mass, human bodies and groups of figures reduced to geometrical solids and the planes confining them, such as "Aesope", "Roland", "Plain People", "Mother and Child", "Adam and Eve."

The Viennese public was still wary of cubism. In the winter of 1923—1924 Ferenczy moved to Berlin. They were farther ahead there. Herwarth Walden, with his unruly enthusiasm for everything new, had founded a paper called *Der Sturm* some time earlier, and even acquired an exhibition room to go with it. He raved over the blue horses of Franz Marc, who had died in the war, over the stifling dreams of Chagall's small-town ghettos, and had the poster advertising his paper designed by Kokoschka. (The oil-sketch of the poster is at the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts.) In 1924 Walden sponsored a show of the abstract compositions of two young Hungarian artists: Aurél Bernáth and Béni Ferenczy. The show, which was arranged by Bernáth because Ferenczy had returned to Vienna in the meantime, was a resounding success.

The cubist period did not last very long, and the small, angular figures gradually disappeared as Ferenczy became interested in the monumental. In the wooden relief "Mother and Child" (1925) which unfortunately has perished, his indifference to detail still points back to the earlier period, but there is already an astonishing sweep to the composition, coupled with a tranquil rhythm.

The wooden figure "Mother and Child" (1926) embodied the monumental style of Ferenczy's Viennese period. The child is standing in the nude mother's joined palms, and not even the ghost of cubism haunts the large, rounded forms. The robust "Sower" (1926), which was cast in lead, fairly bursts with strength and energy. The major works of this period are two huge (59½" by 70") stone reliefs, called "Active Life" and "Meditative Life" (1928), conveying a faultless rhythm in their stocky figures, which now adorn the walls of a summer-villa in the vicinity of Berlin. The tombstone of the painter Egon Schiele (1929), who died early and under tragic circumstances, was also carved by Ferenczy at the request of Schiele's friends. It stands in a Vienna cemetery, and the carved-out back-ground setting of a life-size male and female nude suggests a style that is related to that of the afore-mentioned two reliefs, except that the figures are more elongated. In the meantime, at an exhibition in 1927, the "Society for the Promotion of Modern Art" showed two wood reliefs and a wood-carved statue by Ferenczy together with all the preliminary sketches, with the purpose of documenting the evolution of a work of art *(Das Werden eines Kunstwerkes)*. This ingenious idea, which permits a glance into the mysteries of the process of creation, is worthy of revival.

The artists's continued contact with Budapest is evidenced by the fact that the New Society of Artists (KUT) elected him as one of its regular members and that in January 1929 he exhibited medallions and drawings under the auspices of the Society. Two medallions of the wide range cast in the next year deserve special mention. One of them was a tribute to the publication of the first five-year plan of the Soviet Union and the second bore a head of Lenin on the obverse. Ten-year old memories were stirring in the mind of the one-time refugee from Nagybánya, and soon he was on his way to Moscow.

Ferenczy spent four years in the U. S. S. R., from 1932 through 1935. It was there that he met his second wife, whom he married in Moscow in 1932. This wonderful woman of flowering beauty, simply called Erzsi (diminutive of Erzsébet, Elisabeth) by the friends in their circle, has ever since been the centre of his life: companion, model, inspirer and muse all in one. Her smile and the charm of her figure cast their glow over his art. One never tires of her ever new portrayal and eternal delineation in statue, in relief and on paper. She has remained the main object of his art, closely linking him to reality.

In Moscow Ferenczy lived in a house with a a garden. At first he did not do much creative work, a fact which can be explained by the new environment, the many new things to see, the multitude of new impressions. He spent a considerable amount of time in the museums, especially in the Museum of Modern Art, where a lot of the masterpieces of contemporary art, from Cézanne's unique "Mardi Gras" to several important early works by Matisse and Picasso, were hung before they were moved to Leningrad. In Leningrad he studied not only the treasures of art in the Ermitage, but also admired Peter the Great's equestrian statue by Falconet, the best work of its kind since the "Gattamelata" and the "Colleoni". He was so much interested in this great but relatively little-known sculptor that, for his own delight, he translated Falconet's theoretical tract on three-dimensional art—a brilliantly witty and yet systematizing, characteristically Gallic piece of writing. Unfortunately the translation was destroyed by fire in 1945.

His walks and meditations in Moscow gave Béni Ferenczy the idea of making medallions commemorating various artists, and he completed the first four of the series in the Soviet capital. It was a novel and, we may add, fully successful attempt, with unfailing respect for the classic traditions of the medallion. The obverse bore the portrait of the artist, and the reverse a composition. In order that both sides should be true in spirit to the work of the artist in question, the obverse preferably showed a self-portrait translated into the idiom of relief, while the reverse suggested a memorable composition or a detail thereof by the commemorated master.

In May, 1933, the "Daumier" medallion, the first piece of the series, was cast.

The obverse was based on a self-portrait showing the right profile and the reverse on a lithography representing France: a green branch growing out of a huge tree stump—symbol of eternal rebirth. This was followed by "Goya" in 1934, bearing the self-portrait in a top-hat, and a revolutionary execution scene by the great Spaniard, and, in the same year, by "Michelangelo", with a likeness of the master for lack of a self-portrait and the first fresco in the Sistine chapel—showing God, the Creator. The fourth medallion is a representation of Poussin, one of Béni Ferenczy's favourite masters, and a detail from the Narcissus, to be found in the Louvre. This much of the set was completed in Moscow.

The rest of the artists' medallions were finished in Budapest. "Van Gogh" and "Rubens" were cast in 1936, "Titian" and "Cézanne" in 1938, and, after a considerable pause, "El Greco" in 1941. Thus, the first full series consists of ten medallions.

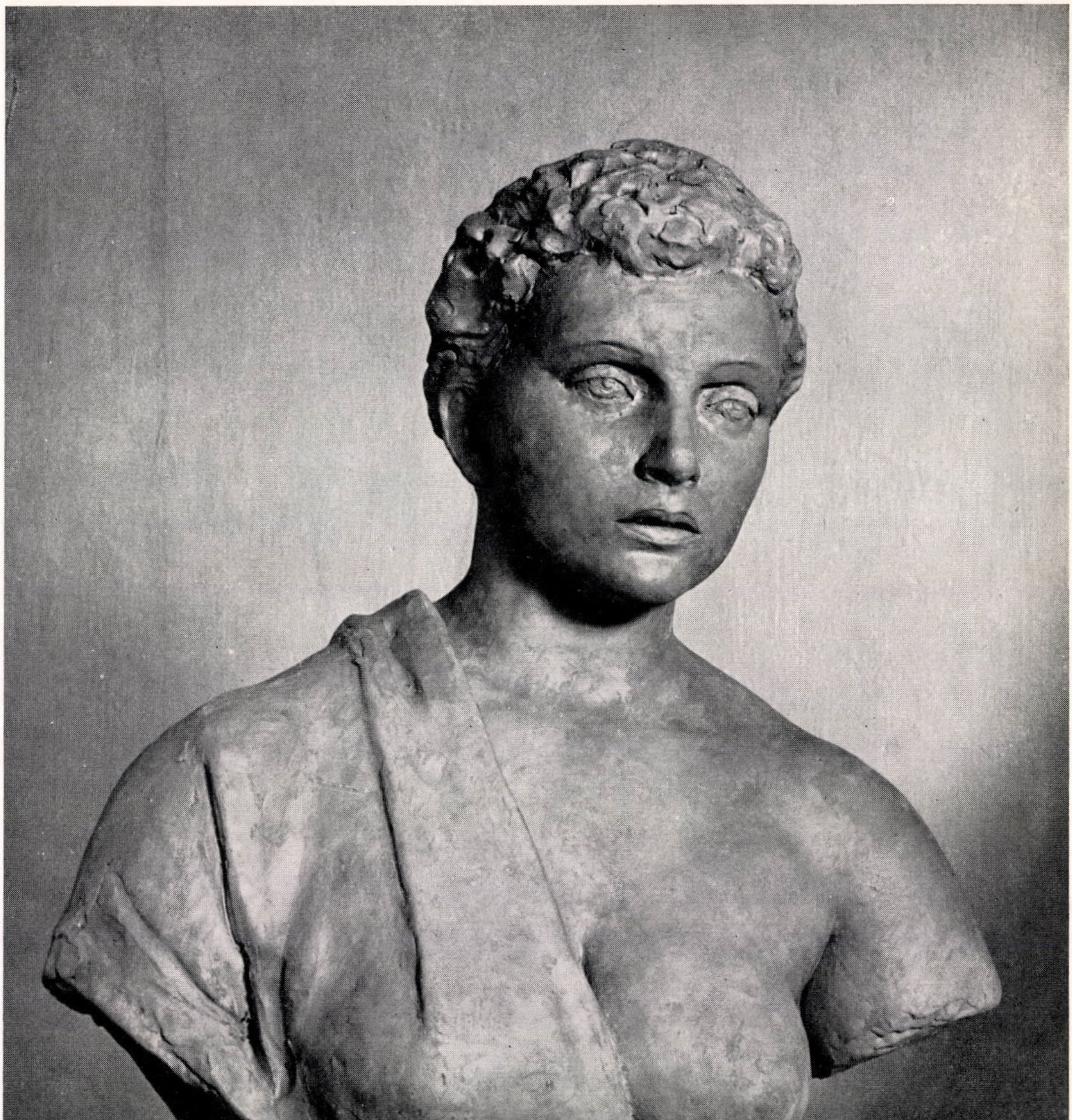
The connoisseur hardly knows what to admire more: Ferenczy's perfect insight into the essence of the work of art which enables the medallion to radiate the style of the master concerned, or the elusive ease with which he re-composes characteristic pictures of different artists in the circular field on the reverse. The "Rubens" medal, for instance, virtually flames with baroque passion, and the reverse of the "Titian" is imbued with mature renaissance dignity. The two figures on the Cézanne medal or the concentrated reproduction of El Greco's "Burial of Count Orgaz"—reduced to a few figures—are masterpieces of circular composition. It is more or less to this series that the one-sided "Borromini" medallion (1936) with the rich capital of the S. Carlo alle Quattro Fontane belongs; this piece, however, does not adhere to the traditional order of the motifs characterizing the rest. The splendid "Leonardo" of a later date (1952) and the "Fischer von Erlach" medallion (1936), the latter of a larger size and oval in shape, also pertain to the series.

It is said of Pisanello—though the statement is without a doubt an oversimplification—that having discovered, and, if you will, founded, the art of the medallion, he raised it to its highest peaks—the first medallist being at the same time the inimitable paragon. Something similar could be said about Béni Ferenczy's artist medallions, especially since imitators mushroomed up after him. The example is attractive, but not without its dangers, for a medallist who cannot, together with the representation of the artist he has chosen for his subject, suggest the qualities of that artist's personality and the salient characteristics of his composition, finds himself reduced to the mere transposition of a fine motif.

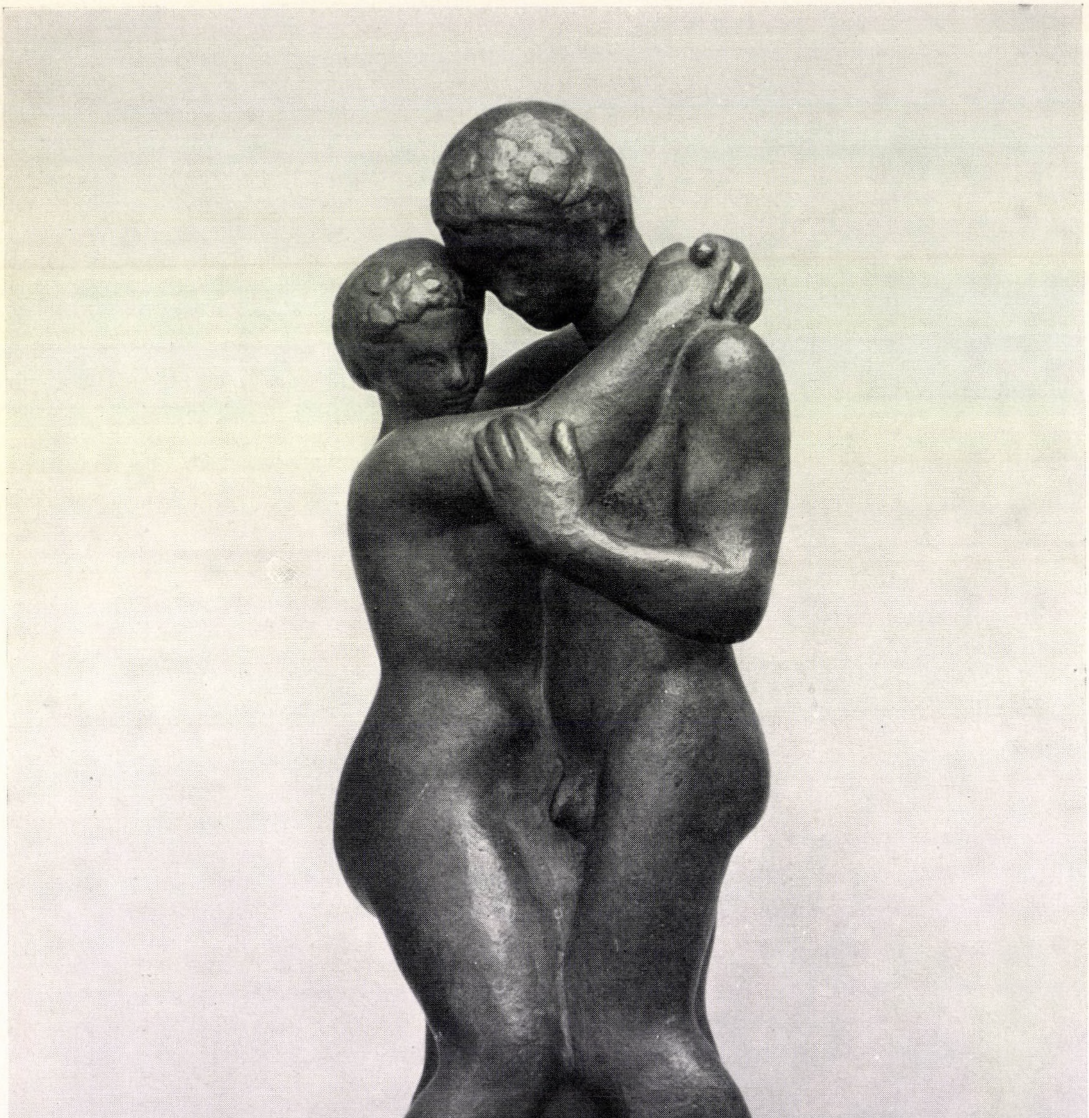
After four years in Moscow, he returned to Vienna again. In 1935 he made a memorial medallion as a tribute to Julius von Schlosser, Professor of the history of art at the University of Vienna, in three-quarter face, with an inscription on the reverse. The same year saw the completion of the bronze figurine "Woman with Raised Arms", the first appearance of the mature female type which was to influence his art for such a long time. A similarly haunting subject is represented in "Boy Playing Marbles" (1936). The squatting, wonderfully compact figure and the big, childish head frequently recur in his work. On the other hand, the "Horse" (1936), with its elemental Leonardo- and Delacroix-like passion, in which the body becomes a dynamic force, marks his only attempt at the field of independent animal sculpturing.

The muse makes her presence unforgettably felt in the bust called "The Wife of the Artist" (1936), one of the most beautiful Hungarian portraits. A proud melancholy clouds the fine head. This is the first manifestation of the energetic attempt to link the architectonic, static forms of sculpture with the tender warmth of the body radiating from the surface. As the portrait testifies, this dual attempt is not fire and water, the two tendencies are not mutually exclusive. The 20th century presented brilliant extremes of the two trends. Rodin was perhaps too much interested in the soft beauty of the surface and Maillol in an almost architectural order. Despiau also experimented with joining the two tendencies, emphasizing however, the mass much more forcefully than did Béni Ferenczy.

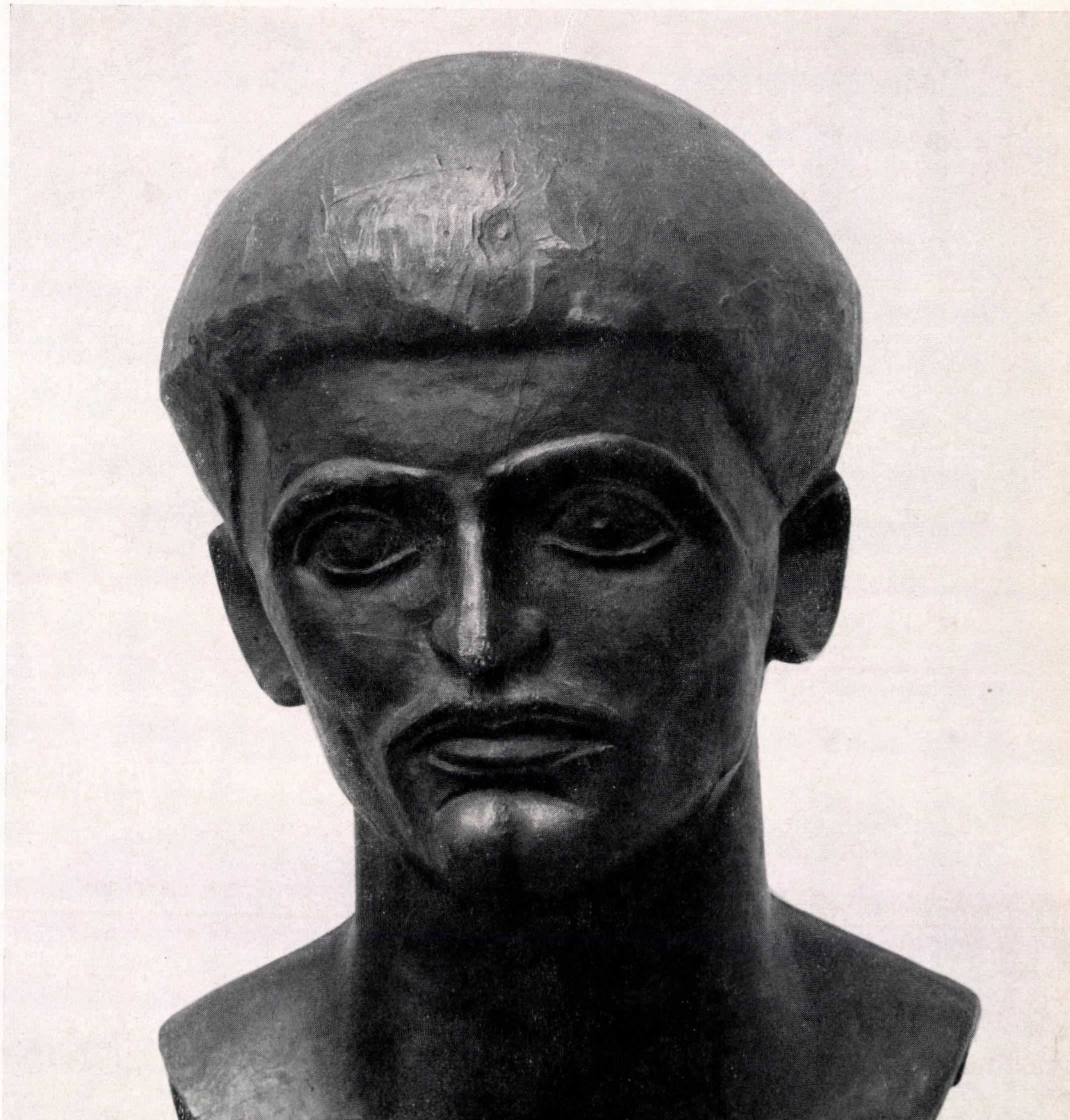
In 1936 Ferenczy had an exhibition in the Gallery of the art dealer V. A. Heck, where he presented the first medallions of the artist series to the Austrian public. In the same year he completed "Danae", a recumbent nude figure reflecting monumental tranquillity. At a Vienna railway station he also drew several sketches of Béla Bartók who was in transit through the city. One of these drawings is the most authentic portrait of the great Hungarian composer, glowing with the warmth of Ferenczy's observation.



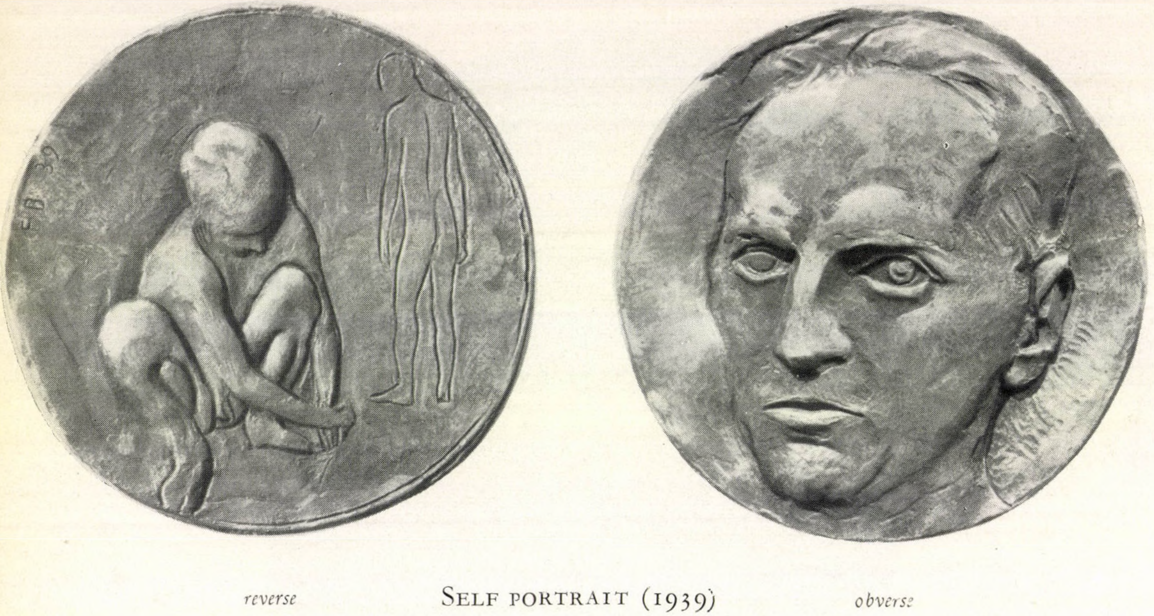
Female Bust



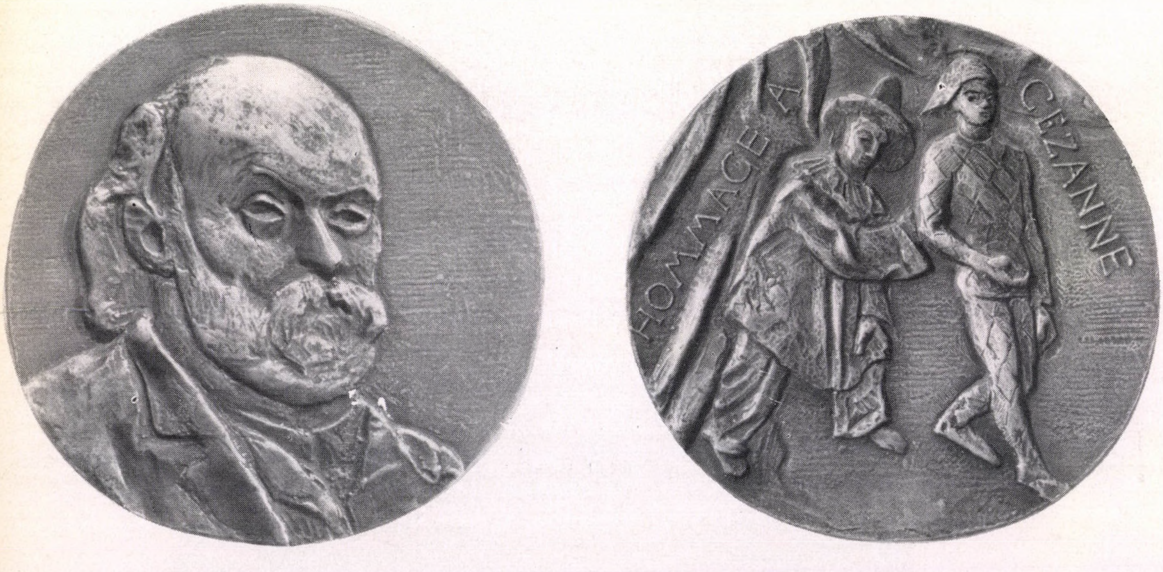
Couple



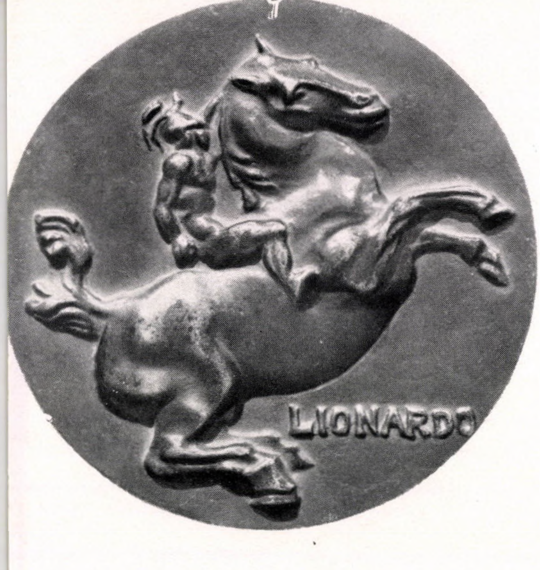
Portrait (Ferenc Juhász, the Poet)



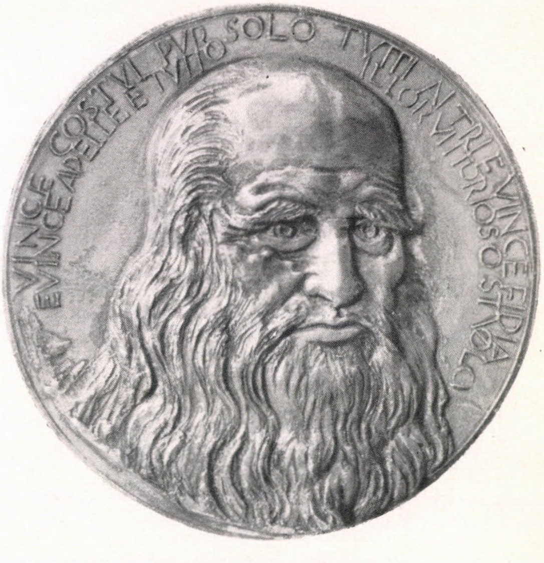
reverse SELF PORTRAIT (1939) *obverse*


HOMMAGE A CEZANNE

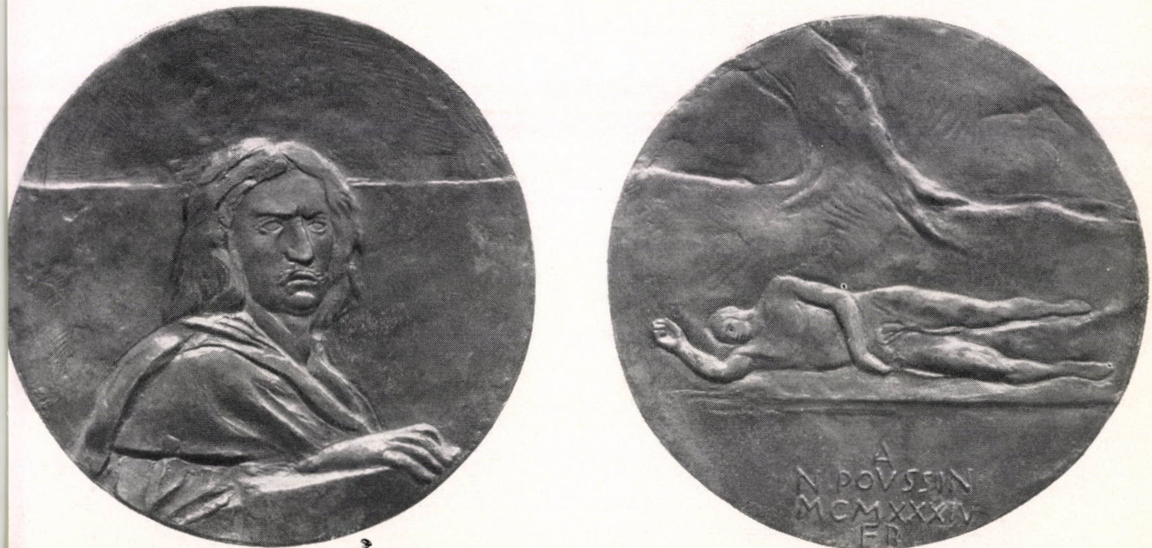
obverse CÉZANNE (1937) *reverse*



Equestrian by Leonardo (1917)
reverse of Simon Meller Medallion



Leonardo (1952)
obverse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N POVSSIN
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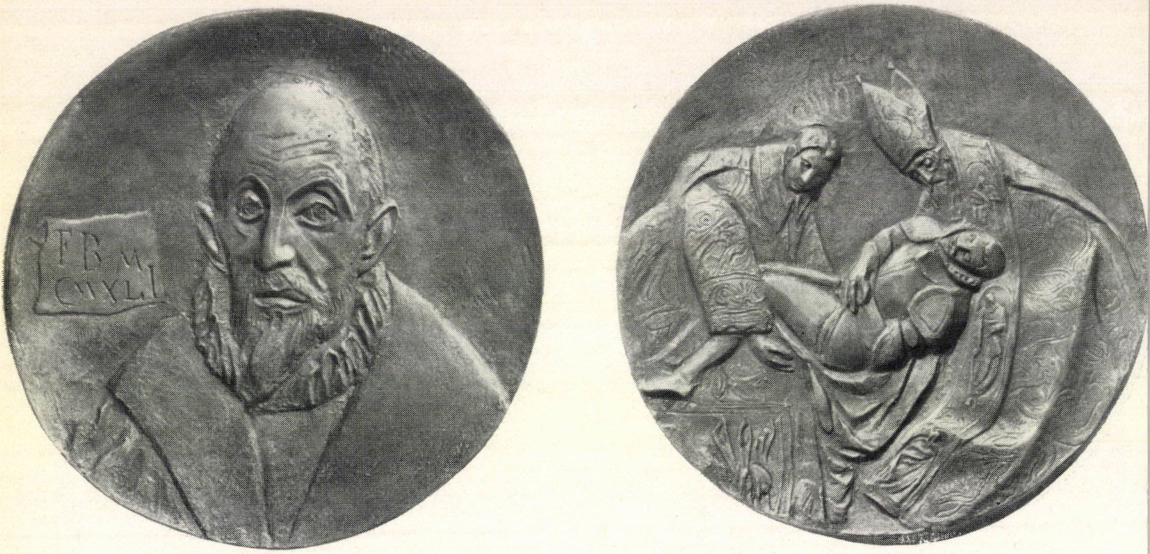
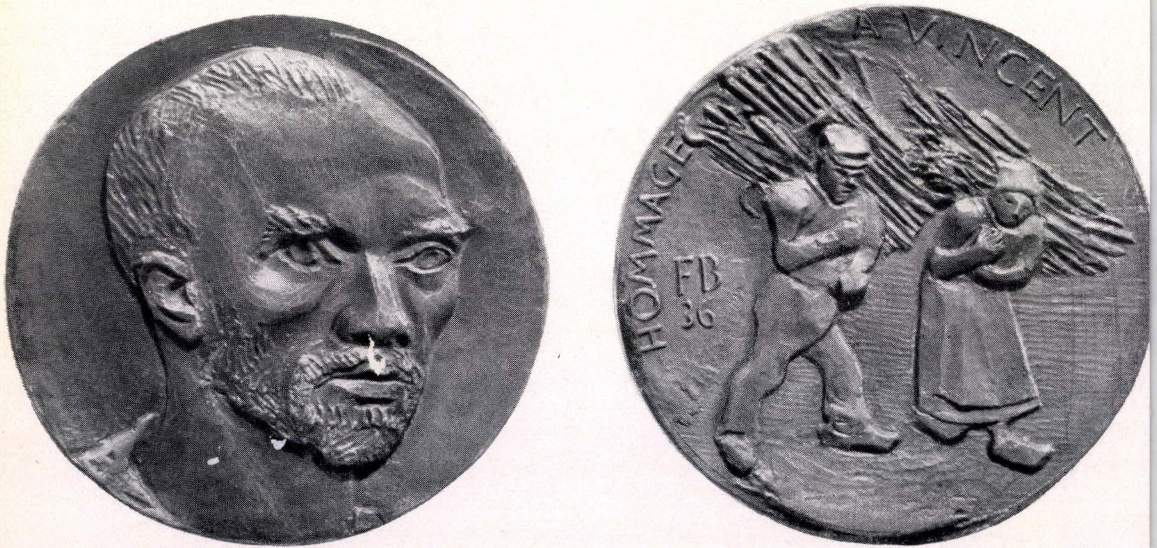
obverse Poussin (1934) *reverse*



obverse El Greco (1941) *reverse*


HOMMAGE A VINCENT
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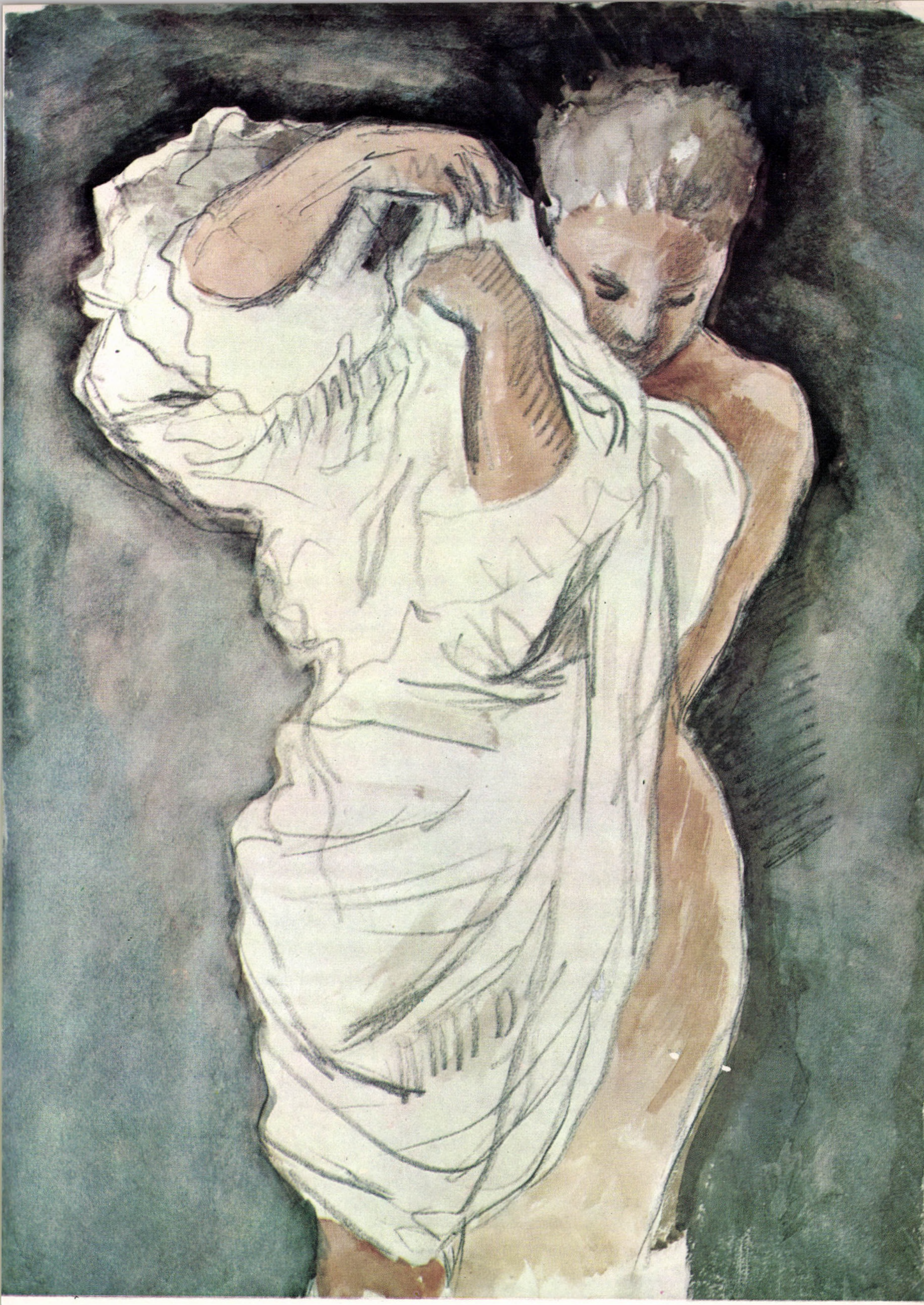
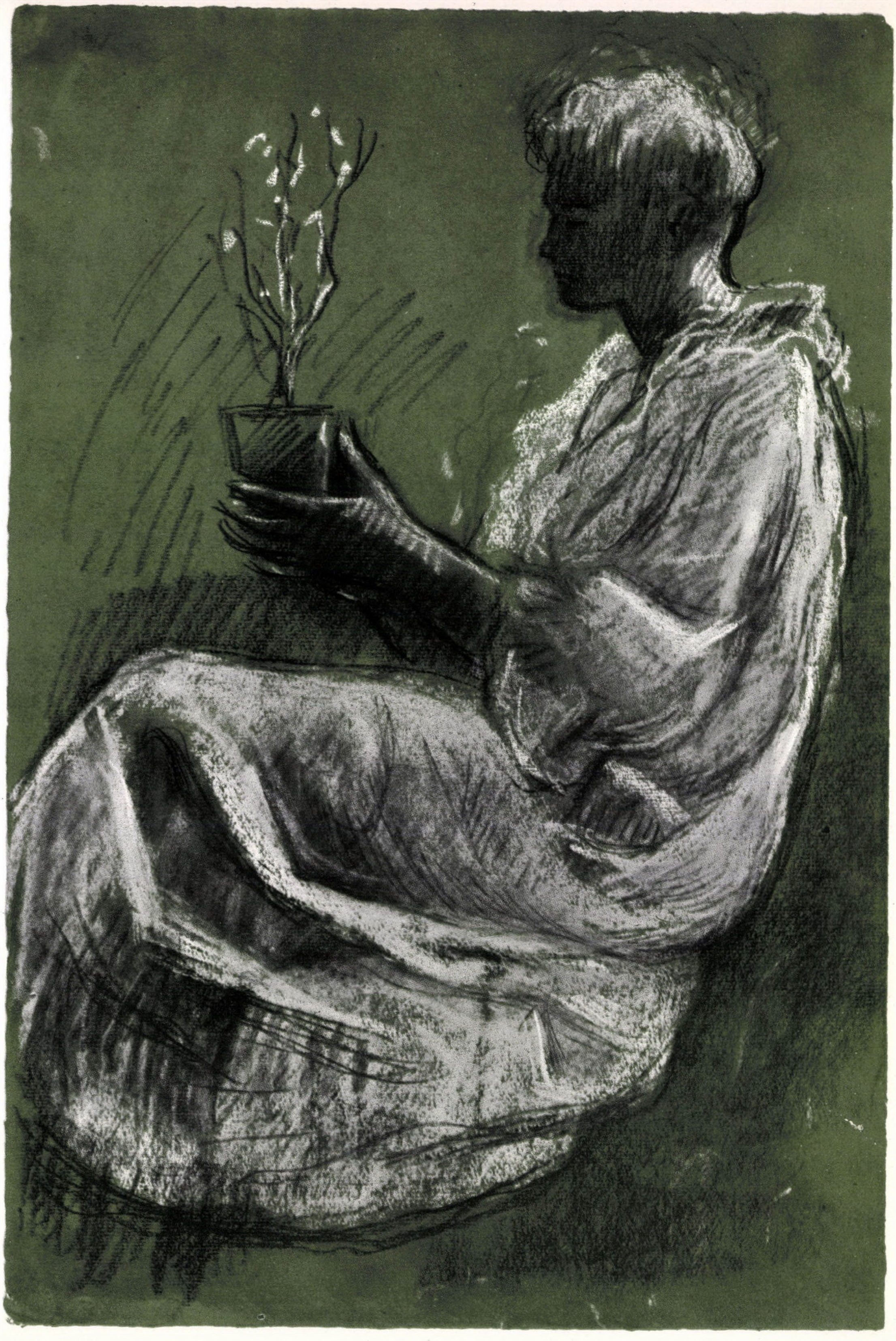
36

obverse Van Gogh (1936) *reverse*



Béni Ferenczy: WOMAN UNDRESSING



Béni Ferenczy: WOMAN WITH FLOWER

For a while Ferenczy lived alternately in Vienna and in Budapest.

The medallions of the artist series were first shown to the Hungarian public in 1937. The same year also saw the completion of two remarkable statues. "Nicholas" is a bronze figure over three feet in height, representing a day-dreaming, nude boy, the head bent to the right and the whole body full of the shy and clumsy charm of burgeoning life. The head falls forward and the arms hang heavy. As a child it stands unsteadily, but as a statue that much the more firmly. The silhouette is clear and logical. It recalls examples of Greek sculpture prior to Phidias, during the one or two springlike decades between archaism and the mature style, when the blond Ephebos was modelled. One senses something that is more than the mere awakening of life: vitality crowds the surfaces, but dare not disturb the strict and still somewhat crabbed system of forms, preferring to respect its own natural bounds. The second statue represents the huge figure of Atalanta leaning forward with knees bent and arms almost touching the ground. She is a symbolic of primeval womanhood with swelling and yet firm forms almost compressed into spherical shape. Although the figure is not much over a foot in height, we have few statues that give a more monumental impression.

In March 1941 he had a joint show with Jenő Barcsay, István Dési-Huber, Endre Domanovszky and Jenő Gadányi at the Ernst Museum, when fifteen statues—most of them bronzes— a lot of medallions and a still larger number of drawings were displayed. In the same year his longest written work, dealing with the technique of sculpture, appeared in an artists' textbook entitled *A szépművészet iskolája* (The School of Fine Arts), edited by István Szőnyi. Two editions of this work were sold out. Ferenczy here expounded the different processes of modelling, in the course of over sixty pages accompanied by a number of illustrations. This work was not reprinted elsewhere because it was written expressly for professional artists and historians of art, but a third edition of the whole book was issued not long ago.

During the war he showed a series of his bronzes, including such important works as the portrait (1941) of Louise de Vilmorin, the well-known French autoress and "Nicholas", at the Biennale in Venice, in 1942, and was favorably mentioned in the Italian press, but there was no chance of a resounding success in the existing oppressive political climate. At a representative Hungarian exhibition in Switzerland, organized with much thought and devotion by Ervin Ybl, he exhibited a few works which aroused interest even in 1944, but the press clippings arrived in Hungary only after the liberation.

The siege of Budapest wrought havoc in Béni Ferenczy's studio. Many of his works perished: plaster casts and large aquarelles were destroyed by the fire. Bronzes melted into a shapeless mass. It was during the siege that the large-scale relief sketches of the Károly Ferenczy tomb were reduced to rubble. But Ferenczy was eager to begin work again and had the opportunity to hold an exhibition in the very year of the liberation. There the Museum of Fine Arts bought his small bronze entitled "Evocation" only recently completed (1945). A sprightly young woman enthusiastically raises her arm, probably out of sheer *joie de vivre,* after having climbed again into sunny peace from the dank darkness of the cellars. At the same time the Museum of Fine Arts purchased the bronze "Danae". Since 1957 the Hungarian National Gallery, founded in that year, has been guardian of the selected works of Béni Ferenczy from practically every period, with the exception of his cubist experiments.

The next year, 1946, was equally favourable as regards small- and large-size works. Under commission of the Art Council, Ferenczy modelled the beautiful specimens of the Pro Arte medallions and the relatively large "Woman Undressing" (over two feet high; the latter is shown taking a determined step forward while doffing her chemise and displaying her firm, vibrant body.)

Béni Ferenczy was among the group of writers and artists who visited Switzerland at the government's invitation for a few months in 1947—48. The rest and the change of environment as well as the visits to museums and exhibitions electrified Ferenczy. He wanted to work. So he went on to Rome, where he completed two fairly large statues in the studio of the Hungarian Academy—the terra-cotta figure of the "River Goddess" and the standing figure of a "Young Athlete" (1947), both of which are still in Rome. He participated with his sculptures and appeared personally at the exhibition of a small group of Hungarian artists in Catania, and then returned home.

Ferenczy's art now acquired a new richness and intimacy, as exemplified in "Boys Playing" (1947), a circular re-composition of motifs that had been haunting him for some time. For the squatting figure he used the form of the "Boy Playing Marbles", mentioned earlier, and for the composition itself the reverse of the "Self-Portrait" medallion. Nevertheless the result was a brand-new, vitally exciting creation, made unforgettable not only by the novel composition, but also by that elusive power of transposition which is able to turn real space into artistic, abstract space. We have in mind the fair amount of space which separates the two boys and yet does not intrude between them with the oppressive weight of reality but becomes a part of the whole as conceived by the sculptor. In 1948 Ferenczy was awarded the Kossuth Prize. After its exhibition at the Biennale of 1948 the "Boys Playing" was acquired by the Museum of Fine Arts in Budapest.

For the hundredth anniversary of the outbreak of the War of Independence of 1848—49, Ferenczy modelled a statue, over six-feet in height, of Sándor Petőfi. The great poet and freedom-fighter, his tunic open, a sword buckled on his side, steps forward with the left foot, treading on a wreath of laurels—the act symbolizing that the ideal of freedom is dearer to him than the glory of a poet. His face is gloomy and burning with the fever of determination, and his mouth has a bitter curve. It is written on this unusual face that the man it belongs to is threatened by impending doom and is in the grip of the terrible conflict between death and immortality.

Very different is the dreamlike, hovering small bronze group entitled "Boreas Takes Psyche to the Palace of Eros", cast in 1949. Upon its completion, Ferenczy returned to the noble material of wood, carving "The Couple" in 1950 and in the next year "Mother and Child", "Boy Holding Drapery", "Christ on the Cross" and "Lovers", which, however, no longer fall into planes and prisms, for long years of thinking in terms of bronze have rounded off the formerly angular contours. Characteristically, most of them continue to be experiments in multi-figured composition.

Already before the war, Ferenczy had moved to the top storey of a big block of flats bordering on the Danube, in Budapest. Here at times the neighbours might hear the banging as he chased his bronzes. In his studio-apartment selected paintings by Károly Ferenczy and here and there his own large coloured drawings of nudes decorated the walls. This was where he drew when he had grown tired of modelling or chasing, and where he read his favourite authors, Racine's dramas, the diaries of Sir Samuel Pepys, of John Evelyn, or of Doctor Johnson, whose flesh-and-blood robustness have remained untarnished by the centuries. And this was where his friends visited him for a bit of animated discussion and intellectual gossip.

In May, 1952, Ferenczy had a small exhibition of his works, shown together with Jenő Elekfy's aquarelles, at the Adolf Fényes Gallery. It was a fruitful year. One of his loveliest small bronzes, "Charitas", was created in 1952. The armless torso is wrapped in heavy draperies, a kerchief on the head, only the breasts left bare. Sorrow seems to envelop the figure, which is modelled with unusual tenderness—as charity generally meets with tears and only rarely with smiles. The year's crop included also the bronze portrait of János Ferencsik, the famous conductor, and the medallions representing János Arany, Benedek Virág, Ferenc Kölcsey and György Bessenyei, followed by the Dániel Berzsenyi medallion in 1953.

One of his most charming designs was the group of four "Cherubs Making Music" (1953), which conjures up a very happy and animated scene of one boy holding a torch, the second a choir-book, the third playing a harp, and the fourth blowing a trumpet. The organs of baroque churches are crowded with similar groups, and with his own interpretation of the scene, Béni Ferenczy, the great admirer of Mozart, paid lasting homage to the genius of music.

The portraits of his literary friends, János Pilinszky, László Németh and Ferenc Juhász, were finished in quick succession, but the principal work of the year was the large-scale bronze relief for the "Babits Memorial", with the beautifully composed youthful figure of the unclad bard ecstatically proclaiming the motto of the poet: "Not the bard gives birth to the song—the song gives birth to its bard." In the impressive group "Mother and Child" (1954), commissioned by a Budapest factory, he boldly returned to memories of past decades.

The past renewed its claim in other fields and other genres too. The vases he had made in his first period haunted his memory again. In the summer of 1953 Ferenczy went to Hódmezővásárhely, where he designed a series of plates and dishes, decorating the black background with nudes or heads. These beautiful ceramics were in great demand, and only a few samples have remained in the possession of their maker. It will be difficult to re-assemble the best of them, although they cannot be left out of the history of the famous Hódmezővásárhely pottery industry.

Rarely has drawing played such an important and attractive part in the work of a sculptor as in the case of Béni Ferenczy. With him the design or the aquarelle is not merely a preliminary step paving the way for the statue or the medallion; he often drew for the sake of drawing itself. The recurring subjects of round plaquettes and medallions—children at play, woman sitting with nude boy—crowd the delightful pages of his drawings in joyous rapture. He caresses his female nudes with petal-soft touches until they are aglow with profound vitality. These pages reflect a warm, animated, and intimate world; he looks at the beauty of life closely and finds delight in it himself. His drawings mark one of the finest chapters in the history of Hungarian graphic art.

The present review can hope to cover only the most essential; its object is not to catalogue. But from the list of Ferenczy's latest works attention must be called to the "Kouros" (1955), which—exceeding six feet in height—was shown at the Sixth Hungarian Fine Arts Exhibition; the bronze group in the Belvárosi Parish Church called "The Baptism of Christ" (1955); and the bust entitled "Genius" (1955). How eloquently these three works bespeak the versatility and noble poetic powers of Béni Ferenczy! With its calm contours, the "Kouros" suggests the clever proportions and fresh rhythm of the young male body; the christening group abounds in the tangled ramifications of space, and is composed in the round with equal attention given to every view. Finally, the "Genius" is Ferenczy's deepest, most enigmatic testimony to feminine beauty.

Ferenczy's monumental "Female Nude Sitting" (1956) is now being set up in one of the public squares of the Hungarian capital. The vibrant and vital body of the girl, pagan and earthly, recalls Renoir's goddesses—cast in bronze—and, like them, pays tribute to the strength and beauty of youth.

In 1956 the artist fell seriously ill and became partially restricted in his movements. Because of the long treatment required, he had to entrust friends with the arrangement of his big one-man show, which opened in May, 1959, at the National Salon. At this memorable exhibition all of his works that could be found in Hungary were put on view, including 124 sculptures and reliefs, 85 medallions and 2 ceramics. On the walls 65 drawings and water-colours completed the rich material. Both critics and the public at large received this full panorama of his works with great warmth.

After a long pause Béni Ferenczy is now modelling again, and his most recent works rank with the best of the past. In fact there seems to be greater dynamism in his latest creations, such as in the captivating young Hercules of the "Golden Age" (1959).

"Breathe our frail desires into your material, you creator of figures!" wrote the poet Gyula Illyés about Béni Ferenczy. This creator of figures, who brought into being a whole world, is now urged on in his further work by the treasure chest of his previous creations.

A JOURNEY TO ENGLAND

by

ISTVÁN VAS

Calais-Marée, Calais-Marée—the sign-boards announced from afar. We rushed to the window, expecting to get a glimpse of the sea or at least of the dunes. But there was no trace of them. We saw nothing but storehouses, rails and trucks. Before I could take down our luggage from the racks, the loudspeaker announced in French and English: "Passengers travelling to Britain are requested to remain in their carriages."

A sensation of panic, of suspense took hold of me. This was my first trip abroad in the last twelve years, and to what a strange country! I had no idea where we were going in London, what would happen upon our arrival at Victoria Station.

"You have translated five of Shakespeare's dramas, three of Thackeray's novels and many other works of English literature. Hence, H. M. Government hope you will be pleased to avail yourself of the opportunity to visit the country where these works have been created and to meet your colleagues in the field of English literature."

When last year I had received this letter I could not help thinking that Arany himself must perhaps have expected such a letter after "King John," "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and "Hamlet," that Babits and Lőrinc Szabó must certainly have expected it likewise. And in their stead, it reached only me. This thought had added considerable anxiety to my pleasure. But now, in my present anguish, I could not help thinking that although Arany, Babits and Lőrinc Szabó were all "worthier poets than I"—to use Babits's own words—they themselves would not feel less awkward if they found themselves in my place.

My anxiety began to leave me only when on board the ship the Immigration Officer looked up from our passports, saying, "I see, you are the guests of the Foreign Office." From that moment on I was passed round smoothly. And I became calm all of a sudden and noticed the sea which "Channel" though it might be called, was indeed the Atlantic Ocean. I had tried to conjure it up in my imagination so many times in my life, the last time and perhaps with the most intense passion when Endre Illés and I wrote the play "Tristan," that antique and modern Celtic love-story in which the most important protagonist—at least to me—was this sea here.

The sight of the Channel evoked the memory of a staggering news-reel seen thirteen years ago. It was shot during the retreat from Dunkirk, that strange, painful and touchingly heroic feat of arms of which I was an "eyewitness" in such comfortable surroundings. And from an even deeper layer of my being it evoked the memory of a summer full of terror and hardly admitted hopes, when, sixteen years ago, in the clutches of the Hitlerite assault threatening the existence of all of us, I kept thinking of the Channel, secretly convinced that since the Germans—after the French collapse and in the boastful age of '*Wir fahren gegen Engelland*'—had been unable to cross that narrow stretch of water they were bound to lose the war.

But I could not have alluded to this memory, dim as it was, had I not been helped to its recognition by the favourite topic of British cartoonists so often seen in newspapers: the queue, that characteristic feature of London life. This odd and slightly grotesque discipline for its own sake can be best observed at the bus stops. Compared with Budapest standards the buses are not so crowded as to justify queuing up. The passengers wait for their buses in an unduly long line, leaving wide spaces between each other, and of course nobody thinks of trying to wedge himself in between. All this seems to be quite superfluous as there are usually four or five bus lines calling at each stop. When a bus stops, five or six people leave the queue, go up to the step, where they form a new queue to get on the bus.

This discipline and politeness may seem eccentric to us, yet it acquired a deeper meaning in my eyes when I thought of the pictures in the news-reels showing how the deadly exhausted soldiers dragged themselves, in single file, to the ships—or let us rather say, to the motor boats, sailing boats, trawlers, punts, provided by private inventiveness and a stubborn, voluntary readiness to help save the soldiers. They dragged themselves along the plashy sand of the narrow dunes, while from the sea and from the land the machine-guns of low-flying aircraft incessantly spat fire at them. However frivolous it may sound, there was in their calm, disciplined and unshakable attitude something of the attracitve practice of queuing up at the bus stops. And I realized suddenly why I had been so much touched by that uplifting heroism doomed to involuntary passivity: because there was something civilian in it in every sense—and in the best sense—of the word.

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Yes, British politeness. It is so lovable and persuasive because it is so embarrassed and awkward. And it is so succinct, so lacking in *fioritura*. Its basic word is "sorry", accompanied by the greatest possible variety of bashfully sincere airs, stresses and gestures.

And "sorry" crops up in the most unexpected situations. "Sorry, it doesn't work", said the notice on the only public telephone-box I came across which did not work. In Birmingham, where in the centre of the city a vast, fenced-in building site made traffic more difficult, the building contractors put up notices expressing regret for the inconvenience caused to the public. In exchange they offered the use of a scaffold from where the building in progress could be watched. And before the scaffold a long queue waited patiently to mount its steps. Or, in the opera house a clumsily-moving foreigner treads on the foot of a lady. He turns round and catches a glimpse of that type of dark-haired, fair complexioned, peach-like distinguished beauty one meets only in England—and even there not too frequently. In his embarrassment he cannot bring himself to mutter a word. "Sorry," mumbles the girl and steps back, smiling but with eyes downcast.

On the other hand, the well-known British reserve, stiffness, reticence, undemonstrative manners, or however one may put it, reduce the value of this politeness in the eyes of many observers. I must say I could not find the slightest trace of this reserve in the various officials of the Foreign Office, the M. P. s, university professors, B. B. C. staff I met, in unknown fellow-passengers, passers-by I came across, not to mention drivers, conductors and workers in pubs. After all—as is also revealed in novels—reserve and reticence as British characteristics must have been, in the past too, confined to the British middle and upper classes. Since the war, and in particular in the past 10—12 years, life in England has apparently undergone much change.

Even clothing has changed. Those of my friends who had been to England were amazed to hear that I did not take a dinner-jacket with me. It turned out, however, that dinner-jackets were now hardly ever worn in England, at any rate much less than, say, in Paris or Vienna. Englishmen are nonchalantly dressed, though their suits are made of excellent material. I observed the same free and easy manners in social life. This does not, however, affect, their utter punctuality in private intercourse. This is most strictly observed.

My hosts were, as a rule, most interested in learning whether I found them really as reserved and guarded as they were reputed to be. I could say "no" with the greatest sincerity—nothing whatever vindicated these continental prejudices. The people I met, and they had very different backgrounds, were almost without exception kind to me and manifested an unreserved friendliness. Deep-rooted goodwill, natural affability, and often sincere, refined tact made their politeness genuine.

Yet a certain reserve still persists in them: they still avoid so-called personal topics and obviously do so not only in the presence of foreigners but also among themselves. It appeared to me that this was what people who had gone to live in England from Budapest felt as the greatest drawback. They still longed to be submerged in the tepid sparkling bath of conversation they had been used to at home, over-spiced with personal affairs and emotions. I can see the benefits of this reserve. One of them—and not the least important—is that just as a result of this repression, if you wish to call it that, the impersonal, general media of intercourse, which make up the greater part of life, are filled with far more personal cordiality and with much richer content than, say, in our country or in the animated French social forms.

Auden's poem beginning with the words "At last the secret is out" has always been one of my favourites. In fact, I translated the poem into Hungarian. The poem resolves a general idea of modern psychology into a characteristically English melody:

Behind the corpse in the reservoir, behind the
ghost on the links,
Behind the lady who dances and the man who
madly drinks,
Under the look of fatigue, the attack of
migraine and the sigh
There is always another story, there is more
than meets the eye.

This poem, with its "scent of the elder bushes, the sporting prints in the hall, the croquet matches in summer," could not have been born anywhere else but in England despite its general validity.

LONDON

Piroska calls it an ugly-beautiful city and is rather surprised that it is infrequently an inspiration for English painters. The greatest lesson to me too—having our Budapest in mind—was that the beauty and value of a city need not always be commensurate with the beauty of its buildings. One does not love a city for art history's sake. For what then? For its soul? We all feel what we mean by it, still it is difficult to explain. Does it mean the soul of its residents? That is not very palpable either. Perhaps it is easiest if we think in terms of what did and does happen there.

One of the reasons why London does not belong to the really beautiful cities is that it is not old enough. Of course, that does not apply to its foundation, we know it was an important city at the time of the Romans. What I mean is that relatively few of its old buildings survived. Considering that since the Norman Conquest nobody has ever occupied or invaded Britain, the number of disasters London had to suffer is quite considerable, from the burning down of London Bridge in the 12th century—its memory is preserved in the Nursery Song "London Bridge is falling down" and woven by Eliot into his "Waste Land" with so much stress—through the Great Fire of 1666 down to the destruction caused by V1 and V2. Hence it is the 18th and 19th centuries that left their imprint on the city, especially with their cold classicism and pseudo-Gothic romanticism. In London everything nonetheless loses its coldness and its spuriousness, just as its elegant terrace-constructions have not become soulless— —and even less so the much deprecated uniform ity of the rows of proletarian houses in the suburbs, with their red bricks and bizarre chimneys. The reason is that the diversely individual and whimsical spirit of the city assimilates everything. Perhaps that is what I liked best in London: the extremely lively organism, full of surprising turns which, particularly in the City, would not tolerate the principle of symmetry, as expressed in the building of Boulevards, Avenues and *Rings*.

I have always been very fond of *Chesterton*'s poem on the crooked road made by a tottering Englishman, which I could never translate properly. The lyrical first person singular of the poem tells how he helped to repulse Napoleon's bayonets, although he had no grudge against Napoleon but all the more against his own landlord. Still, he went to fight against Napoleon because Napoleon wanted "to straighten out the crooked road what a drunkard English made." Now I saw for myself that London itself was a "crooked" city and very much like the crooked road of the poem.

*

Secret

We Magyars, put together, are in all
Not more than dwell in London Town alone.
I know not why this fact I must recall
While listening to the city's busy drone.
What a great city! What great people! Here men
Of all five continents feel common ties.
I am their guest. They treat me well.—And then
Like in a thermal bath my body lies.
For what know they of me? Where can they start?
Were they not Angles but Angels indeed
Would then our solitary tongue and heart
Mean more to them? Here my life has one creed,
One sole secret and one sole sense.
And that is that I am a Magyar.

OXFORD

In Godfrey E. Turton's charming house we discussed Radnóti, with Turton's Radnóti translations in front of us. Turton speaks excellent Hungarian. This made me feel ashamed of my halting English whenever the conversation switched to English. Turton had been to Hungary after the war, but at that time nothing certain was yet known about Radnóti's death. Now I tried to tell him about the circumstances of his death, the mass grave, the rotting trench coat, the soaked notebook. All this sounded so utterly unreal in Oxford that I listened to myself almost with my host's incredulity.

Turton had translated one of my sonnets which I happen to like very much, and I believe nothing is lacking in the translation. He also had translated my "Eastern Song," whose Hungarian Alexandrines were rendered by him into sonorous, pathetic English stanzas. It is impossible to imagine the stressed Hungarian Alexandrines in English. Turton's arguments as to his choice of form perfectly convinced me. Still, I feel that some last century flavour was thereby added to my poem, from the era of Shelley and Keats or perhaps rather from that of Tennyson and Rossetti. Here, again, the effect produced was pretty unreal: the intense sensation, in Oxford, of the electric current of Hungarian poetry through the medium of English!

Of Turton's translations the Petőfi poems are the most perfect. With an unfailing flair he selected some of the great poems from Petőfi's last year. Their breath-taking force and exceptional potential gradate through the English translation with a natural simplicity. There is no need for questions and explanations. The universal Keats formula of "truth beauty" can fully assert itself.

*

It was not often that I talked in England in such a direct way about poetry. "To meet your colleagues in the field of English literature" apparently referred mainly to university professors. Partly because the living English poets whom I had translated and whom I wished to meet were almost without exception abroad at the time, partly because it must have been taken for granted that as a Shakespeare translator, and generally as a translator of English literature, I was interested first and foremost in meeting research workers in English literature. It was too late and would have served no purpose to explain that, though I was a Shakespeare translator, I was not a university professor and did not even have a university degree.

Needless to say, British university professors are very different from their Hungarian colleagues, primarily from an ideological point of view. Still, they have something in common "professionally."

Professor N. is a highly respected Shakespeare scholar. He has written quite a library on Shakespeare and on the history of English drama. He asked me the usual question, which of Shakespeare's plays I liked the best. I answered that "Othello," "Anthony and Cleopatra" and "The Merchant of Venice" were closest to my heart. Did I think that "Othello" and "Anthony and Cleopatra" belonged among the great Shakespeare tragedies? Yes, I answered without hesitation, and on seeing his sceptical attitude I asked for his opinion. He announced that they did not, because "Othello" belonged to Shakespeare's family dramas, while "Anthony and Cleopatra" dealt exclusively with love, and that these subjects were not really suited for a great drama. I mentioned that in Hungary two essays had been written on Othello, both of them seeking to prove that in its real significance it was a political or at least a historical tragedy. Of course, even at the time when I had read them I could not easily follow their analysis, so I was unable to sum them up from memory, let alone in English. But Professor N., despite all his politeness, smiled with a wry superiority at the very thought that Shakespeare's dramas could be approached from a Marxist angle.

Unfortunately, the acting to be seen in the Stratford Theatre does not reveal much more about Shakespeare either. I went to see "All's Well That

Ends Well," a play of particular interest to me, since I have translated it and I know every line of it. I found it most intriguing while I was translating it; its harsh jesting, laconic ambiguity, mordant happy end has continued to occupy my mind ever since. No wonder that Shaw liked it so much. It belongs to Shakespeare's late, disillusioned comedies, each of which hides a tragedy. It is one of the Shakespearean versions of love, and in this category it is among the most bitter ones. The main source of its bitterness is that Shakespeare here carries *ad absurdum* his ideal of womanhood: the courageous woman full of initiative and, at the same time, immaculately feminine and virtuous: Desdemona and, better yet, Portia who, in addition, is supremely clever. Helena, the heroine of "All's Well That Ends Well," is a lesser sister of Desdemona and Portia. Coleridge called her Shakespeare's noblest creation, fighting, as she does, with courageous initiative and masculine cleverness for Bertram, whom she finally succeeds in winning as a husband after fighting for him through fire and water. But Bertram—in contrast to Othello and Bassanio—is an unworthy, impudent fop. He does not want Helena, and he says so forthwith, in public. First, he does not want her because she is a humdrum middle class girl, but at the end of the play he confesses that he is in love with another girl, Lafeu's daughter. When Helena with the help of the king, whose life she saves for that purpose, compels him to marry her, he flees to Italy to take part in the wars there so as to get rid of her. He leaves her the message that he is ready to recognize her as his real wife if she produces the ring he wears on his finger and conceives a child by him. When Helena, through her cleverness and with the aid of flippant yet moral methods, satisfies even this seemingly impossible condition, Bertram, who, suspected of grave crimes, is again summoned before the king's tribunal, can do nothing but admit his defeat:

> "If she, my liege, can make me know this clearly
> I'll love her dearly, ever, ever dearly."

But after the antecedents, can this sudden change of attitude have any authenticity of feeling? According to Professor C. in Oxford, with whom we discussed the play and the performance, Bertram (like all men, in his opinion) is touched by the idea of having a child from Helena. Apart from the fact that in Shakespeare's dramas we hardly ever come across such homely emotions, it is inconceivable that Shakespeare the poet and playwright should not have suggested it at least by one line if it were true. No, if we consider the text and not our own ideas of what would be proper, this happy ending can on Bertram's part hardly be anything else but the very reluctant capitulation of a man who has fallen into a net. And isn't Helena's triumph in truth an unhappy one, doesn't it really mean a humiliation, beginning with the moment when, the king having granted Bertram to her, he repudiates her love in front of the king and the whole court, and continuing through the "satisfaction" she receives that he, Bertram, takes her unbeknown in the dark, instead of the woman he desires? And doesn't nobility, cleverness, lofty initiative in Helena degenerate into assertive obstinacy, doesn't her almost ruthless and selfish insistence look like the fiasco of a courageous woman in love, just as Ophelia's example represents failure resulting from passivity in love? Sir Edmond Kerchever Chamber's contention that this play was a product of "Shakespeare's unusual moods," —a characteristic piece of British understatement—is very apt, and in these circumstances the ending "all's well that ends well" seems to be a parody of the sad but firm encouragement proclaimed at the end of Shakespeare's tragedies.

Since, so far as I know, the literature on Shakespeare does not deal with this aspect and these elements of the play, I looked forward with great interest to seeing to what extent the new stage management in Stratford would reveal them. In Shakespeare's case, it is true, love conflicts are never concerned purely with love—as I haltingly tried to explain to Professor N., who did not seem to appreciate it very much. I was consequently anxious to discover how this audacity in social thinking could assert itself in Britain, manifesting itself not only in the humanist contrast between merit and rank, but also in the figure of Bertram and his counterpart, the *buffo* character of Parolles. When Parolles is asked whether Bertram loved Diana, his Italian sweetheart, he answers: as a gentleman loves a woman, he loved her and loved her not. In my opinion this is the fundamental social criticism conveyed by the play.

This, it seems was not enough for the manager, Tyrone Guthrie—he is said to belong to the group of "angry young men"—and he supplemented the original audacity extrinsically by the introduction of a rather inorganically treated modernity. He chose as a frame the late-Victorian period, that is to say, a period which constitutes the greatest possible contrast to the spirit of the play. This change of background, I must say, completely ruins the interpretation given by the distinguished Edith Evans. In costumes dating from the end of the 19th century, she makes a somewhat hypocritical, whining Victorian lady out of the grand Renaissance figure of the Countess of Rousillon, mother to Bertram. What she gives is excellent, but the style is not in keeping with the play. How could this modernization possibly allow the multiple audacity of Shakespeare's love and social message to unfold? In addition, the king, the spokesman of Shakespeare's humanitarian feelings, gives the impression of some caricature *à la* Offenbach. I do not know whether the British feel that they are compensated by the unquestionably well-meant political aggressiveness whereby the otherwise sparklingly gifted manager, in the second act, changes the uniforms of the turn of the century into present-day tropical uniforms and the Italian scuffle into a caricature of the Suez adventure. I could not help thinking what the opinion in the West, British and non-British, would be if we tried to modernize Shakespeare in this way? Also when seeing Lawrence Olivier's "Richard III," I wondered how they would take it if we were to treat Shakespeare's text so arbitrarily? I am glad to say we do not want to do so.

Only Zoe Caldwell's art, combining a natural mode of speaking, full of vitality, with Shakespearean sonority, can break through these concepts of the stage manager. Her Helena, even in the costumes of the turn of the century, can convey something of the nobility, the mordancy, the determination, resulting simultaneously in triumph and disaster, of that strange heroine. Of course, she too could not cope with the final scene left unsolved by the stage manager.

When all is said and done, we have to conclude that in Stratford-on-Avon, as elsewhere in England, the most essential information on Shakespeare that cannot be obtained at home is supplied, after all, by the willows, the wall-flowers and the varied flora so well-known from Shakespeare's dramas amidst which the river Avon slowly winds its way.

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Of all the marvels Cambridge can offer mention should be made only of the following: In the Chapel of King's College—an artistic marvel of the 15th century—there is, on the main wall of the nave, a list engraved in golden letters of the college undergraduates who gave their lives in the two world wars. I noticed the poet Rupert Brooke's name among those killed in the first war, with the dates: 1887—1915. On the side wall there is but one name, that of Ferenc Békássy: 1893—1915. Yes, he is the young poet about whom Babits wrote an essay after his death.

In the courtyard a very old man, suffering from gout and leaning on a stick, came towards us with flying white hair. I was introduced to him. If I remember well, his name was Sir John Sheppard. He had been Ferenc Békássy's professor. I was meditating: Békássy died 44 years ago; his master, Babits, "the old poet," died 18 years ago. Sir John Sheppard (?) had retired and had now come back to direct the Euripides play performed by the college undergraduates. Yes, he did remember Békássy, he had had few such brilliant pupils ever since.

*

Of all the colleges, I paid the longest visit to Trinity College, because Thackeray graduated from there and had Henry Esmond, my favourite hero, study there. I was shown the manuscript of the novel in my capacity as its translator. It was a lucky choice on my part to go to that particular college, as Trinity appears to have been the college of poets. From among my 17th century "metaphysical" poets, Herbert, Cowley, Suckling and Marvell went there. I saw their portraits. The revolutionary-looking Marvell with sleek black hair and flaming eyes, the distinguished-looking Sir John Suckling with curly hair and an expression of wistful decadence in his eyes, in a lace collar and lace gloves. Marvell was a Puritan, one of the few who after the Restoration did not join the other side. His reward was penury. Suckling, on the other hand, committed suicide in Paris as a Royalist *émigré*.

A booklet containing the history of the College is available, written by Trevelyan, the famous historian, who for ten years was a Warden of the College. At the end of the booklet there is a list containing the names of the celebrities who had been members of Trinity College, classified according to professions. The list is headed by the members of the Royal Family, among them Edward VII. They are immediately followed by the poets: Dryden, Byron, Tennyson, Fitzgerald and Housman besides the ones already mentioned. Prime Ministers and "other public men" come only after them, beginning with Essex. Then there are the scientists and mathematicians, among them Newton, Maxwell, Rutherford, Eddington, Jeans; classical philologists, including Housman, mentioned also among the poets; philosophers, such as Bacon; historians, such as Macaulay; musicians, judges, jurists, priests and theologians. First among the last-named is Archbishop Fisher, executed by Henry VIII for not recognizing the supremacy of the State over the Church. And only after all these, at the very end, come the "miscellaneous writers"—and among them Thackeray.

T. S. ELIOT

Of all the poets I wanted to meet, he was the only one I succeeded in doing so. It is true, he interested me the most. It was not easy to get in touch with him. My hosts shook their heads and hinted that he would be a difficult person. Someone said he was not like a poet, he was more like a banker, he dressed and behaved like one; but then—my interlocutor added contemptuously—he had, of course, been a banker. Then I heard he was American, and this was said with an unmistakable stress of reserve such as I so often noticed in connection with the term. As is well-known, Eliot is of American origin. He settled down in England in 1915, when he was 27, and became a British subject in 1927.

When arrangements were initiated to bring about a meeting between the two of us, he must have misunderstood the situation or else he had not been properly informed and my friends came back in alarm: Eliot was indignant since he had not been asked for his permission to publish a Hungarian edition of his poems. When he was told that I wanted to talk about a forthcoming edition and not a volume already published, he invited me to tea at his office in Faber and Faber, the distinguished publishers of poetry, essays and books of art, of which he was manager. I learnt that despite his 71 years, he came to his office every day. He, nevertheless, put off the interview twice so that finally I did not feel much like going, besides not wanting to appear importunate. But the go-betweens anxiously sought to persuade me that Mr Eliot insisted on our meeting and it would be difficult to call it off. His condition was that we should have a *tête-à-tête*, he would not put up with the presence of a third person. Those who heard about the invitation were astonished that Eliot was ready to receive me at all.

The office of Faber and Faber is a white villa-like building in Russell Square, in the vicinity of the University and the British Museum. I felt rather embarrassed when I sat down opposite the greatest living English poet, indeed, in my opinion the greatest present-day poet of the Western world. He did not help to dispel my embarrassment though he started apologizing immediately for the cancelled appointments, which he put down to his ill-health. Yet he did not in the least give the impression of not being in perfect physical condition.

He is tall, well-built, erect, neither too thin nor too stout, ginger-haired and only slightly turning grey. His photograph on the dust-cover of his collected poems is misleading. There, for goodness knows what reason, he screws his face into a thousand wrinkles. His face struck me as quite smooth, and not a bit worn; he would pass for a man in his fifties. He was the only Englishman I met who corresponded to our preconceived picture of them. Impeccably dressed, he wore a navy-blue suit with white stripes, a striped shirt with starched collar and cuffs. His manners were a bit stiff, his gestures formal, and he weighed every word he spoke. On the whole, however, he, too, was no exception to general British kindness. He tried to speak to me slowly and intelligibly and praised my English. Anyway, he understood me.

Gradually I began to realize that his bearing, seemingly so self-assured and reserved, might hide some embarrassment, even some awkwardness. We sat opposite each other, rather close, but he hardly ever looked at me and even when I spoke he barely raised his eyes. This was all the more strange since he nodded repeatedly, though the content of our conversation scarcely justified it. Sometimes, however, I caught his slanting glance as he was scrutinizing me with his grey—or maybe blue-grey?—eyes.

I told him that I had become interested in his poetry 25 years ago when I first heard about him from Mihály Babits. Then I spoke about Babits. He did not ask anything, he did not say anything, although he must have known Babits's name, as I knew that he had at least looked into the German edition of Babits's "History of European Literature." Anyway, he had mentioned it in a letter sent to Hungary. I told him that "Waste Land" had been translated previously by our excellent poet Sándor Weöres. Again no questions, either about Weöres or why I had translated it again. Then we spoke about the forthcoming collection of works of his. I asked him if, besides the poems, two dramas might not also be included and which one he would suggest aside from "Murder in the Cathedral." Without hesitation he proposed "The Family Reunion." This is just what I, too, would have selected, but Eliot even gave the reasons for his choice. He said he had better dramas technically, but poetically that was his best. Still, he did not want to interfere and would not object if any other of his dramas were chosen.

His stiffness gradually vanished. There was no trace of pride or self-conceit in what he said and in the way he said it. He asked whether there would not be any ideological obstacles in the way of the publication of an Eliot volume. "I hope not," was my answer, and I added that I felt compelled of course to write an introduction to his poems and point out the problems encountered in his poetry. Not for all the world would he ask what those problems might be, although they were the very things I wanted to discuss with him. Instead he said he knew that in our part of the world his reputation was bad, all sorts of things had been said about him, he had even been called a fascist. I told him I knew nothing about that and the point in question was rather the contradictions inherent in the essence of his poetry and not practical political objections; then I tried to revert to the point I had in mind. But no answer was forthcoming; he kept silent. I was more and more urged on by my wicked curiosity of wanting to know "what's behind it?" and asked him whether he knew that one of his reviewers had said that if hyenas and jackals could type they would write poems *à la* Eliot. No, he replied with indifference, although I felt sure he knew about it. But when I mentioned the comments made by my friend O. on that criticism, he suddenly burst into relieved laughter and said, "Of course, if they could type," at the same time screwing his face into innumerable tiny wrinkles.

Then he went so far as to ask me about my translations. I also mentioned Apollinaire, whereupon he inquired, with unwonted naturalness, how I translated him. After a few sentences I remarked that in my opinion modern European poetry had two main trends, the one initiated by Apollinaire, who was also its greatest representative, the other by Eliot. I may have expressed myself bluntly, erroneously, or perhaps I touched on a delicate subject. In any case, he cut in abruptly, saying that at the beginning of his career he had not even known Apollinaire and although he thought much of him, their poetry had nothing in common. Eagerly I tried to set his mind at rest, pointing out that I myself considered the traits that divided them more essential than their similarities.

After three quarters of an hour I stood up, not wanting to waste more of his time. He, too, got up, without any effort to keep me longer, but then started in again on another subject. Presently he sat down and then after a while looked at me with astonishment, as if he did not know why I was standing, and casually asked me to sit down. This interlude was repeated three times. He showed me the new edition of Saint John Perse's translation dating from 1930, and I told him that after concluding my translation of his works I wanted to translate Saint John Perse. Then when he discovered that I did not know his new drama "The Elderly Statesman," he presented me with a copy of it bearing a strikingly cold inscription: "Dedicated to Mr. István Vas"—but later I heard that he was not wont to write in a more cordial tone.

He added that on one occasion he himself did some translation from the Hungarian. As a young man he worked in Lloyds Bank. Since he was known to occupy himself with languages, he was one day given a short letter to translate which had come from Hungary. Not having the courage to reveal that he knew no word of Hungarian, he set about the task and after one week's labour in the British Museum, consulting books and dictionaries, he succeeded in solving the riddle.

In the meantime he provided me with the explanation of one of his obscure lines, and, making use of the opening, I tried again to put out my feelers, politely and hesitatingly: what was the poetic value and interpretation he attached to his frequently repeated lines and passages that referred to some lines or passages of old English or other poets. I added that these references made the translator's work much more difficult. But all he replied was that the poems were intelligible even without comprehending the references. (My opinion is different, but this is a matter that does not concern us here and rather pertains to my introduction prefacing his poems.)

Finally I asked him whether he could recommend someone to whom I could turn whenever I had difficulties in translating his works—immediately adding that I did not mean him personally. He mentioned one or two essays which dealt with his poetry and recommended the author of one of them, an Oxford professor. But it turned out that the essays were of a theoretical nature and I told him that what I needed was practical, philological assistance. Clearing his throat and amidst much hesitation he bashfully offered his own help. I showed reluctance, but he added that he had collaborated systematically with his French translator. After all, he said a bit ironically, that was the best solution from the point of view of the translation. Then I finally said good-bye to T. S. Eliot.

When I stepped out into Russell Square, suddenly Babits's bitter, sallow face emerged in my memory, the Babits from whom I had first heard Eliot's name. Yes, the same embarrassment, the same sensitiveness, restlessness and anxiety characterized him that I had just seen behind the well-wrought armour. How exposed, how unprotected, how open was the look in Babits's nervously vibrating eyes and what fascinating courage there was in his frightened look. Of course, Eliot was lucky to have been able to acquire the armour of that "banker's" exterior, the security needed for self-preservation. Curiously enough, this armour serves, to some extent, as a clue to the inhibitions, indirectness and intellectual interpositions in his poetry, to the diffident falterings, — — so out of tune with his great spirit, whereby he avoids straightforwardness even when simple words would be the right choice in place of complicated phrases. On the other hand it is doubtful whether, without this protective covering, he could have told all that he had to tell and which constituted a rather important message, certainly the most important in contemporary English poetry. No doubt, the hidden sensitiveness, the essentially simple lyrical feeling, which is the innermost core of all real poetry, and thus also of Eliot's, could find its solitary and shy expression only behind that protective armour. And as I think back, it did emerge at times, resignedly and plaintively, from behind his reserved bearing and the probably slightly affected tone of his voice.

Turning to the real poetic personality from the dissembling blood-and-flesh personality, I listen in myself to the beginning of the second part of "Little Gidding," one of the pieces of the "Four Quartets": "Ash on an old man's sleeve . . ." He wrote it in 1942 during the bombing of London. It is characteristic of Eliot's poetry that this warmly sincere song switches over, in its intellectual content as well, to an indirect tone, suggestive of Dante's *terza rima* and a Dantesque atmosphere, and that finally in the last line, alluding to Hamlet, the "Composed ghost" vanishes in the morning twilight.

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When twelve years ago I was in Siena, I was greatly impressed by the town's motto: *Cor magis tibi Siena pandit* (Siena expands your heart). There is no town that would better deserve this motto, from many points of view. Still, the sentence is of general validity too. Perhaps it embodies the innermost aim of every world traveller. For isn't this the supreme value of all new cities and countries, of all our journeys, of every strangeness we grow fond of? I had not been abroad for the past twelve years, and three weeks are much too short a time in which to get to know a country or even a city. But one thing is certain, England has greatly expanded my heart.

BUILDING A CLUB IN A WORKING-CLASS DISTRICT

by

VILMOS FARAGÓ

The Hungarian trade unions run three or four hundred cultural centres and halls. The largest of them is the Pesterzsébet Cultural Hall in the southern part of the capital, which has been operating for five years under the management of the Hungarian Iron Workers' Union. It was established on behalf of the workers and its *raison d'être* is to satisfy their cultural requirements.

"BUDAPEST'S HOTEL"

The 20th district of Budapest, formed as a result of a merger of the suburbs Pesterzsébet and Soroksár, has a population of about 120,000. What makes it almost unique among all the districts of the capital is the fact that 80 per cent of its population is made up of industrial workers. Yet there are not many factories in this district; and the few that exist can hardly be called very big. In fact, none of the principal industrial plants of Budapest may be found there. Thus it is not the blast of the whistle of the nearby works that wakes the late sleeper—those factory whistles blow farther away: at Csepel, Lágymányos, Ferencváros, Kőbánya and other industrial districts of the capital. In the morning, trams, buses and trains rush the Pesterzsébet workers to every corner of Budapest and in the afternoon rock them back home to their leisure, recreation—and sleep. This peculiarity of Pesterzsébet earned it the nickname of "Budapest's Hotel" as early as the beginning of the century.

And it explains, too, the particular part the Iron Workers' Cultural Centre plays in the life of the district.

The inhabitants of Pesterzsébet are commuters. Many of them will travel as much as 8—10 miles to and from work each weekday, and while public transportation service isn't bad—still, distance is distance. After hours, everybody hurries home—how could anyone be enticed to stay on through cultural programmes arranged at the works? Another factor is that a considerable proportion of Pesterzsébet workers go home not to forbidding tenement houses but to attractive cottages with little gardens. The people in charge of the Centre, who carry the responsibility of providing culture for workers who day after day shirk the cultural influence of their works, find themselves faced, moreover, with "subjects of educational activity," who hurry to their homes to strip cheerfully to their shirt-sleeves and delve into their hobbies—breeding pigeons, poultry, rabbits or bees, or pottering about their gardens! Is it possible to entice such people to leave their happy lairs? Well, with many of them, it isn't—at least, for the time being.

That not a few of them have been lured away is due, aside from the adroitness of the Centre's activists, in part to the positive effect of the very factor whose negative consequences have just been pointed out—that is, distance. A worker, who, because he has to travel a couple of hours to and from work, makes a dash to get home as soon as he comes off shift, will think twice before he leaves his home again in the evening, to seek entertainment and recreation in the neon-lit downtown section of the city where most theatres are situated. And one out of every two workers would no doubt repress his thirst for culture, were not the Iron Workers' Cultural Centre at hand as the only important institution in the district designed to quench this thirst. Its radiating windows beckon in the darkness, and the Pesterzsébet citizenry flock there night after night.

DOWN TO BRASS TACKS

Consisting of a one-storeyed, modern building, with twenty-six rooms, between offices and club premises, and a spacious auditorium and ballroom, the Centre was opened in November 1954. However, the opening ceremony came off without flowery speeches. There were no addresses by "comrades from HQ" exhorting Flórián Szita, the manager, to "raise high the Banner"—or bear aloft the standard, torch, and so on—"of Working-class Culture." No, there were neither banners, standards, nor torches. Instead, someone asked Szita casually:

"I say, have you asked them to give you a danger bonus over and above your pay?"

"What's that for?" the manager laughed behind his spectacles.

"Why, look here. Once the gang from 'the Dzsumbuj' has begun to frequent this joint, you'll be spending half of your life in casualty wards."

That was how it began.

Did Flórián Szita get frightened? A little, perhaps. But he had read Makarenko's book, The Road to Life, and thought that somehow he, too, would manage to cope with his Gorky Colony. So he buckled down to the job. He made the first move, then the second, then the third, the fourth.

Move One. A library? Well, one might as well begin with that! So he salvaged the remnants of a former local public library, received fresh stocks from union headquarters and from the library of the Trade Union Workers' House, and bought some more as soon as he had a budget—so at last the centre's 4,000-volume library could be opened. The library's stocks were not large, but their composition was a very fortunate one, with a sound ratio of new and old editions. The number of readers grew with surprising rapidity.

Move Two. This move was dictated by the necessity of bringing to the attention of the district's population that the Cultural Centre had opened its door to them. Every Saturday night, between November 1954 and March 1955, the manager offered the use of the premises to the local factories and mass organizations, requesting them to arrange their programmes there. The latter accepted the offer—the experiment was successful. Now it was the turn of the Centre itself to come out with its own programmes in order to build up a clientele.

Move Three. This was a public opinion poll taken among mothers and teachers to find out what activities they would like to have the Centre organize. "Let's have a ballet course," said most of the people that had been approached, and, although this was the last thing the manager had thought of, he had to bow to the public will. "All right, let there be a ballet course!" And there was a ballet course. It was started in January 1955, with 55 participants. There was a bevy of spindle-shanked girls, who in the beginning listened in some bewilderment to mysterious expressions like "pas de trois" and "pas de quatre."

Move Four. What entertainment to provide for teen-agers? The answer was obvious enough: dances, of course! Thirty youngsters signed up for the first dancing lessons. A folk-dance group was formed with the cooperation of the Lamp Factory. In an effort to turn the young people who had been enticed here into steady visitors, they were given a club room on the premises, and dances, arranged with the help of a newly formed jazz band, were made a standing item on the weekly programme.

Move Five was occasioned by the fulfilment of the sinister prophecy made by the man who enquired after the "danger bonus." The young people from the disreputable Illatos Road quarter—the "Dzsumbuj" (pron. Joombooy)—did in fact begin to frequent the Centre. They had a lazy way of walking, but were quick with their hands, a lot of big louts with a firm conviction that free-for-alls were as essential a part of a pleasant Saturday Night Social as a band or a refreshment bar. That belief had to be knocked out of their heads. A fifteen-member vigilance committee consisting of hand-picked, lusty young workers from the local factories was set up. The manager, acting on the principle of "set a thief to catch a thief", also picked four of the Dzsumbuj gang. These fellows only had nicknames: "Jackie", "Slim", "Rags" and "Marcell No-lights"—the influence of "modern" thrillers was evident in their nomenclative imagination. The set-a-thief-to-catch-a-thief principle worked admirably. No vigilantes were more inexorable and more reliable than these four.

What was—and is—the operational routine of the vigilance committee? To begin with, they are on duty day after day by rotation, but turn out in full force at Saturday night dances and Sunday afternoon shows. There is a whole scale of sanctions for rude behaviour or picking a quarrel, beginning with mere "chucking-out" and proceeding to repeated exposure on the loudspeaker at the offender's place of work, exposure on the factory's notice-board, prohibition from entering the Centre's premises for a month, for six months, or final expulsion.

Move Six. Why arrange only dances and programmes of questionable value in the large auditorium? Why not invite one of the theatrical companies? Ah, what great excitement it gave them, that first show! Saturday night (it seemed the most convenient) A Comedy of Errors produced by the Madách Theatre Company—tremendous organizational activity—distribution of handbills in the streets—and, in the end, a loss of 15,000 forints! There was no audience.

It was some time afterwards that they began to suspect that for the workers of Pesterzsébet, Saturday night was a time for cleaning up and resting, or for goodness knows what sort of occupation—but they wouldn't go to the shows then. It was found that the most suitable time would be that which had been thought the most impossible one—Sunday, 4 p. m. Thereafter, all theatrical performances would be arranged—and are still scheduled—for that hour.

Move Seven. By now the time had arrived to raise the question of how to dress. Whoever took a look at the crowds attending a show or a dancing party here four years ago must have realized that this was pre-eminently a cultural problem. Or to be more precise, it was a question of refinement. Some people would come to the dances wearing quilted jackets or grease-stained overalls, monstrous boots or laced top-boots. Then came the night when the Vigilance Committee members stationed themselves at the entrance door and politely told visitors in quilted jackets to get back home and change their clothes. Did that produce a proletarian outcry! Some people even went so far as to complain to the Iron Workers HQ.

"What does he mean, this Szita fellow?" they protested. "We ain't no toffs, not us! Maybe he wants us to put on bow-ties, too!"

But Szita and the Vigilance Committee returned:

"We'll tell you what we want. We want you to be dressed decently, like decent people. And what do you mean, you're no toffs? What do you think you are, anyway? Why, who runs the show in this country, if not you, working chaps?"

Thereupon the quilted-jacket people went home, got into their dark-blue worsted suits, and came back, perfect baa-lambs. As for the query concerning ties, they deserved special thanks for that, for next time the VC, jumping at the idea, checked male visitors for ties. A necktie lending-service was set up where those who forgot to put on ties could borrow one for a whole night against security.

Move Eight. It would be hard to describe the next move. From that time on, things began to move rapidly. Whoever could keep track of them? One after the other, special interest societies were formed, courses were launched, popular science lectures were begun, the library stocks grew rapidly, and a restaurant was opened. The Centre's annual budget shot up to over one million forints, then soon rocketed beyond the two-million mark and climbed on vigorously towards three million. But more about this later.

STOCK-TAKING

Now I propose to review the life of the Cultural Centre as it is today and, as far as it lies within me, to draw some conclusions.

The Library. It now contains more than 12,000 volumes, and the composition of the stock has remained a fortunate one. The following is a breakdown according to the main lines of interest:

	volumes		volumes
Fiction	6,328	Technology	567
Juvenile literature	1,147 (too few!)	Agriculture	47 (too few!)
Politics and Sociology	1,190	Art	529
Linguistics	76	History of literature	469
Natural sciences	289	Geography	190
Medical science	52	General subjects	59

The favourable impression imparted by the above list is strengthened when we remember that all this is "live" material; "dead" literature was weeded out on January first, 1957.

Readers number 1,013—not very many, but the picture becomes rosier when about 4,000 readers of the Pesterzsébet Branch of the Municipal Library are taken into account. About the proportional distribution of interests, more will be said later on; for the time being, let me point out that nearly 50 per cent of all readers are either primary school children or secondary school students. This percentage is too high. Unfortunately, the same applies to most other institutions. To increase the number of adult readers is, perhaps, the most urgent objective of public library policy.

So far as the scale of library service and the types of literature borrowed are concerned, here is the turnover of one day (February 4, 1959), which may be said to be typical:

	volumes
Hungarian classics	42
Hungarian moderns	35
Foreign classics	40
Soviet literature	7
Juvenile literature	6
Other fiction	36
Political literature	1
Technology	1
Natural sciences	4
Literature, science of,	8
General subjects	3
Total	183 volumes

The above books were borrowed by 67 readers. The most striking point about it all is the low proportion of popular science literature, and particularly deplorable is the indifference shown to technological books. It is small comfort to suppose that technically minded readers may avail themselves of the services of their works libraries as the most obvious source of technical literature. It may be taken for granted that the figure for juvenile literature (6 volumes) is misleading as to real demand. It rather reflects the small assortment of juvenile literature in the library. Youthful readers simply eat up the available stock, and part of the replacements are virtually lost as far as library circulation is concerned, since parents, in the meantime, buy the books in question for their children. So the librarian wastes his time recommending them to young readers, who proudly decline them with a "No, thanks, I've got that at home."

Restocking is on a sound foundation. This year's allocation for the purpose totals 60,000 forints: a contract has been concluded with the State Book Distributors to the tune of 40,000 forints while the remaining 20,000 forints is earmarked for second-hand purchases.

2. *Popular Science Lectures.* I have listened to three of the series of lectures on psychology and shall deal with this in greater detail.

The lecturer is an excellent, ambitious expert on the subject, and—a quality not frequently combined with the former—he is endowed with didactic ability. He has a way of bringing his audience, within a few moments, into a state of absorbed attentiveness, which he achieves mainly by always raising a number of questions before proceeding to his conclusions. The latter ring like an answer in the audience's mind already roused by his questions. In general, he lays the issues relating to his scientific field as problems before his audiences, outlining all possible tentative solutions, and only then does he proceed to give the present-day standpoint of Marxist psychology on that particular question. Through this convincing and exciting (because it is polemical) method he manages to give his audience glimpses of the scientific history of the various issues. He conveys an idea of the clash of differing ideologies in the field of psychological science and wins confidence in materialist psychology. Besides exciting curiosity in psychological problems, he finds some quite tangible means of activizing his audience by carrying out some easily performed psychological tests on the spot, the subject of these tests being the audience itself.

His theme offers the lecturer scores of ideological conclusions. Unfortunately, he makes use of them with so much caution and so indirectly as to be almost ineffective. This is unworthy both of the Marxist science he represents and of the audience, who eagerly expect—on ideological issues more than anything else—a firm and straightforward attitude. There appears in my mind's eye the working woman they told me about at the Iron Workers' Union HQ. She was attending a lecture on astronomy, listening, with an ecstatic look in her face, to the wonderful things the lecturer said about boundless space and the planets in it, the solar system and the galaxy. When the lecturer finished his discourse, the tension that had been bottled up in our working woman found an outlet, and with the Archimedean joy of sudden discovery she exclaimed:

"But then there's no room for God in Heaven! Is it possible that there is no God at all?"

At the third lecture, which attracted about 80 people, I distributed questionnaires among members of the audience. Forty-five people filled in their questionnaires, and as this was the more or less permanent audience of one lecture-series, I think I am justified in applying to the whole series the statistical inferences drawn from the questionnaires. At this point let me confine myself to stating that, here too, there's something wrong with the composition of the audience. Things are even worse than in the case of those who use the library: 65 per cent of the audience are adolescents! Let there be no misunderstanding — — I do not complain that there are too many youths; what I do deplore is that there are too few grown-up people. Several children, 10 to 12 years old, fidgeted restlessly and scrambled about in the audience and, as they could not sit through the lecture, they eventually walked out of the room amidst much banging of the door. The only time they sat motionless and pop-eyed was when the lecturer was discussing questions of sex with remarkable candour. They should not have been permitted to attend.

The efforts made at the Centre in disseminating knowledge still lack the form of organized courses designed directly and solely to raise the general educational standard. Perhaps the reader may guess what I'm getting at—something like Workers' Academies, Parents' Schools, Girls' and Women's Schools, general information courses and the like. Of the courses which, in an indirect way, do provide some additional education, it is the foreign-language and sewing and dressmaking courses, first of all, that deserve notice.

The language courses are attended by a total of 287 people. Of this number, 172 (in four groups) are studying German, 85 (in two groups) English, and another 30 (also in two groups) Russian. The language teachers are excellent in their field and do not content themselves with teaching only the rules of grammar and giving merely a verbal knowledge of words—they strive to impart to their pupils a living, working knowledge of the language by means of conversation. As far as the importance of these courses as a means for disseminating knowledge is concerned, let me suggest the banal thought that language is mainly an instrument for widening one's education and that even by studying languages one may obtain some idea about the spirit—and even literature and history—of a people. And that is no trifling matter.

The sewing and dressmaking courses are attended by around 100 persons. Naturally—or is it no longer quite so natural?—all the participants are female, mostly young girls and a few married women. Each course lasts for three months and one can choose between beginners' and advanced courses, according to previous skill. What can one learn in three months' time? One can get a grounding in cutting and a certain manual skill in needlework. The educational and cultural opportunities, inherent in these sewing and dressmaking courses are not being fully taken advantage of. What I have in mind is not talks on political affairs (although, elsewhere, I have seen one instance of this being managed quite skilfully, with no appearance of forcedness), but something that would follow from the nature of the course—lectures giving information on materials, on the history of fashions, on taste in clothing and hygiene, on the poetry of colours, lines and shapes. Is anything being done on these lines in the courses? Scarcely. Of course, such talks are not a vital necessity; still, there is one auxiliary course which would not be amiss: the girls are no good at sums and have forgotten even the rudiments of geometry. Couldn't they be given a few classes in arithmetic and geometry?

As for the special-interest circles, I shall confine myself to enumerating them. Thus there are: apiarists (85 members), pigeon-breeders (360 members), philatelists—adults and children—(174), amateur photographers (20), toy-makers (28) and model-aircraft builders (26). These special-interest circles add a touch of colour to the life of the Centre, and, although their activities are not of primary importance, they are—with a total membership of nearly 700—part of the hard-core of the Centre's *habitués*.

3. *Artistic activities*. The fact that the Cultural Centre, even though in an outlying district, is nevertheless within the confines of Budapest (the El Dorado of theatres and other entertainments) determines, to a certain extent, its artistic activities. Thus it runs only such art clubs or courses as are formed in response to the demand of prospective members. These art clubs, accordingly, place the stress on the special education of their members, rather than on performances, as their primary objective.

The children's dramatic club, for instance, whose forty gifted members have been selected from more than one hundred applicants, has been set up for the express purpose of acquainting its members, through a series of studio activities, with stagecraft. The object, therefore, is not to stage hastily rehearsed productions at the Centre, but to turn these children into well-trained amateur actors who will be mainstays of the dramatic groups of their respective schools.

Seeing the unbelievably low standard of amateur acting at the schools, members of the Centre's staff have been induced to tackle this matter also from the point of view of the teachers. They have offered to provide professional guidance for school teachers responsible for amateur cultural activities. It would be going too far to say that the announced course of the

Teachers' Amateur Stage Management Studio has had an extraordinarily great response, but ten people attend it faithfully, and this is a good beginning. It is an encouraging sign that seems to warrant the hope that some day the principle of turning the district Cultural Centres into centres of methodological guidance for their respective areas will be realized.

The thirty-six-member brass band cannot stick only to the training of its members as an end in itself—it follows from the very nature of this "genre" that the band cannot stay within the walls of the Centre. On festive occasions the streets resound with their music. For the time being they have no uniforms, but expect to get some police uniforms, altered and adapted for their purposes, before long.

The forty-two-member string orchestra and the vocal ensemble of twelve can boast of several successful concerts. Experts might study their activities with some profit. I did not attempt to do so. There is no sorrier figure than a meddlesome dilettante.

The central chorus of the Iron Workers Union, proud of its nearly sixty-year existence, has retained a rigid *esprit de corps* to this day, and stray new recruits whom chance may bring in are soon ousted from this elect society. A stratagem is now being prepared against it. The man in charge of the Centre's teenagers' club happens to be a choirmaster, and it has been decided that he should form a youth chorus from members of his club. This chorus, when brought up to an adequate level of singing, is to be merged with the Central "old boys' " Chorus. Once acquiring membership, these young people should, with tact and persistent work as well as by their very presence, be able to break the old caste spirit.

Three art courses are being run: a ballet course for children, a music course and a ballroom dancing course. All three are heavily attended, the ballet by 156 little girls, the music course by 78 children and adults, and the ballroom dancing course by 181 young people.

Ballet teaching is based on the subject-matter of instruction of the Budapest School of Ballet. Watching the little pupils' graceful movements, one cannot help being deeply moved. And who is more deeply moved than their mothers? They sit through each session, and as long as they only manifest pardonable parental partiality ("My little girl's the best dancer of the lot"), there can be no objection. Since, however, the majority of mothers have generally been found to urge on their little girls by dangling the carrot of an Ulanova career before their noses, I took a flying public opinion poll among them. Well, I have to take their answers at face value, I suppose. It seems that Pesterzsébet mothers are practical-minded women—they only expect the ballet course to give their daughters grace, agility and charm.

The piano and violin instruction course is, as a matter of fact, the "local branch" of the Municipal School of Music—the Cultural Centre only provides a home for it. Yet their relation is something more than that of tenant and lodger. They are organically integrated. This course is responsible—thanks to the hard-working pupils who keep practising from morning till night—for an almost unceasing supply of noise at the Centre. Let no one read irony into this remark. A well-run Cultural Centre *ought to* be noisy!

The answers I received to one question—a rather naive one, as it turned out—I put to the piano pupils afforded me a glimpse into the financial circumstances of Pesterzsébet workers: I found out that *each* pupil had a piano at his or her home.

What could one say about ballroom dancing? Conservative old age would dismiss the question with a wave of the hand. Yet there is no reason whatever for disparagement. What teen-age boys and girls get out of this course is something that will last them a lifetime. It is possible, of course, that mambo, now being taught, will fall out of fashion before long, but the rules of conduct and manners they learn here should certainly prove more lasting. And the group dances are, in a way, a school of democracy for young people, as they are among the rare occasions when students and young intellectuals mix with young workers.

Large as the attendance of these courses and the membership of art circles may appear, they are negligible compared with the population of the district. Besides, special interest circles and courses attended by people ready to put time and energy in self-training in artistic activities are not identical with efforts to satisfy the artistic requirements of the broad masses. This latter end is promoted by cultural programmes and theatrical shows held about once in a fortnight in the auditorium (or, in summer, on an open-air stage); sometimes, variety entertainments are arranged at the Tátra cinema. These shows attract some 30,000 people yearly, being the second most heavily attended type of collective entertainment after the dances. Since the managers of the Cultural Centre are people of discriminating tastes, these large audiences always get high-standard artistic entertainment which is also above reproach from the point of view of programme policy.

The so-called entertainment programmes with dances have proved a total flop here. People who came for the dancing were bored with the programme, while others who were attracted by the programme could not peacefully enjoy the show because of the impatiently clamouring "dancing" faction. So it was decided to separate the dances from the entertainment programmes.

As the director puts it, "We now have two separate sources of income and two satisfied audiences."

4. Club life. We have the good example of the cultural centre movement in several people's democracies to caution us against any one-sided development of our recreation centres into mere "entertainment concerns." The population should be given the opportunity of frequenting the local Cultural Centre as if it were a second home to them, and dropping in, even when there is "nothing on," to have a chat, play at cards or chess—that is to say, to live a club life.

The management of the Pesterzsébet Cultural Centre has recognized this possibility, and, although, as in many other fields of activity, it has not yet got beyond the trial-and-error phase, it can already boast of some noteworthy progress in this sphere.

The first concern of the management was the pensioned old metal workers, veteran trade unionists. A Pensioners' Club has been organised for them: a room has been specially allotted for this purpose, and it has been furnished with cloth-covered tables and comfortable armchairs and equipped with a radio, chessboards and pieces, and packs of cards. Some twenty or twenty-five out of a total of about one hundred old-age pensioners have formed a body of regular visitors who spend all their day at the club, which has thus become, not a second, but, indeed, a first home to them. Their constant presence is of inestimable value. In their person they form a living link between the past and the present, and they make themselves useful in attending to a number of small everyday matters. They volunteer as attendants at displays and exhibitions arranged at the Centre, which they also help to organize and are tireless organizers and propagandists of the various programmes of the Centre. The maintenance of the Pensioners' Club is therefore in no way a burden on the Centre—nothing of the sort. On the contrary, it only gains by it.

Young people have their Youth Club. Naturally, youngsters do not have the time to be able to stay all day at the club; club life is somewhat formal in their case, anyway. They have chess, billiards and table tennis; their activities are rather desultory. As the Youth Club had no more than 30 to 40 members, the Centre management hit on the excellent idea last year of organizing a Students' Club for secondary-school students. A weekly time-table of club activities was drawn up with school-like strictness—and that rightly so: meeting once every week; 5 p. m. to 7 p. m.: leisure hours, 7 p. m. to 8 p. m.: popular science lecture. Two hundred prospective members came forward! Yet the Students' Club is no longer functioning—the headmasters broke it up, out of unjustified jealousy. Headmasters of primary schools would maybe prove less jealous, the man in charge of children's activities hoped, for he had just finished drafting a plan for a Children's Club.

PAYING ITS OWN WAY

The director commands, as it were, a veritable little army of social workers. A separate full-time worker is in charge of each field of cultural activity —library, dissemination of popular scientific knowledge, art courses and circles, children's activities, and so on. Further, there are the restaurant service staff, the warden, the office staff, and the cleaning women. These workers constitute a kind of "general staff" of the Centre. But in performing its duties, the management of the Club also relies on the cooperation of a Board of Governors. This Board is presided over by the MP of the local constituency, and among its members we find representatives of the local social organizations and a number of teachers. The Board holds its meetings at regular intervals, and provides invaluable assistance by discussing the Centre's plans of work and by advising on or approving them.

For several years now the management has known no pecuniary worries. Its expenditure is covered, by and large, from the proceeds of the many different programmes and shows arranged here. Yet admission charges are notoriously low! The 300,000-forint allocation made available by the Iron Workers Union HQ each year can be regarded merely as a token sum, when compared to the three-and-a-half-million annual budget of the Centre.

STILL TO BE DONE

People who favour the dissemination of popular scientific information rightly feel dissatisfied when they consider what a great deal yet remains to be done, as regards both subject and form. The questionnaires previously mentioned, in which 45 people listed the subjects on which they desired to hear lectures, told me of very wide (and still largely unsatisfied) interests. What is most heartening about these answers is that the proportional break-down of these interests as it emerges from the questionnaires is of a nature to meet the most sanguine requirements of our cultural policy. Forty-seven per cent want to hear about natural sciences, 11 per cent about technology (too small!), 20 per cent about social sciences, 36 per cent about the arts, and 9 per cent about everything. These percentages add up to more than 100 per cent. This is due, of course, to some people having indicated several subjects. Compared to this great show of interest, the efforts being made at present to satisfy them are obviously pretty meagre.

They are rather unsatisfactory also as regards their form. Let me enumerate the special interest circles and courses which I think should be started, although such enumeration is nothing more than the "prudent counsel" of an outsider, a counsel based more on general requirements than on familiarity with the actual opportunities. Thus a circle of technicians would be useful. By way of experiment, natural science, biology, geography, and astronomy circles should be set up. Let us have a literary and arts circle; one might, perhaps, even have a try at setting up a circle for local history, with the assistance of the National Museum. There is much room for experiments so far as the popular science courses are concerned. Why not have general knowledge courses, parents' and women's schools, a workers' academy, and possibly—after the example of several institutions in the country—an improvement course for young workers. Sightseeing tours through Budapest, organized visits to museums and excursions should be made regular programme items.

These demands may appear to be far-fetched; yet the enterprising spirit in the staff of this young establishment is too high for them to omit trying to exploit every opportunity.

PARIS, VIENNA AND AFTER

A commentary on the international situation

by
FERENC PAÁL

One of the chief characteristics of the international political situation at the present juncture is the collapse of the United States' foreign policy conception, which owes both its shape and basic principles to the late John Foster Dulles. The leaders of the United States have found themselves unable to bury a foreign policy which proved to be useless after its artificer's death, and whose unserviceability Dulles himself was reluctantly compelled to recognize.

The American press has been trying to present President Eisenhower's direct participation in international politics as an indication that the President had some particular conception concerning a settlement of the intricate international situation, but that these ideas of the President's could not prevail against Dulles' stubborn, overbearing personality. The President did indeed make gestures and statements which led one to infer that he was trying to reconcile the policy of peaceful coexistence initiated and pursued by the Soviet Union with the global interests of the United States.

That, by and large, was the situation when a startled world discovered suddenly that, while President Eisenhower was going out of his way to fill the last phase of his term with peaceable gestures and statements, the Pentagon was continuing the provocative attempts so characteristic of the cold war period.

The U-2 affair, exploding as it did right before the summit meeting, did at any rate give President Eisenhower a chance to extricate himself from such an ambiguous position and dissociate himself from those elements which have been trying to veer the United States back on to the cold war course. Seen from that angle, the Paris summit conference might have had some significance even if it had not succeeded, because of the U-2 affair, in fulfilling the expectations attached to it.

The Soviet Premier, fully aware of this dilemma of his chief antagonist, went to Paris for the purpose of helping the American President in taking a decision. Obviously the first thing to do was to remove from the path of the meeting those obstacles with which the policy of certain U. S. circles were blocking the road not only to an eventual agreement but also to serious negotiations. To enter into serious discussion of such crucial matters as disarmament and the German problem in the atmosphere of tension created by the U-2 affair seemed quite impossible.

Matters were further complicated by the U. S. Government's extraordinarily myopic fears that it might be driven into a defensive position at the summit conference. To avoid this, it announced a doctrine as absurd as it is dangerous to the effect that espionage was both legitimate and necessary.

I was one of the approximately two thousand journalists who had come from every part of the globe to attend the summit conference at the Palais de Chaillot in Paris. I lived through those dramatic days, or, rather, hours, which have since become history. My personal impressions gathered there support the opinion held by the majority of journalists, that the U. S. Government, and President Eisenhower personally, suffered a serious loss of face. Journalists were aware, of course, that summitry as a method of settling international disputes was founded on the belief that direct talks by leaders of the great powers who possessed the greatest authority were likely to prove more fruitful than negotiations conducted through the ordinary channels of diplomacy. It was now discovered, however,—and this is one important conclusion to be drawn from the whole aircraft incident—that the President of the United States did not possess sufficient authority to enable him to carry through such ideas as he might have with due efficiency.

Subsequent events deepened this crisis of confidence. It is by no means fortuitous that American foreign policy should have sustained a series of defeats and that a chain of events should have followed which shook the whole network of American bases abroad. Two trustworthy satellites—President Syngman Rhee of South Korea and Prime Minister Menderes of Turkey—have been overthrown, and this under the most stormy circumstances. Storms also raged throughout President Eisenhower's Far Eastern tour, and the Tokyo fiasco in particular has had an extremely depressing effect upon American public opinion and the allies of the United States. President Eisenhower entered upon his Far Eastern tour at a juncture when the provocatory U-2 flight had laid bare the aggressive character of American policies before the entire world, and the Soviet Prime Minister had thrown a strong light upon President Eisenhower's personal part in and responsibility for those policies. At that time, world opinion was able to form a clear idea of the evident relationship between the double-dealing of the American politicians and the failure of the summit conference.

The betrayal of the spirit of Camp David began when the President made concessions to Herr Adenauer over the German question and reassured the Chancellor that, although he (the President) would discuss the status of Berlin in Paris, he was not going to yield an inch. This in spite of the fact that the view that the Berlin situation was an abnormal one, one for which a settlement would have to be found, had been generally adopted already at the Geneva conference of foreign ministers. This view had been expressed more than once by President Eisenhower himself. Yet comments and political statements appearing in the western press prior to the summit conference were with growing insistence drumming up the key-note that "the West must be adamant on Berlin."

Even on the issue of putting an end to nuclear tests, concerning which the nuclear powers had, by common consent, come nearest to agreement, Washington blocked the way to a settlement by declaring that the United States would resume nuclear tests, no matter what position was adopted by the nuclear experts at Geneva. It should be noted that observers who were most cautious regarding the chances of the summit meeting, were united in the belief that some headway could be made in this particular field. The United States Government destroyed even that shred of hope well in advance.

After the failure of the summit conference, it became obvious once more at the ten-nation Geneva conference that the western delegations were unprepared for any serious discussion of disarmament, even though it had admitted that it considered disarmament the most important of all points to be treated at the summit. By contrast, the Soviet Union immediately after the collapse of the summit conference, brought the proposal which it had originally drafted for the summit talks before the Ten-nation Disarmament Commission at Geneva. Judging from this proposal, which embodied some important Western conceptions, it was evident that, at the summit conference and after, the Soviet Union strove to provide a realistic basis for negotiations. What is more, in setting forth the succession of the various disarmament measures, to be taken, the Soviet plan adopted as its starting-point a western proposal, originally suggested by the French, to the effect that the first step towards disarmament should be the destruction of the means of delivering nuclear weapons. To accept this starting-point would have been logical for the western delegations, since, for one thing, they had themselves proposed it and also because the Soviet Union has outstripped NATO in this particular field of ballistic technique. None the less the western spokesmen at the Geneva talk consistently opposed this proposal; what is more, they did not even shrink from putting the head of the French delegation, M. Jules Moch, in the painful situation of having to adduce constrained arguments against his own proposals. Under the circumstances, the Ten-nation Commission spent more than two weeks watching rhetorical *tours de force* by the western delegates, who carefully evaded any comment on the merits of the Soviet proposal. At last, the socialist countries represented at the conference drew the obvious conclusions from this state of affairs and decided to submit the question of disarmament to the United Nations General Assembly.

Meanwhile, American propaganda has been taking great pains to prove to the world that the policy of peaceful coexistence has broken down. Undoubtedly this propaganda line has had some effect upon world opinion. Such was the situation when Khrushchev visited Austria. On that occasion too, I was sent to Vienna and met several western journalists who had also attended the Paris conference. I could see in the first days that, looking at the international situation in the perspective of Khrushchev's visit, they were, on the whole, taking a more optimistic view than earlier. The very fact of the visit itself and, especially, the statements made by Khrushchev, served to relax the cramped mood which in previous weeks had been elicited in western public opinion. Although a section of the western press continued its cold war campaign, a new confidence began to rise in public opinion. It became sufficiently clear that pessimism was increasingly becoming limited to those circles which have a vested interest in maintaining the cold war.

In his Vienna talks, which were centred on the extension of Austro-Soviet economic and cultural ties, Khrushchev took out time to comment on those issues of an international bearing which, more than anything else, occupy public opinion throughout the world. In one of his talks with Chancellor Raab, the Soviet Premier remarked that he was unconditionally in favour of exchanges of views between the heads of states. The American attempt to revert to methods of old-type secret diplomacy was like wanting to return to obsolete arms in the age of nuclear weapons. The method of negotiations on the highest level had arisen in response to the requirements of the time.

As for that part of Khrushchev's visit to Austria which directly concerned that country, the joint communiqué issued on the talks points out that the relations between the two countries—the world's leading socialist great power and a small neutral nation—have been developing, and will continue to develop, in harmony with the principles of peaceful coexistence. Austria's socialist neighbours are guided by the very same principles. For our part, we in Hungary are convinced that, if the Austrian Government will reach some practical conclusions in line with these principles, the contribution of Austrian neutrality towards the relaxation of tension and the maintenance of peace will increase in importance. At any rate, the clarification of the concrete content of Austiran neutrality—a clarification which Khrushchev's visit has promoted considerably—is an important prerequisite for future progress. On several occasions during his visit to Austira, the Soviet Prime Minister pointed out—and this is also stated in the joint communiqué—that the Soviet Union had always respected, and would continue to respect, Austria's neutrality. At the same time, he called attention to threats on the part of other powers—particularly the United States and the German Federal Republic—to Austrian neutrality. Austria's national and international interests, in harmony with those of peace in Europe, demand that neutrality should be permanent and stable, a consistent contribution to the cause of peace, and not merely a transitory state.

The collapse of the Paris conference no doubt produced disappointment in public opinion throughout the world. However, developments since Paris have shown that the advocates of cold war, who tried to utilize the failure of the summit meeting as a means of causing a lasting worsening of the international situation, have fallen short of their aim. The growth of the forces of peace continues to be the most salient characteristic of the international situation. And although one must never discount the menace of war inherent in the nature of imperialism, the prospects of peace are steadily improving—and they are doing so in direct ratio to the growth of the strength and international influence of the socialist countries.

The Hungarian people, which has had to endure so much suffering as a result of armed conflicts in the past and which, after the collapse of an utterly corrupt political system, is now at last in a position to muster its best abilities, and utilize the resources of its country for the improvement of its situation, has now found the road to prosperity in socialist construction. It is natural that such a people should defend peace with might and main and expect its government to pursue a foreign policy which promotes the cause of universal peace. Accordingly, the foreign policy of the Hungarian People's Republic, founded on the twin pillars of close cooperation with the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries and of the principle of peaceful coexistence, is guided by the desire to contribute towards the safeguarding of peace. It is evident that the enforcement of the principle of peaceful coexistence provides the only feasible arrangement for creating lasting peace. The Hungarian Government has therefore been using every effort in order to further strengthen its ties with the other socialist countries and also to cement its relations with countries with a social system differing from its own. Progress in this latter sphere has not been uniform. There has been an auspicious development in Hungary's relations with the newly independent countries of Asia and Africa, which by dint of their very position welcome the policy of peaceful coexistence. The Government of the Hungarian People's Republic is doing its best to offer the widest possible assistance to these emerging nations, which have shed the fetters of colonialism or are fighting to extricate themselves from them.

The most difficult of foreign policy issues for Hungary remains the attempt to realize peaceful coexistence with those countries whose governments, while recognizing the significance of this policy, have failed so far to translate it into practice. This applies first of all to the NATO countries. Despite the series of defeats sustained by American foreign policy of late, and notwithstanding the growing realization in the West of the bankruptcy of this aggressive policy, the situation has not yet improved, and it is this bankrupt policy that has so far prevented the normalization of relations between Hungary and the United

States. This is also true of most of the other NATO countries, although it must be said in fairness that Hungary has established better relations with many NATO countries than she has with the United States. Among numerous examples, we may recall the mutual visits of British and Hungarian writers taking place in the latter half of 1960. As part of this program, a delegation of such outstanding writers as Áron Tamási, Ferenc Juhász, Géza Ottlik and the professor of Italian literature at Budapest University Tibor Kardos are going to England, as is the head of the Central Directorate of Publishing, Béla Köpeczi, a well-known historian. Hungary's economic and cultural relations with these countries are improving, even though slowly, and the existing possibilities for such improvement have not yet been utilized fully.

The improvement of these relations and the consolidation of the situation in Hungary is clearly reflected in the fact that the o-called "Hungarian question" has for quite a long time ceased to draw the attention of international public opinion. The initiative of the American delegation to the United Nations in having this non-existant issue once more included in the agenda of the United Nations General Assembly is an indication of the revival of the cold-war policy. These attempts are however doomed to failure and will further discredit an already bankrupt policy which aims to create hatred and international tension.

Addressing the National Assembly at its August session, Dr Endre Sik, the Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs, summed up the essence of Hungarian foreign policy in the following words: "Firm alliance and close cooperation with the socialist countries and efforts to build up good, normal relations and ensure peaceful coexistence with all countries which have a different social system from our own—these are the two principles that guide our actions in the sphere of foreign policy. It is these principles that define our tasks and determine our attitude in the various forums of international politics."

DOCUMENTS

HUNGARY IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR

In the fifteen years since the liberation of Hungary, a number of memoirs and collections of documents have been published abroad which make the various events of these fateful years more intelligible, or rather give an insight into their background. Also in Hungary, important work has been going on to arrange, catalogue and publish the records of the war period.

In the last year two important collections of documents were made available to the Hungarian public, namely *Magyarország és a második világháború* (Hungary and the Second World War), published by the Kossuth Publishing House, 1959, and *A 2. magyar hadsereg megsemmisülése a Donnál* (The Annihilation of the Second Hungarian Army at the Don), Zrínyi Publishing House, 1959.

I. The German Advance in South-East Europe

After the talks between Lord Halifax and Hitler in Obersalzburg in November 1937,[1] the last worries of the fascist leaders had been dissipated regarding their plans to change the status quo in South-East Europe. Shortly after the *Anschluss*. Litvinov emphatically warned the Hungarian Minister in Moscow that in the new situation the Soviet Union was attaching even greater importance than before to the maintainance of the independence of Hungary and intended to create an anti-fascist bloc.[a]* The warning fell on deaf ears: The Hungarian ruling circles were primarily concerned with their own class interests, though it became ever more obvious that the independence of the Danube basin could be secured only with the help of the Soviet Union and through cooperation between the countries concerned. But not even those among the Hungarian ruling circles who mistrusted Germany and had their doubts about the continuation of Hitlerite successes, could reconcile themselves to this. First and foremost they were hindered from taking this course by their fundamentally anti-Soviet outlook, their fear that such a policy would inevitably give internal development a democratic turn on the one hand, and on the other would deprive them of their hopes of territorial revision at the expense of the neighbouring states. In the period from the Czechoslovak crisis up till Munich, Hungarian policy was characterized by a certain hesitancy, causing Göring twice to decry Hungarian "guardedness."[2]

The Munich Pact which, in spite of a number of promises from the Italians,[3] brought no settlement of the dispute on the Hungarian national minority in Czechoslovakia, put the Hungarian government in a grave situation. The right wing started a very intensive campaign for closer friendship with Germany, and at the same time the Western Powers were reluctant to convene the Four-Power Court of Arbitration, for as the British Minister in Rome said, they preferred arbitration by the Axis.[b] This was another proof that the Western powers were indifferent to developments in South-East Europe. Thus the first Vienna Decree linked Hungarian policy even more closely to the Axis, despite the fact that one of the main demands of the Hungarian government, the annexation of the Carpathian Ukraine to Hungary and the creation of a common Hungarian-Polish border was not countenanced by Ribbentrop.

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* The letters indicate documentary citations on pp. 201—204.

At the end of 1938, Hungarian-German relations deteriorated precisely over the question of the Carpathian Ukraine. Encouraged by Mussolini and in full cooperation with Poland, the Hungarian government intended through unilateral military action and without the knowledge of the Germans to create a *fait accompli* in the Carpathian Ukraine. This plan, however, leaked out, and in a very sharp note, Ribbentrop called the Hungarian leaders to heel.[c]

To regain the goodwill of the Germans, the Hungarian Government decided to make a new anti-Soviet move. On January 13, 1939, disregarding the warning of the Soviet Union, Hungary joined the Anti-Comintern Pact. It must be added that before the actual announcement of this step occurred, the Hungarian ministers in London and Paris had made enquiries about the attitude of the foreign ministries of the two countries concerned, and in both cases the Hungarian move was accepted with "understanding."[d-e] It was the same story when Hungary withdrew from the League of Nations.

These were the preliminaries after which Pál Teleki took over the helm of Hungarian political life. Early in 1939 the new premier represented that group of the Hungarian ruling class which did not sympathize with Nazi-fascism, and, as the situation in Europe sharpened, tried to maintain correct relations with the Western powers. The fundamental contradiction in Teleki's policy was that while he wanted to realize his territorial aims with the help of Germany, he thought it possible to maintain at the same time a certain kind of independence, and friendly relations with Britain and France.

In March 1939, Hitler thought the time had come for the complete dismemberment of Czechoslovakia, and consented to the Hungarian invasion of the Carpathian Ukraine under the condition that all special German interests would be safeguarded. The short-sightedness of the Horthyite policy of territorial revisionism is demonstrated by the fact that, while Hungarian leaders were congratulating themselves on their success, in Berlin plans for the military annexation of Hungary had been ready for a year.[4] Evidence of this is to be found in Hermann Rauschning's book.[5]

II. The Outbreak of World War II and Hungary's Entry into the War

The invasion of Poland, which started World War II, put the Hungarian government in a very delicate position. Teleki and his adherents, believing that the western armies would start serious military operations against Germany, announced their benevolent neutrality, and on September 9 even rejected the German demand to let German troops pass through Hungary, bringing up Hungarian territorial claims against Rumania in justification of this attitude. The Germans, since the use of Hungarian railway lines was no longer of much importance for their military operations in Poland, postponed the "settling of accounts" over Teleki's disobedience.

"The group of the Hungarian ruling class to which Count Pál Teleki belonged was sceptical about the outcome of the fight. The unexpectedly rapid successes failed to reassure Teleki and some other far-sighted politicians of that counter-revolutionary period. They were convinced that this would only prolong the war and that the hostilities would finally result in the defeat or at least in a very serious weakening of Germany. In both cases—they argued—a vacuum would be created in East and South-East Europe which would only be favourable to the revolutionary movements and the Soviet Union. Counterrevolutionary Hungary—they claimed—should keep herself aloof from the war, so that, if need be, she could keep order in East and South-Eastern Europe, either alone or together with countries like Jugoslavia." (Quoted from the introduction of the book: Hungary and the Second World War, p. 17.)

In the following period the Hungarian government tried to keep out of the European war by planning to start a separate war against Rumania. From the spring of 1940 onwards, the Hungarian government increased its propaganda activities against Rumania, and during the summer of that year ordered full mobilization.

A separate Hungarian-Rumanian war was not in Germany's books. That country wanted to create a situation in which both Rumania and Hungary were obliged to rely on her. Therefore, after the failure of bilateral talks between Hungary and Rumania, Germany was willing to consider the request of Rumania and to arrange another court of arbitration. The Second Vienna Decree re-annexed the whole of Northern Transylvania to Hungary. Hungary on her part undertook to stand squarely beside Germany, to satisfy German economic and raw material demands, even at the expense of her own needs, to guarantee full freedom to the German national minority groups in the country, allowing them to carry out political organizational work, and promised that radical steps would be taken in regard to the Jewish question. Finally Hungary undertook the obligation to join the openly aggressive Three-Power Pact.[6-7]

This adherence spelled a greater-than-ever danger for the country, for Hitler had started the preparations for a new predatory attack. On November 20, when the treaty was signed in Vienna, Hitler was already making allusions to Teleki about the possibility of military operations against the Soviet Union.[8] As we already know, on December 18 the *Wehrmacht* received orders to prepare "Operation Barbarossa."

Quite unexpectedly, however, a very grave situation arose along the southern borders of Hungary, At the end of 1940 Hungary signed an eternal friendship pact with Jugoslavia. The aims of this treaty were viewed differently by Hungary and by Germany. At that time Teleki thought that by relying on Italy, and with the help of a Hungarian-Jugoslav bloc, at least the vestiges of Hungary's independence could still be maintained. The Germans, however, wanted, through Hungary, to draw Jugoslavia into orbit as one of their satellites. As soon as the Jugoslav leaders signed the Three-Power Pact (March 25) a popular uprising of great strength broke out in Belgrade and put a government of Western orientation in power. The German general staff swiftly regrouped their forces for military operations against Jugoslavia. From the very beginning they took Hungary's participation for granted. Teleki hesitated and, before making a final decision, consulted the British government. The reply was harsher than expected. Britain held out the prospect of a break in diplomatic relations and a declaration of war. On April 3 a shot from his revolver put an end to Teleki's life and to his unrealistic policy.[f, 9] The same day the Hungarian Army joined the invasion.

As a result of the military operations in Jugoslavia and Greece, the start of "Operation Barbarossa" was postponed from May to June. The plan did not call for direct military participation by Hungary. On June 22 the treacherous attack of the fascist armies was launched against the Soviet Union. The Hungarian ruling circles, led by Horthy, were afraid that if Rumania lined up alongside Germany in the military field, the chances for the reoccupation of Southern Transylvania would deteriorate. Therefore, disregarding an emphatic warning telegraphed by Kristóffy, the Hungarian Minister in Moscow, Hungary broke off diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. The government and the extreme right wing elements among the Chiefs of Staff, were not satisfied that this step went far enough. Moreover the Nazi Party, wishing to give an "all-European character" to its "crusade against Bolshevism," looked with disfavour on Hungary's "lukewarm participation." A "solution" was suggested by General Fütterer, German Air Attaché in Budapest, who conceived the infamous scheme of making the Hungarian people believe that Russian planes had bombed the town of Kassa. On June 26, 1941, German aircraft, painted with Soviet insignia, dropped bombs on Kassa and Munkács. The Hungarian commander of the Kassa airport made it clear in his report that the attack had been made by German planes. This report, however, was kept secret from Horthy by the then Prime Minister Bárdossy.[8, 10] On June 27 Bárdossy briefly reported to the Hungarian Parliament that as a result of the bombing a state of war had set in between Hungary and the Soviet Union.

III. The Voronezh Catastrophe and the "Kállay Double Dance"

The guilty leaders of the country thrust the Hungarian people in this manner into the abyss of an unjust and senseless war, which led in the end to immense losses in Hungarian blood and national wealth. In 1942 the Hungarian government directed the Second Hungarian Army, numbering about 200,000 men[11] to the front. The government wanted to show that they stood "solid as a rock" on the side of the German *Reich*. The Nazi leaders, however, did not put much confidence in that "solidity," and in February 1942 Göbbels wrote openly that after the war Hungary would be radically dealt with.[12]

The Second Hungarian Army, after some advances at the front, had to build defence lines along the 130 mile line of the River Don. The morale of the army equipped with obsolete weapons and lacking winter equipment, was very low. These forces were hit by the sweeping attack of the Soviet forces on January 12, 1943, in the Voronezh area. The Voronezh break-through, as it is known, meant complete catastrophe to the Second Hungarian Army, which lost 150,000 men (30,000 of these were taken prisoners-of-war) and 80 per cent of its equipment.[13] During the withdrawal German troops treated the Hungarian soldiers with barbaric cruelty, and their atrocities increased the hatred against fascist Germany within the country.

The Voronezh catastrophe was followed by the defeat of the Germans at Stalingrad. The Hungarian ruling circles began to realize that Germany had lost the war. They tried hard to refashion their policy to suit the changed situation. Thus the activity of Prime Minister Miklós Kállay can be clearly divided into two phases.

Until the Voronezh and Stalingrad defeats, he tried to put the material resources of the country at the service of Germany's war needs, but after this he tried to steer the country over to the other side, although, of course, exclusively to the Anglo-American side. The idea of creating contacts with the Soviet Union did not even occur to him.

The Nazi secret service followed alertly the half-hearted and ambiguous attempts of the Hungarian government. In April 1943, Hitler censured Horthy sharply and charged him with seeking contacts with the enemy.[14] Horthy handed a document to Von Papen, who was in Hungary, according to which the Nazi leaders and the Hungarian right-wing extremists had prepared a plan to divide Hungary into counties which would be absorbed into the German Empire. At the same time Horthy told Von Papen that he was going to establish contact with the British.[15] From then on, Göbbels referred to the Hungarian Prime Minister simply as "Kállay, the swine."

In September 1943, the Kállay government made a provisional agreement with the Western states, promising that, as soon as Anglo-American troops reached the borders of the country, Hungary would lay down her arms and declare war against Germany.[b, 16]

The tide of the war, however, tore Kállay's calculations to pieces. The front halted in Italy, and it became obvious that it would be the Soviet Army which would march into Hungarian territory. The counterrevolutionary Horthy regime, however, had not the courage to turn to the Soviet government. Thus precious months were lost. And in the meantime the Germans acted.

IV. The German Occupation of the Country

On March 17, 1944, Hitler summoned Horthy to Klassheim. Before this, the German Security Office had handed a memorandum to Hitler on the "evolutionary" change in the Hungarian situation.

Dramatic scenes took place between Hitler and Horthy at the former's headquarters. Hitler declared in peremptory tones that the German army would occupy Hungary. The talks were broken off several times. It was then that Ribbentrop told Paul Schmidt "If Horthy does not give in, he will be taken back to Hungary under armed escort as a prisoner." Horthy did give in, however, and signed a proclamation, according to which the German troops marched into Hungary at his own request. On his way back in the saloon car, Horthy was in a good mood: "He behaved like a real Hungarian lord from the Dual Monarchy, and told splendid stories from the old days."[17] In the meantime eight German divisions carried out the occupation of the country. Power was completely taken over by the Germans and their lackey government. The extermination camps in Poland and Germany were filled with hundreds of thousands of Hungarian Jewish and left-wing deportees. The First and Third Armies were sent to the front.

After Rumania had laid down her arms, units of the Soviet army crossed the Southern Carpathians and started operations in the Danube basin. The Hungarian ruling circles, recognizing that their plans with reference to the Western Powers could not be realized, started preparations to sign an armistice with the Soviet Union. Horthy appointed a new prime minister, General Lakatos. His task was to conclude an armistice. On September 28, a delegation left for Moscow and on October 11 an armistice between Hungary and the Soviet Union was signed.

V. October 15 and What Followed

On October 15 Horthy finally resolved to take a decisive step. On the morning of that day he read his proclamation over the radio stating that he had asked the Soviet government for a cease-fire. No military preparations, however, had been made for changing sides, The Germans on the other hand, were quite prepared and not at all surprised at the turn of events. As early as September 13 S. S. Lieutenant Colonel Skorzeny had received a personal order from Hitler that in case of such an event he should occupy Buda Castle and arrest Horthy.[18] At the beginning of October Skorzeny's specially trained batallions had already been stationed in the suburbs of Budapest. S. S. "Obergruppenführer" Bach Zelewski, well-known for his brutality, had also arrived at the Hungarian capital. Sixty-five cm. supermortars, which had been used during the siege of Sevastopol, were sent to Budapest in order to level it to the ground. This however did not take place, because on October 18 Skorzeny succeeded in kidnapping Horthy's son, and invaded the castle at night without meeting much opposition.

By this time Horthy had entrusted himself to the protection of the Germans and in fact appointed the Szálasi government, which was recruited from the scum of the Arrow Cross. With this act he reached the most shameful point, at the same time the most logical culmination, of the policy he had pursued for 25 years.

And with this the rule of terror of the S. S. and the Arrow Cross bands finally prostrated Hungary.

The liberators, however, were not far away. On December 26, the Soviet army surrounded Budapest and in a siege lasting 47 days, annihilated the German forces and Hungarian Arrow Cross detachments defending the city; on April 4th they completed the liberation of the whole territory of the country.

Obviously there were two factors which determined the policy and unavoidable tragedy of Hungary during the war. One of these was the class interest of the ruling circles, the other, the lack of active co-operation among the democratic forces which had been muddled and disorganized under the twenty-five years of the counter-revolutionary regime. The regime of the big landlords and capitalists did not dare to establish contacts with the Soviet Union, and thus subordinated the general interests of the nation to their narrow class interests. At the same time, with bloodstained hands, they prevented any kind of organisation by the democratic forces, thus depriving themselves of the only chance of success against Hitler's Germany.

History passes severe judgement on Hungary's war-time leaders for their policy was both criminal, and costly. As a result of that policy, hundreds of thousands of people and 40 per cent of the nation's wealth were destroyed.

Tibor Pethő

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(a) Moscow, March 26, 1938
Report of the Hungarian Minister in Moscow, Mihály Jungerth Arnóthy, to Foreign Minister Kálmán Kánya.

..... referring to Hungarian Soviet relations he (Litvinov) stated: „*Unser Verhältnis zu Ungarn wurde durch die Änderung nicht berührt, im Gegenteil, wir sind jetzt an der Erhaltung der Unabhängigkeit Ungarns in gesteigertem Masse interessiert.*" (Our relation to Hungary was not influenced by this change; on the contrary, we are now in an even greater measure interested in the preservation of Hungary's independence.) He made this statement twice during our talk...

(b) Rome, 28 October 1938

Cipher telegram of Frigyes Villani, Hungarian Minister in Rome, to Hungarian Foreign Minister Kálmán Kánya.
6758/150.

Count Ciano told me on telephone this morning, that the news regarding Britain's standpoint against arbitration was incorrect. British ambassador stated last night that, though his government has no objection to four power conference, they would prefer arbitration by the Axis. Count Ciano had exchanged views with Ribbentropp immediately after latter's arrival.

He (Ciano) hopes that any German opposition to arbitration can be overcome.

Villani

(c) Berlin, November 21, 1938.

Note of the German Government to Hungarian Foreign Minister Kálmán Kánya.

Charged by my Government I have the pleasure to inform Your Excellency of the following:

"The German Government has been informed by the Italian Government about a Hungarian statement, according to which the Royal Hungarian Government had informed the Government of Italy that on Sunday, November 20, it intended to start military operations to invade the Carpathian Ukraine...

"The German Ambassador in a demarche sent to the Royal Hungarian Government explained his government's concern about the use of force in the Carpathian Ukraine and referred to the fact that in the event of any opposition to the occupying forces, which according to reports at our disposal is highly probable, the German Government at the present time cannot give military aid to the Hungarian Government. The German Government also pointed out that for these reasons it does not approve of such action at present...

"To avoid any misunderstanding the German Government has the pleasure to inform the Government of Hungary of the following:

"1. The Court of Arbitration which recently met at the request of the Governments of Czehoslovakia and Hungary, attended by the German and Italian Governments, had delineated the borders between Hungary and the Carpathian Ukraine. Hungary, by signing this agreement in Vienna, had acknowledged that border as final before the whole world. If Hungary should now try to take armed action against the Carpatho-Ukrainian part of Czechoslovakia, it would put its government in a very serious position from a moral point of view.

"2. Such a step might have the additional consequence that the Vienna decision would lose its validity at the expense of prestige of the two arbiter powers. The German government rightly expects that Hungary adhere to the decisions of the arbiters.

"3. According to information at our disposal, there is the possibility that action against Carpathian Ukraine would meet with the armed resistance of the Czechoslovak military forces. Taking into consideration the respective strength of the two armed forces as known to Germany, Hungary would find herself militarily in a serious, perhaps critical position. The German government, however, as already stated, is at present not in a position to support Hungary in any way.

"4. On this basis the German government wishes to express concern which it believes would be justified over such a forceful occupation of the Carpathian Ukraine and emphasizes that for any unfortunate consequences of this act Hungary would only have herself to blame.

Dr. O. von Erdmannsdorff."

(d) Cipher telegram of Ferenc Marosy acting chargé d'affaires in London to Foreign Minister István Csáky 5008/2 Confidential

Answer to Order No. 1502

As far as Britain is concerned there are no such points of view which might be considered as decisive in connection with any future step to be dictated by Hungarian political exigency.

1. One must certainly reckon with attacks from the left wing press and the part of the press opposed to dictatorship, but that press has been our enemy in any case ever since the Czech crisis and has more or less taken into calculation the developments in question.

2. Our position in the City has been determined first of all by the Jewish question, but that additional burden hardly counts any longer.

3. We cannot expect much in political circles from representatives of anti-German and anti-Italian trends. This refers to certain groups of the Foreign Office, too. Other government circles, however, are aware of our position and their existing sympathies will not be essentially influenced by the steps planned.

(e) Cipher report of Sándor Khuen-Héderváry, Hungarian Minister in Paris, to Hungarian Foreign Minister István Csáky.
No. 5014/1 Top Secret.

Referring to Order No. 1502.

Our joining the antibolshevist pact will undoubtedly create an unfavourable impression in French political circles and on French public opinion. The measure of this, however, will depend on future attitudes and reaction here concerning the significance of this fact.

Regarding the much-weakened international position of the Soviet Union, they will certainly not* .... that the aim of our joining would, in fact, be a common fight against communism. If our joining is regarded as a demonstration on the side of the German-Italian Axis, then this matter, in my opinion, will not cause any serious disadvantages, since French political circles admit that in the present European situation we have to adjust our policies to those of the Axis, on the other hand, recently friendship towards the Soviet Union has been sharply decreasing in France...

Khuen Héderváry

(f)
Budapest, April 3, 1941
The Farewell letter of Prime-Minister Pál Teleki to Miklós Horthy
Your Excellency!

We have committed perfidy—out of cowardice—against the perpetual peace treaty based on the Mohács address. The nation feels this and we have flung away its honour.

We took the side of scoundrels, for not a word is true about the fabricated atrocities! Neither against the Hungarians, nor even against the Germans! We shall be body snatchers, the most disgusting nation. I did not hold you back. I am guilty.

Pál Teleki

(g)
Miklós Horthy on the provocative bombardment of Kassa

...I am forced to come to this bitter conclusion on the basis of a report given to me by Cabinet Secretary Bárczy in 1944. He revealed a conspiracy to me which I would never have thought possible. Mr. Bárczy on the basis of his direct knowledge of actual events told me that Air-Force Colonel Krudy, the commander ot the Kassa airport, informed Prime-Minister Bárdossy in writing that he, i. e. Krudy, had seen with his own eyes that the bombs were dropped by German planes. In the meantime, however, a state of war had been declared with the Soviet Union, and Bárdossy had told Krudy, that unless he wanted to get himself into an unpleasant situation, he should remain silent. He compelled his colleagues in the cabinet to be silent as well; Colonel Krudy confirmed this report in a sworn statement in the Bárdossy trial in Budapest, which took place in 1946.

Miklós Horthy: Ein Leben für Ungarn
(Bern 1953, Athenaeum Verlag, pp. 235—236.)

(h)
September 9, 1943.

Text of the preliminary agreement between Hungary and the Allied Powers.

1. The Hungarian government confirms its communication August 17th regarding the capitulation of Hungary and the acceptance of conditions dictated by the Allied Powers.

2. Hungary's capitulation will be kept secret. It will be made public by the Allied Powers and Hungary simultaneously at a time accepted and considered as convenient by both parties. At the expressed wish of the Hungarian party, agreement had been reached that under no circumstances would this treaty be made public until the Allied forces reached the borders of Hungary.

3. Hungary will gradually decrease her military cooperation with Germany, and in particular she will withdraw her troops from Russia. She will promote *(sic)* the flying of Allied air forces across Hungary on their way to attack German military targets.

4. Hungary will gradually decrease her economic cooperation with Germany and will refuse to participate in the production of war materials for Germany.

5. Hungary undertakes the obligation to oppose any attempted invasion of her territory by Germany. To this end the Hungarian military staff shall be reorganized to enable the Hungarian armed forces to withdraw from German detachments and to attack them.

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* one group of ciphers in the code is missing from the original telegram.

6. At the given moment Hungary will put all her material resources, communication network and air bases at the disposal of the Allied Powers for the continuation of the fight against Germany.

7. At the proper moment the Allied Powers will parachute a delegation into Hungary, which will make the necessary preparations for the capitulation of Hungary.

8. Regular radio contact will be established between the Allied Powers and the organs of the Hungarian Government. The Allied Powers will be kept constantly informed about the German and Hungarian positions.

(i)

Draft of a memorandum of the German Security Office on the possibilities of Hungary's integration.

Viewed by the Reich, from the long-term perspective the integration of the Hungarian area as an essential part of the old Hapsburg empire is indispensable.

This aim can be achieved through military intervention or through evolutionary means.

Despite the extremely significant geopolitical and economic position of Hungary from the point of view of the Empire, German policy has not made any serious attempt in the past few years to gain influence over Hungarian developments—apart perhaps from the direct personal attempts by the Führer to persuade Horthy to remove Kállay and to put an end to the Bethlen influence.

The Hungarians who can look back on a past of 100 years in the field of foreign policy are themselves disposed to a conspiratorial policy. The complete absence of German attempts to gain leadership has necessarily accustomed them to that type of sitting on the fence, which had become intolerable, as was clearly shown by the "evidence"...

...I am thus convinced that the intended military intervention would not achieve the desired ends unconditionally, but would bring about a hard-to-manage strategic and foreign political situation. A successful attempt at reorganization on an evolutionary basis would, in any case, mean:

1. As far as home policy is concerned a consolidation of pro-German Hungary.

2. Retaining of Horthy in office as a "historical" personality who can further ensure the continued functioning of state institutions.

3. Army and militia units would be retained in complete readiness at the disposal of the demands of the Reich.

4. The total economic exploitation of the Hungarian area would be fully assured.

5. Rumania could no longer advance arguments for her need of retaining troops in Transylvania, but could free them for service in the East, and, with clever promises, the present Transylvanian problem could be shelfed.

6. Thus we not only gain Hungarian and Rumanian troops, but can also spare a number of German divisions.

7. The loading of Hungary with German troops, which may become necessary to safeguard her against armed invasion by Britain, could be done peacefully, with the help of tanks units, like in Rumania.

WORLD PEACE — WORLD LITERATURE

International Discussion initiated by a Hungarian Periodical

The Budapest periodical *Nagyvilág*, which regularly informs Hungarian readers of the most recent works and trends in world literature, initiated an interesting discussion recently. It invited a number of foreign and Hungarian writers to express their opinion on the relationship between world peace and world literature. The replies received—which appeared in the May issue of the periodical—bear witness, despite the differences in content, their emphasis and method of approach, to common anxieties, common hopes and a shared sense of responsibility by writers living under widely different geographical and political conditions.

This anxious hope dictated the grim "either-or" concept of

LEONHARD FRANK

(German Federal Republic): "In the long run there are only two choices possible: either the pacification of the world or the extermination of mankind." As an afterthought this same writer calls upon the authority of science to bear him out: "Albert Einstein, that is, somebody who knew more about this question than the *Draufgängers* who are blinded by hatred, said to me in New York: 'As the consequence of an atomic war all development on earth might cease. Nobody can assure us of the opposite'."

This same feeling of an impending threat induced the Czechoslovak-Hungarian writer

ZOLTÁN FÁBRY

to give expression of his opposition to the catastrophe: "Today world literature must make everyone aware that the world peace—all mankind—is threatened and must resist... In the century of world wars, world literature can only be the literature of world peace. This is the law."

Another representative of the literature of the German Federal Republic

WOLFGANG KOEPPEN

introduces his remarks by commenting that he wants peace "absolutely, one might even say, at all cost". At the same time he touches upon the complex relationship between peace and literature, the peculiar phenomenon that "important works are born even in the excitement of war." Naturally we would be quoting Koeppen falsely if we stopped here. He is not bowing to some kind of functional usefulness of war with this statement. He is merely referring to the inner laws of the realist writer. For let us just read on: "I hold with Brecht: freedom for the writer, no freedom for the glorification of autocracy, no freedom for incitement to war..."

In his last sentence Koeppen prays to the patient and tolerant mankind of the future. But

ARNOLD ZWEIG

(German Democratic Republic) already turns his full countenance to the future:

"Throughout the world mankind has decided," he writes, "to realize the vision of the prophet Isaiah—disarmament—in practice... The literary works of all the peoples will begin to compete with each other and the Babel of languages which we inherited from our forefathers can no longer hamper us in singing the glory of the human intellect that links all of us... And this is when the new world literature will be born."

The writers' sense of responsibility is the other common motif that is voiced in each of the contributions, perhaps most forcefully by Zoltán Fábry, who has been quoted above, and the Scottish poet

HUGH MACDIARMID

For an eloquent cultural heritage both draw upon Goethe and Thomas Mann, as a common source.

MacDiarmid, examining the task of literature, the writer's sense of responsibility, quotes Thomas Carlyle as his witness just as he does Lenin or Priestly. Finalley he says that what he feels about the question of literary dedication and selection of theme was best summed up in the words of a shrewd old Scots labourer who once said to him: "I know straightaway where I stand with a writer from what he writes. If he loves his fellow-man and is aware of the importance of world peace, then he will write about that. If this question is important to him, he cannot do otherwise... This is the decisive measure of literary worth."

Finally to conclude the series we quote the whole of the letter by

Gyula Illyés

Hungarian poet and writer:

"World literature is not the sum total of the literature of the individual nations—as we can read in Babits's History of Literature. The civilization of the peoples is not merely exchange and circulation. This circulation comprises more than itself, no less so than the circulation which makes the blood run within us. It is the symptom of life and spirit.

"When Goethe created the word World Literature, this term referred in fact to the whole of the Literature of the European peoples (or peoples of European heritage)—a whole aspiring to be more than the sum of its parts. Goethe himself, whose horizon was limitless, acquainted himself with the spiritual product of the rest of the world as with some curiosity, well beyond the ken of his mentality, which—though enriched by this knowledge—was characteristically European.

"Not so long ago the characteristic new word of our epoch, World Peace, expressed the cause of European peoples (or peoples of European heritage). A tremendous widening of both concepts, a sort of identification of each with itself, is taking place before our very eyes. It would be hard to deny that the word of the Chinese, the people of the most ancient civilization of the East, carries more weight in world politics than, let us say, that of the people representing the most ancient civilization in the West, the Greeks. Bare-footed—yesterday still slave—peoples are rushing ahead with "frightening" speed along that stretch of mankind's progress where the milestones and dates are marked not by battles and treaties, but by inventions and the acquiring of knowledge. The reason for this is that the accomplishments of the Louis's, Phillips and Ivans of various epithets may be preserved after a fashion within the borders of a country, but not those of the Edisons, Blériots and Kochs. Indeed, the spirit not only soars, but it does not even scorn telepathy: Bólyai and Lobachevsky at a distance of two thousand kilometres from each other and, as I happened to read just today, "knowing nothing of each other", tapped their foreheads at the same time, having hit upon how they were going to transcend Euclid, thus opening the way to nuclear fission.

"In other words, this telepathy is nothing other than the identity of thoughts, freely circulating over the frontiers of countries. It is textbook material how much the 16th century, the great century of the natural sciences, owes to the globe-trotting intellects of the Renaissance and their theories—and perhaps even to their off-colour short stories. The unity of the world of sciences was preceded by the unity of the world of literature.

"The space rockets launched in fast rivalry are proof that the telepathy of the scientists is still working today.

"But emulation is keen not only for travelling to the moon. One hears almost every week of those test explosions whose ultimate aim, if I may be excused for saying so, is how to manage most successfully, by the pressing of one button, to blast to bits one of the best known planets of the still unexplored universe, the Earth. For where do these experiments lead? I believe that few among our readers who have completed their secondary school studies were not inspired by their first chemistry classes to set up for themselves, even if only from a couple of test tubes and pipettes, a little laboratory in the woodshed, or their mother's kitchen. In Bonyhád a youngster in the eighth grade, following a textbook recipe, made some genuine gunpowder, and it is said to have blown up. If I were a writer with an apocalyptical imagination, I should depict the world only according to the Revelation. A fuzzy-chinned student in a small domestic's room on the fourth storey of an apartment house is busily filling his test tubes. Since his zeal is greater than his knowledge of materials, he manages to do something entirely exceptional. That which St. John so precisely divined.

"What defence is there against these 'experiments' that threaten to end the world and whose criterion sooner or later will no longer be whether they are performed on a large or small scale, or how frequently and where they take place? Only responsibility. Responsibility, however, with regard to the nations, does not depend on the size of the population. If Britain and France set off explosions, why should not Italy and eventually even little Andorra with her population of six thousand do so? Undoubtedly this would be a kind of democracy; but in this instance the democracy of Hell.

"We must obtain protection somewhere else.

"A lyrical idea has occurred to me: What if we dared to turn to public opinion to oppose matter in its headlong rush to doom? As we have seen: the sciences were liberated by a world spirit. Perhaps also in curbing matter there might be a few tasks for this world spirit, in which "world literature" is also included. How might this be possible? The statement on the questionnaires is justified: the distrust dividing the peoples is affecting world literature adversely. The word at which we must stop is distrust.

"World literature is still a unit today, in fact, it is only now that it will really spread out to the whole world. There is trouble with the blood circulation, the circulation that means life. Writers living in the West and in the East both have experiences they wish to share, even if for no other reason than the mere fact that they live at different points of the compass. They have thoughts they wish to pass on for the future of all mankind. The first regrettable reality is that these thoughts and experiences from distant parts are greeted with hardly less suspicion than those thalers in the Middle Ages which the merchants, in order to determine their gold content, as we know, took into their mouth, bit into or filed and trimmed, finally ruining them; true they did determine their content well enough, but they destroyed them and rendered them useless in the process.

"I welcomed the fact that the Hungarian publishers had issued so many plays and short stories by Western authors whom more exacting critics like to put under the heading: Kafka school. I approved and still approve their appearance, because they stimulated me to a healthy contradiction; the thin injection of their bitterness kindled my blood to the conquest of more concentrated ills. The Dürrenmatts see the end of the end in the fact that their native town crumbles to dust! To them this represents the ceasing of all questions. We know that the real, the Hamlet questions only begin then.

"Reverence has once again placed into my hands Camus's best book, the "Myth of Sisiphus." It begins with this statement that strikes a bullseye: "There is only one serious philosophical problem: suicide." As I read in Triolet's article, Camus constantly lived on the border of self-imposed death; still this was not what he died of. His last great work was to elevate Du Gard to leading Master, whose questing spirit, on the other hand, was a Jaurès, who in turn... whom did he follow? Those whom we may again all follow; those who are themselves World literature.

"I believe people both in the East and in the West have something to ask of, and to reply to, each other. We, too, feel the solution as telepathically as do the scientists. To make this telepathy conscious and to speed it up, to restore the carat system of words, of other words, to perfect intellectual exchange, this—it is my solemn conviction—is the surest way to avert war."

AS WRITERS SAW IT...

Workers' and Peasants' Life in Pre-War Hungary

Hungarians reading western papers and periodicals and talking to people from the West have often noticed that there are widespread misconceptions not only of the social, political and cultural situation in Hungary today, due to insufficient or distorted information, but also of the situation in pre-war Hungary.

The fact is that all we call up-to-date, progressive or democratic in Hungary today and all that we may, without seeming too prejudiced, claim as achievements, has been accomplished almost without any antecedents, indeed, sometimes, despite some rather alarming ones. For — and here some observers from the West go astray—pre-war Hungary was not some socially-minded bourgeois democracy, coloured by the romance of the *puszta*, folk costumes and gipsy music. Far from it! Hungary, in those days, was marked by a semi-feudal social and political structure, human relations based on rank, class arrogance, racial prejudices and often on servility, where the masses suffered from widespread diseases, lack of education and dreadful worry for their daily bread.

Let us see how the Hungarian writers of that time described the age they lived in.

This is what Lajos Kassák wrote in his autobiography *Egy ember élete* (The Life of a Man," 1927) on the fate of a worker in the "happy peace years" before the First World War:

"After having been unemployed for a week, I was lucky to get into the Langfelder factory. This bloodsucking establishment called factory had been a scrap-iron shop only a few weeks before. Now the owner was hiring young unemployed workers by the dozen at a wage of 6 *krajcárs** an hour. There were some hundred of us working there from six in the morning till eleven or twelve at night. The system was based on the most terrible exploitation. There was an overseer to every four men. He had a wage of 9 *krajcárs* an hour and for this he had to sell not only his body but his soul to the manufacturer.

There were some so-called "independent workers" among us, myself being also one of these distinguished individuals. The 6 *krajcárs* I earned were not even enough to satisfy my hunger once a day. At five in the morning I was roused from sleep, and not until midnight could I creep back into bed. But this daily toil became so much a part of my nature that I would jump out of bed in the middle of the night and begin to gesticulate, shout orders, and call the names of all sorts of tools, as if I were in the factory. My aunt would then get up to hand me a glass of water and make me go back to bed.

In the morning I felt completely crushed and broken."

The writer Ferenc Móra (1879—1934), director of the Museum of Szeged, had this to say in *A magyar paraszt* ("The Hungarian Peasant"), published in 1935:

"...The woman in the shop made me sit on a box of copper sulphate and without being asked gave me some statistical data on trade in the puszta. In more than two years' time she had sold about two pounds of coffee. The amount of white sugar sold was about 24 pounds in the previous year, this year she had not sold more than three.

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* One krajcár was $\frac{1}{100}$ of the old forint

'Well, what do people buy nowadays?'

'Salt, petroleum, matches.'

'And surely tobacco too?'

'Oh, no. not nowadays any more! They make tobacco out of potato-leaves. So does my husband.'

'Then you are married, are you?'

'Of course. He keeps the credit-book.'

'Oh, so you keep such a book too?'

'Certainly; people can't pay in cash. They buy salt, petroleum and matches on credit. Later, after the harvest, they pay in wheat.'

And she actually showed me the credit-book. There were many, many entries in it, but the figures amounted to very little. The highest sum was 12 *pengő* 70 *fillérs*. But this was the total of a great many items filling two full pages, such as salt and matches, in minute quantities.

'And this customer is a big farmer,' the shopkeeper's wife told me. 'On Twelfth Night, when he sold his pig, he settled his debt of 23 *pengős* carried over from the previous year. My husband always says that if we had ten such customers we should have nothing to worry about.'

'And where is your husband?' I asked.

She shook her head regretfully.

'He's away. His sister died last night, and as the canvasser happened to be here at that time my husband came to terms with him.'

'What about?' I asked flabbergasted.

'Well, if the canvasser pays for the coffin, my husband will vote for that what's-his-name from Budapest. My husband said this was much safer than getting cash. The last time we had elections, my cousin was taken in with the cash. Sure he got 30 *pengős*, but after the elections he had to repay it or else he might even have been jailed. But I don't think they will take the coffin out of the grave."

It was in the "thirties" that Ferenc Móra wrote this story, at election time.

Nor were poor people any better off in other regions. The fact that the world of the late nineteenth century was a dreary jail for millions of working peasants and that the burden and bitterness imposed by the Horthy regime on the working people was even more dreadful, is unquestionably borne out by *A boldog ember* ("The Happy Man," 1932), a beautiful novel by Zsigmond Móricz (1879—1942).

"Mother," relates György Joó the hero of the Móricz novel, "used to bake bread from fine flour saying that it yields more than any other flour. It was cheap, she would always buy 10 to 12 kilos at a time, and we had nothing to worry about. Now 100 kilo of wheat costs eighteen and a half *pengős*. I did not buy a single kilo the whole winter... Meat we bought for Christmas. Thirty *fillérs* for a kilo of flour, 2 *pengő* 40 for a kilo of fat... my wife makes a little gruel without milk. She puts some onion stalks into the flour and makes a soup without fat. And I'm lying about the whole winter, I can't earn a single *pengő*. Salt? There are five of us, we buy a kilo of it and it is used up in no time. In the old days the finest salt from Szlatina cost 10 *krajcárs* and was twice as good as now; today this good-for-nothing boiled salt costs 60 *fillérs*... Rice used to be 12 *krajcárs*, today it is 70 *fillérs*. Sugar? I don't even know what it costs. We bought some for Christmas, a lump came to 2 *fillérs*. My son fetched five lumps for 10 *fillérs*, my wife cried over it. As for matches, three women put their money together to buy a 6 *fillér* box. And then they divide it among themselves... Now everybody is unhappy, everybody under the sun.

This country, as it stands, this whole damn' country is going to the dogs. How did it come about? What has ruined the country?. . . Suppose people wake up one day and say it's all wrong, let's do things otherwise?. . ."

Wherever writers went in the country, wherever they questioned the workers and the peasants, they found nothing but anxiety, suffering and complaints to write about. In Transdanubia, the part of the country where beautiful Lake Balaton lies, the farmhands on the estates of several thousands of acres were toiling amidst conditions far worse even than those of the small farmers and day-labourers.

A puszták népe ("People of the Puszta," 1936) by Gyula Illyés is to this day a memento of the past.

"In the house of the Szerentsés family we were met by a regular nursery school—a nursery school in revolt, along the lines of Rousseau's principles. There were children galore, lying or sitting on the beds, on the earthen floor, on chests, on windowsills, mostly naked, and quarrelling. On the upper and lower benches round the big stove children were sitting in rows, close to each other, reminding one of an altar in an exuberant baroque painting. They were screaming and starving.

The Szerentsés family was starving, shamelessly hungry every one of them, there within their four walls. The other family living under the same roof was starving too. The whole *puszta*, indeed, was famished.

Not that they were screaming from hunger. But they were starving, quietly, as a matter of course, of this there could be no doubt. They gathered mushrooms in the forest, and made their meal of them. And when there were no mushrooms, they would steal the leaves from the sugarbeet fields of the estate and devour them to still their hunger. Of course, they had something to eat every day, but so little that it hardly made up for the energy wasted on chewing. . . . Excellent economists have worked out the monetary value of all the naturalia a farm labourer received for his work. We will not estimate the value of the labour spent by the farm-hands, especially their womenfolk, on tilling the little piece of land and breeding the animals they got in return. All the remuneration the farm-hands received in a year—including the wheat, rye, barley, wood and also the lodging they obtained from the estate—came to 350—400 *pengős*. This is what they would have got for it, if they had wanted to sell it. So the share of the yearly income of every member of a farm-hand's family of five amounted, in the 1930's to an average of 25 *fillérs* a day.

This was the sum from which they had to buy food, fuel, light and clothing, and cover their cultural and religious requirements, as well as their travelling expenses.

This was their past and their present. The age of settled conditions, the age of peace. They did not complain. Only the children cried, kicking at the locked bread-box."

And let us bear in mind that the children of the farm-hands joined the ranks of the breadwinners almost as soon as they could walk. In his *Viharsarok* ("Stormy Corner," 1936) about the land and the people of the lower Tisza-district Géza Féja gives facts like these:

"The narrow court-yard of the farmhands bears the stamp of an oppressed spirit. Consciously and intentionally a social stratum is being created which does not develop, so its requirements do not increase even over centuries. But even the parents themselves kill their children's love for play. At the age of six most of them have to go to work. The factories employ more and more young workers. The workshops and store-rooms are peopled by 12—16-year-old children. But the children of those who live by the sweat of their brow begin to work even at an earlier age. What else can the parents do but to fill the hungry mouths of the children with food earned from others, the sooner the better, so that the children may at least earn the price of their clothes. The first stage of work is guarding the animals. There are some who watch hens, others geese, pigs, sheep, cows. Near Orosháza, on the farmsteads round Monor an eleven-year-old child tending animals gets yearly 100 kilos of wheat, a piglet, a set of winter-clothing, three sets of underwear, a pair of boots. Where poverty is worse, the child-workers are of course paid much less. The children at the Rákóczi-settlement of Orosháza are sent to work at the age of six, and the parents are happy if the child gets food and 2 to 4 *pengős* a month. And they can count themselves lucky if they are given the job of watching the animals, for otherwise, they must labour on the estate, and there they must work hard or else they get punished by the farm-overseer.

... The Tisza region is still "leading" in infant mortality. (As a matter of fact, we are ahead of almost all the countries in Europe in this field.) In the County of Békés, of 100 liveborn infants 17.8, in Csanád 17.6, in Csongrád 18.2 die."

The writings of Lajos Kassák, Ferenc Móra, Zsigmond Móricz, Gyula Illyés, Géza Féja are staggering testimonies. It is from such depths that the Hungarian people had to fight their way up, fifteen years ago.

IMRE F. JOÓS

RÁTH VÉGH — COLLECTOR OF FOLLIES

An educative and still entertaining writer has taken eternal leave of the follies and failings of man. With the death of István Ráth-Végh the mosaic of Hungarian literature has lost some of its colour, for in his special field—writing about the oddities that spice universal cultural history —he had few rivals. He was nearly ninety years old when death interrupted the writing of his new work "The Comedy of Books", an excerpt from which follows below, on which he was labouring with untiring assiduity, for life is so short, and so long the list of the follies he still wanted to glean.

Ráth-Végh's activity was on the borderline of science and fiction—a kind of no man's land, so little wonder that now and then arrows were pointed at him from both sides. Hundreds of thousands of readers had genuine appreciation for his interesting and informative books, and good educationalists saw a true ally in him and referred to his works as models.

In his younger days, Ráth-Végh was a judge —that is probably why he never stopped searching for truth and justice—and as a judge sitting in juvenile court he had ample opportunity to learn about the boundless wickedness of the grown-up world. Possessed of such passions and experiences in combination with the extensive knowledge of a polymath, he might have become a successful writer of mystery stories as did so many eminent British scholars. Under Hungarian conditions, however, this born student of crime and morality dedicated himself to a more instructive style and produced a series of excellent works in the field of cultural history.

István Ráth-Végh created a unique world: a garden of follies which was not confined by the limits of time and space, transcended continents, travelled back into the past and ahead into the future mapped out by utopias. Strange breeds of people swarm in his garden: soldiers akin to Falstaff who like a stiff drink and a bold lie, alchemists who search for a magic El Dorado in test-tubes, princely idols, and priests of the inquisition, snobbish gentlemen with quaint eccentricities, the petty kings of Lilliputian countries who imitate Alexander the Great, unfortunate witches burnt at the stake, and women in love who are more dangerous than any witch. As did once Barnum in the ring of his world-famous circus, so Ráth-Végh assembled in his books all that is queer and amusing in the world, with the aim of holding a mirror before us and asking: "Are you different?" For in the final analysis Ráth-Végh conjured up a merrier version of Dante's hell, and in his works on cultural history, numbering about a score, the principal punishment for the guilty was the reader's smile: he subjected stupidity, bigotry, and the entire junk-pile of superstitions to the judgement of a smile. The smile won by his books made them bestsellers, and the same smile extinguished the follies, eccentricities and obsessions of his figures that might be found in the hearts of his readers. The gift of winning this judgement of a smile was his greatest asset, for it enabled him to teach without appearing didactic.

We know that he must have read tens of thousands of books in order to collect this menagerie. In this endless pilgrimage through history and literature he himself was cleansed of vanity—the arch-crime of most of his characters. For—and this is the greatest praise we can say in tribute to him—he was a writer whose literary efforts sought to do away with his own actuality. May the fate of his books be fulfilled and they become a museum of *extinct* follies and eccentricities in which the readers of the future can no longer recognize their own obsessions.

IMRE SURÁNYI

EXCERPT FROM

THEY WERE IN LOVE WITH BOOKS

by ISTVÁN RÁTH-VÉGH

The Book-lover's Will

The book-lover can be distinguished from the book-maniac when it comes to *reading*. He appreciates he rarity of a book, but his eyes are attracted mainly by its contents.

The genuine book-maniac, as we shall see, hardly opens his books. In his case acquisition is the main thing, the passion of collecting, of satisfying an unquenchable greed. He is indifferent to what he is collecting. He might pursue with the same abandon buttons or the rope by which executed men and women were hanged, as did Sir Thomas Tyrwhitte, the rich English gleaner of executioners' paraphernalia, whose nerves must have been as strong as the ropes he collected.

A little bit of eccentricity is not enough to transform the book-lover into a book-maniac. Such a little thing hardly deserves special comment in England, the homeland of whim.

In 1733 a Mr. J. Underwood died in Withleson. His will reads as follows:

1. As soon as my body has been lowered to the grave, a white marble tablet should be placed on it with the inscription:

   NON OMNIS MORIAR
   J. UNDERWOOD
   1733

2. Thereupon the following six gentlemen (the names are listed) should sing loudly, joyously and merrily the last four lines of the 20th Ode of the Second Book of Horace:

   Absint inani funere naeniae
   Luctusque turpes et querimoniae.
   Composce clamorem, ac sepulchri
   Mitte supervacuos honores.

(Let inane funeral dirges, the ugly laments and complaints be missing from my funeral. Suppress your clamours and omit vacuous tributes at my grave.)

3. May the bells not toll at my funeral. None of my friends and relatives should follow my coffin excepting the six gentlemen named.
4. My coffin should be painted green. This was always my favourite colour.
5. Lay me in the coffin in my every-day clothes. Under my head let Sanadon's Horace be placed, at my feet Bentley's Milton; in my right hand place my little Greek Bible, in my left my small-size edition of Horace, and under my back Bentley's Horace.
6. After my funeral my sister should serve a feast to the six gentlemen and pay them each 12 guineas for the trouble they undertook.
7. After the feast the same friends should sing the 31st Ode of the First Book of Horace, and when this is concluded let them make merry with wine and no longer think of

Underwood.

The Horace-loving Mr. Underwood was not the only bibliophile who hoped to be buried with his favourite books. Coelius Calcagninus, a humanist from Ferrara, who had visited Hungary prior to the disastrous Battle of Mohács, left his library to his native town, stipulating that he should be buried in the library room. This was done, and over the door the following inscription indicates this book-lover's resting place: *Index Tumuli Coelii Calcagnini, qui ibidem sepelire voluit, ubi semper vixit.* (Here is C. C.'s tomb who wished to be buried where he always lived.)

The Book-maniac

The real, Simon Pure, thoroughbred book-maniac is not interested in what his books are about. He goes for rarity, oddity and sometimes for sheer quantity.

To forestall the glory of foreign maniacs, let me begin with a Hungarian character.

One of our antiquarians dealing in scientific books said of a newly-rich master-builder, called Jamintzky, that he collected books with fervour, but did not read them at all. He did not dare to take his loot home because he was afraid of his wife. His house had a huge padlocked cellar-like place under the stairs, which had a small window looking out on the staircase. It was through this opening that he threw in the books he had purchased, wrapped up as he brought them home. He never even touched them afterwards. When the man died, it was almost impossible to get into this peculiar "library-room," as the door was barricaded by the parcels of books thrown in through the opening. When the heirs finally made their entry, it turned out that the tied-up bundles contained Hungarian books from the 16th and 17th centuries and priceless first editions.

The reader who is unfamiliar with the symptoms of bibliomania will perhaps shake his head and suspect exaggeration. Not a bit of it! The obsession of the old Hungarian master-builder will seem like a mere nothing if we compare it to the practices of the most notorious English book-maniac.

Richard Heber (1773—1833) was a wealthy English gentleman. He soon threw himself into book-collecting, which gradually became an all-consuming passion with him. He broke with all his social contacts and was to be seen only in libraries, book-shops and auction halls. When he found out that some rare book was up for sale, he called for his carriage and would drive as much as four-hundred miles to get there first. Genuine maniac that he was, he would not be satisfied with just one copy of the rare books. He bought the second and even the third copy, merely to prevent other collectors from grabbing them.

All the time, he had agents outside of England in all the major European book centres, snooping around after valuable books. It was impossible to find out just how many volumes there were in his entire collection, which was variously estimated at 150,000 and 500,000 volumes.

This may sound odd. Why could the volumes not be counted? In this particular case they were really impossible to count because Mr. Heber had piled up the mass of his books in eight different places. One country house and two London mansions were full of books from the cellar to the attic. When these became too small for his stock, he rented a house in Oxford, which he also crammed full with his acquisitions. His foreign purchases he did not even have sent home, but rented houses for storing them in Paris, Antwerp, Brussels and Geneva.

This fact gives him away. He may have occasionally read his books at home, but his houses abroad were certainly only crypts and coffins for books. A book once taken to any one of them was buried. Its owner never even gave it a thought afterwards. His raging passion for acquisition quieted down as soon as he could call the desired book his own.

Mr. Heber was not even interested in what was to become of his books. His will makes absolutely no provision for them. His heirs had to explore much of the continent before they could find the scattered collection.

We hardly need say that the books were finally auctioned off. The catalogue of the auction filled 2,000 pages and the auction itself lasted for 202 days. The proceeds amounted to 56,775 pounds, which was a lot of money then, but was certainly less than the sum squandered on collecting them.

Toward the end of his life Richard Heber came into an odd contact with another man obsessed with books.

When the 600,000 volumes of the Boulard Library were auctioned in Paris, Heber purchased the entire historical and travel material of the collection.

Who was this Antoine Marie Henri Boulard, who managed to acquire the biggest private library in Paris? He was a member of the bourgeoisie, a notary public, a landlord, and an eminent scholar who wrote a number of learned works himself. When the passion for collecting got the better of him, he, too, succumbed entirely, just like his British colleague. Naturally, there was not enough room for all his books at his residence. So he came upon the bright idea that when a tenant of his moved, he did not rent the flat again, but furnished it as a library. Finally he gave notice to every one of his tenants, and thus the whole house was transformed into a library. He still did not have enough room, so he rented another house. Then a third one. After that a fourth. At last he added a fifth one. According to the legend—for after his death a whole myth arose around his personality—he packed a total of eight houses with books, but even if we stick to five, the number is high enough.

The placing of the books was carried out with ingenious simplicity. He piled the volumes of different sizes and formats atop each other, like so many bricks, and built pillars, stakes and bastions of books. These structures criss-crossed the rooms like rows of houses and streets; it was possible to walk among them like between the woodstacks of a timber-yard.

For classification and cataloguing Boulard had no time left, for he spent all free hours near the Seine embankment hunting for books. He usually came home with two or three dozen. He had a coat especially made for these purchases with immense pockets that would hold even the large quartos.

Widely known is the attitude of wives to the fever of book-acquisition. M^{me} Boulard, too, tried her best to cool her husband's ardour. She wheedled a promise out of him that he would leave the Seine embankment alone for a while. The poor man kept his word, but began to crumble like a book partly eaten by worms. His wife had to release him from his promise, whereat he recovered and became his old self again.

He died a beautiful death like a soldier on the battleground. One day he loaded himself so heavily with ancient folios that the hansom cabs would not give him a ride for love or money. He dragged himself home on foot, almost collapsing from the sweet burden, and soaking wet. He caught a cold, contracted pneumonia, and when Death came to Father Boulard's name in his own catalogue, the Great Reaper checked it and crossed it out from the list of the living.

THEATRE — CINEMA

"STYLE-BREAKING" IN THE THEATRE

A lively controversy on the question of style has for some time been going on in Hungarian artistic circles. Besides discussing the broader issues of artistic style in general. this controversy is especially centred on the theatre, stirring up quite a storm in the world of critics, play-wrights and stagemanagers. Printed below, in abridged form, is a contribution to this debate—an article written by Mr. József Czimer, literary adviser of the Gaiety Theatre Vígszínház Budapest, which originally appeared in the February 1960 issue of "*Kortárs*" (Contemporary), a Hungarian literary magazine.

The Narrator and other "tricks"

Not so long ago, a violent and almost concerted offensive was conducted, in the columns of theatre critics and indeed throughout the broader Press, against what is generally termed "formabontás", a newfangled Hungarian word signifying, literally, the "breaking up of style", that is to say, the dissolution of conventional theatrical forms. To this day, one can find such sweeping attacks cropping up in sundry reviews of plays. But whether you come across articles of the recent past, or criticisms appearing in today's morning paper, they will not give you any clear idea of what those who attack that ominous "breaking up of theatrical style" mean by it.

For instance, in a recently published militant article attacking "style-breaking," one of our most assiduous critics—who by the way, is the literary adviser of a Budapest theatre—expresses his disapproval of the tendency in several plays to employ the device of the narrator. (He wrote this, incidentally, at a time when his theatre was scoring its greatest success with a narrator-equipped Soviet "style-breaker.")

Another article takes "style-breaking" as meaning the rejection by "modernists" of conventional "true-to-life" *décor* and its replacement by unimaginative symbols, or the total rejection of all scenery.

Reviewing the *première* of a Hungarian play, one of the critics of our leading national newspapers vehemently censures the stage-manager for mobilizing the whole range of mechanical paraphernalia. He also rebukes other young stage-managers for resorting to such devices as projecting scenery, the use of carriages, spotlight and so on, which, as he writes, he will "put up with" occasionally, in some good play, but even then reluctantly.

The disappearance of the barrier separating the audience from the stage, the actors' leaving the self-contained world of their parts and directly appealing to the audience—a proceeding by which they allegedly "expose" the make-believe world of the theatre and "degrade" their art into mere play—is regarded as blasphemous "style-breaking" by another critic. In addition, there are the critics for whom "style-breaking" does not actually mean the breaking up of theatrical forms of expression, but the total rejection of the division of a drama into closed scenes and acts.

For a better understanding of this approach, let me attempt to list the reasons on which the critics say their views are based—that is, where they choose to give any reason at all and are not content just to sneer.

Thus it seems that "style-breaking" is: (a) an indulgence in formalism, an end in itself, the predominance of the stage-manager's whims over the playwright's intentions; (b) an ephemeral vogue created under the influence of the motion picture and other technical elements that are alien to the theatre; (c) on the contrary, a rehash of the old, outmoded Weimar experiment; (d) a symptom of putrescent imperialist culture; (e) the producers' inability to compete with their predecessors combined with a desire to attract attention by inventing something new; (f) for several thousand years masterpieces have been created without all that fuss, so what are all these tricks for?; (g) style—that is to say, form—is not a matter for the artist, or the writer, to decide anyway; rather, form is determined by content; so stop giving us Shakespeare productions in goodness knows what modern styles, and stop writing everyday stories in jumbled-up sequences.

Breaking Up Which Style?

When a controversy arises between persons all of whom hold progressive views, the crucial point is to decide which of the two schools of thought is really progressive and which conservative. In the present case, that of theatrical style—it has to be decided whether the claims of the theatres are the progressive, and those of the critics the conservative ones, or vice-versa.

For the sake of brevity, let me say right at the outset that, to my mind, the very term "formabontás," "breaking up of theatrical style", makes no sense at all. Is there such a thing as a permanent theatrical style which is now being broken up, or which one is seeking to break up? What sort of style is it, anyway? The Greek amphiteatre? Shakespeare's Renaissance stage? Or the "peep-show", complete with curtain and settings? And in the drama: Is it Aristotle's taut dramaturgy with its choral pattern? Or the loose structure of Shakespeare's or of Lope de Vega's plays? Or the three dramatic unities of French classics? Each theatrical or dramatic style so far has "broken up." Are we to regard naturalism as the only style that is indissoluble? No, even the critics cannot suggest that we should adhere to such an absurd idea.

What, then, is the meaning of the term "breaking up of style?" If there is no such thing as an everlasting theatrical style—one that endures through the ages—then the term "breaking up of style" is meaningless. In that case one would have no reason to protest if the stage-managers, having grown weary of the old style (which has by now become useless as a medium of expression), begin groping for new ones.

As to the aesthetic maxim that form is determined by content—this is something that, in my opinion, most stage-managers understand and also apply better than many of those who advert to it. In the relationship between content and form, content is unquestionably the determining factor; but its function is not nearly as mechanical as some people seem to believe. There are certain factors—for instance, the laws governing the movement of social forces—which influence content and form simultaneously. It is a common experience that a classic drama—say, one of Shakespeare's plays—conveys, intellectually, a great deal more to a Communist playgoer (who belongs to a society having reached a more advanced stage of development, and who possesses a higher degree of consciousness than his counterpart living in the Age of Shakespeare) than it did to members of Elizabethan audiences. Also, the message that a play conveys to its audience at some later period, or in a given political or social situation, may be totally different from what it was at the time of writing or—to put it trivially—in some less agitated era of history. In such instances, several ideas expressed in the drama or sometimes even its fundamental message will change; and this, in our view, is tantamount to the content of the drama as a whole having changed. That is something to be remembered by the staff of a theatre which aims to be an ideological theatre, one which looks upon stagecraft not as an end in itself but which assigns to it a social function. If certain conditions influence the content of the drama or of the theatre, the content thus changed may easily conflict with the old form; consequently, a new form will have to be found. Not to mention the new content that is now in the process of being created—and that may inevitably clash with the old form.

Walter and Beckmesser

Old *habitués* of the theatre like to put the following question to budding authors or critics: Who is the hero of the world-famous tragedy in which a prince, whose royal father was murdered, pursues his studies abroad, while the throne is usurped by the murderer, who has married the widowed queen; and the prince returns, staking a bloody vengeance to which both usurper and the prince's mother fall victim? Halfway through the sentence the novice will begin to smirk complacently and give the cock-sure answer, "Hamlet." After which he will be dumbfounded on being told that the young man the questioner has in mind is Orestes. Is it a matter for joking only that the plot is the same in both cases? Numerous aesthetes will tell you that it is not.

Or take the countless indisputably identical mythological themes. The reason why Giraudoux gave his Amphytrion the title "Amphytrion 38" is that, so far as he knew, his was the thirty-eighth treatment of the theme. Now compare his "Amphytrion" with Plautus's and Molière's and see whether the content has indeed determined the form mechanically. If it were as simple as that—could Shakespeare have been produced with the curtain rung up? And which would be a "breaking up of theatrical style:" to produce Shakespeare with curtain rung up? or to "decapitate" him with a "peep-show" curtain?

We have recently staged at the Gaiety Theatre an adaptation from "War and Peace." The production has been favourably received by the audiences as well as by most critics. A few critics, however, suggested that a dramatisation in the conventional way (closed scenes on a closed stage, etc.) should not have been impossible to execute, without any change in content. In our production we have adopted the Piscatorian conception—narrator, some stylization here and there, symbols, and no wings (one critic has observed, nevertheless, that the "wings are drab".) Another delighted critic wrote that this dramatization is just what Okhlopkov has always been striving to make a stage version of "War and Peace" like. I could not help smiling at this, for Okhlopkov has recorded his idea of staging Tolstoy's masterpiece, and it is quite a different one. He has in mind a peculiar circular stage on which it would be possible to perform interior as well as mass scenes. In our version there is no circular stage and there are no mass scenes. Thus it can be seen that the same content permits of at least three different treatments of style. Therefore, the content, which in its relation to the form is the primary, the decisive, factor, does *not* determine the form in a mechanical way. If it did, how could Beckmesser give such an interpretation of Walter's song as he actually does?

The Artist's Personality and His Work

Now what factors help to mould the form of a work of art.

Let us take them one by one. Obviously, the artist's personality is one of the influences shaping theatrical style.

Art is the most individual of all creative activities. Other activities, too, I know, have the individual element in them, but their result—as in the case of, say, an electric switch—offers no clue as to the personality of their maker; at best, you can conclude from them whether their maker has done his job well or bungled it. In contrast, the product of artistic activity is always stamped with the artist's personality. If and when it is not, one mostly has to do with an echo, an imitator of creative genius... What can a theory which excludes the creative individual from the process of shaping the style make of recalcitrants like, say, Lope de Vega? Time and again he was called to account for the unities of time and place—conventional rules of the French drama of the period. Even Cervantes rebuked him for not following the examples of the ancients, and warned him that "there can be no greater nonsense than when a person appears as a baby in the first act and turns up as a bearded man in the second." Or when the first act of a play is laid in Europe, the second in Asia, and the third in Africa. Fixing on him the same charge, almost word for word, for the same "offences," Boileau referred to Lope de Vega as the *rimeur d'au-delà des Pyrénées* (the rhymester from beyond the Pyrenees). One can imagine the biting scorn of this *enfant terrible* of unbridled and inexhaustible imagination as he replied to these charges. Of his creative method he wrote that "when getting to work on a play I put all rules under lock and key. To keep Terence and Plautus from interfering, I bid that they be taken out of my room."

When preparing for a "style-breaking" non-naturalistic experiment some time ago, the excellent French actor-producer-manager Jean-Louis Barrault quoted Lope de Vega for Anouilh in connexion with the same problem: "The theatre requires three things: two boards, two trestles, and a great passion." Had Lope de Vega (or Shakespeare, for that matter) been forced into some conventional or academic form, the world would probably never have known the name of either of these giants. Of course, it is sheer folly to make such a supposition, for they would never have given in anyway.

Stanislavsky's Vision

What all this means in terms of theatrical style, I shall try to illustrate by the examples of Okhlopkov and Stanislavsky. Stanislavsky owes his immortality, not to the style of the Moscow Arts Theatre, but to his dramatic theory and his activity in rearing young histrionic talent. It is true, of course, that the Arts Theatre and its productions lay claim to great importance in theatrical history—productions of the highest standard in what was the most advanced theatrical style of the time were given on the "box" stage, with "true-to-life" *décor* and closed ceiling-high settings. Today, Okhlopkov, Meyerhold's eminent disciple, has adopted quite a different kind of stage for the modern theatre—the "round stage without décor," set up in the centre of a circular auditorium. Indeed, a variety of round stages are in use throughout the world. I do not here propose to discuss the prospects of the round stage but prefer to examine the question: Is there any contradiction, in matters of dramatic-aesthetic principles, between the realist—and, at the end of his life, Socialist—Stanislavsky and the Communist Okhlopkov?

Toporkov tells us that, at a rehearsal of "Tartuffe," Stanislavsky, while emphatically insisting on the necessity for the actor to become pervaded by theatrical truth. said, "I dream of a theatre in which the actor may never know which of the four walls of the stage is going to open before the audience." He had in mind that when the actor is conscious of being surrounded by a watchful audience on every side, he will have no opportunity, in any situation, to engage in make-believe or pretending on the stage. In a way, it may be said that what Okhlopkov and the advocates of the round stage are doing is, actually, to act in accordance with principles conceived by Stanislavsky, translating into fact what must have seemed to their predecessor a dream. Why? Stanislavsky and Okhlopkov are not contemporaries. Thus, the next factor that comes into play as a force fashioning theatrical style is—the epoch. That, however, is too broad a category; let us therefore try to break it down into its component parts. Take technique first.

The Naturalist Experiment

I do not wish to expatiate on this subject. Up-to-date technique has been part of the European theatre from the very outset. The ancient Greeks, too, called in the aid of various mechanical devices for their performances. As early as Aeschylus, the gods made their appearance with the aid of hoisting-engines; and later on, especially with Euripides, machinery acquired a downright dramaturgic significance *(deus ex machina)*. Even sliding stages are known to have been used by the Greeks for interior scenes; they would be trundled on to the stage in much the same way as the trucks are operated in the present-day theatre. We need not trace the evolution of stage techniques—which always influenced theatrical styles—all the way through Aleotti, Brandt and Mühldorfer. I only wish to make it clear that the very theatre, which certain critics are so anxious to protect from "style-breaking" attempts, owes its very existence to modern techniques. For it was the invention of electric lighting that made it possible for the first time to set up true-to-life sceneries on the stage. As a result, the theatre was induced to present on the stage a piece of "real life," deluding the spectator, as it were, into the belief that the action he watches on the stage is not play-acting but reality. This has meant the breaking of the convention, ever present between actor and spectator throughout the more than 2,000-year-old history of the Theatre; namely, that "you and I, we know that this is mere play, but as it is Life that we are acting, we shall take it seriously, and as it is Art, we shall respect it." That is what the naturalist "style-breaking" experiment put an end to at the time Stanislavsky and his associates were active. The theatrical forms he worked with were probably one of the factors influencing Stanislavsky's outlook.

"Unheeding Technology"

There were in every age some people—great minds among them—who criticized, censured and jeered at the pioneers of the theatre and at leading playwrights for their use of machinery and technical devices. Aristophanes never ceased to decry and ridicule Euripides on account of the latter's reliance on engines, hoisting contrivances and carriages, and sliding stages. But in these matters the ultimate decision rests not with the voice of authority but with the requirements of progress, and Aristophanes' acid criticism proved no more capable of impeding the ascendance of Euripides' theatrical style than did Cervantes' or Boileau's severe judgement stop the triumph of Lope de Vega's drama. It is sheer naïveté to expect the present-day theatre to do what the theatres of other ages never did, namely to abandon the use of modern technical aids.

I do not believe, I must confess, that handicraft techniques can contribute towards producing performances of a higher level... Fortunately for us all, modern technology does not bother about the opinion of this or that critic, but enters the theatre and offers its services to—nay, forces them upon—the theatre. One can only wish the Hungarian theatre were in a position to enlist these services to the full; alas, the technical equipment of our theatres is far from up-to-date. We, theatre people, often grumble about the technical inadequacy of our theatres. After all, technology—and this has been a natural process over the centuries—influences even the dramaturgy of the plays. To be able to produce modern plays, you simply must have modern technical aids. The development of theatrical technology does not result from the influence of the motion picture, the radio, or television. No, both the motion picture and television are products of the same technological progress—a progress which has had no reason whatever to shun the theatre...

Oracles, Ghosts and Alter Egos

And here I come to the next factor—namely dramatic style—which, at any given time, exerts an influence on theatrical style. Theatrical style and dramatic style are not, of course, identical notions. If they were, it would be impossible to present Shakespeare in varying theatrical styles in each succeeding age. Yet the relationship between them is a very close one, particularly in the case of the latest dramatic and the latest theatrical styles of a given era.

Every drama expert is well acquainted with the process of transformation which has taken place in dramatic style through the ages. These changes have been the result of the combined action of several factors, but they have been due in no small measure to the changing world outlook in the minds, either of audiences or playwrights, or of both. The activization of the chorus in Euripides, as well as his "mechanization" of the gods, was the result of an ideological development, and not merely a formal fact. Or take a modern example. Arthur Miller's "most American" play, "The Death of a Salesman," is having a highly successful run at the National Theatre of Budapest.

In this non-naturalistic "style-breaking" drama, memories of the salesman—nay, even other, momentary products of his mind, visions, imaginary figures—come trooping in, with a matter-of-fact ease, right in the middle of the action that passes on the stage. Thus we witness the appearance—first as a memory, then as an apparition—of the salesman's brother, Ben, who represents the *other* type of American businessman, the ruthless go-getter, the cruel, cynical, uninhibited *entrepreneur*—the type of businessman which is Willy's ideal, but like which he can never become, for he still believes—or at least wants to believe—that honesty, diligence and competence prevail in business. This Ben, the counterpole of Willy's soul, the image of his mental struggle, appears with increasing frequency until, as a decisive jolt towards making up Willy's mind, he bursts into the latter's present.

What kinds of media would be used in times past to solve a similar dramatic task? In the Greek drama this would appear as an act of the gods, an oracle ("Antigone," "Oedipus," "Iphigenia"). With Elizabethan audiences, the rulings of Grecian gods carried no ideological weight. Therefore, when Shakespeare wants to show us the "alter ego" with which his hero is struggling mentally, he, too, resorts to supraterrestrial—if not mythological—oracles, as in the case of the witches in "Macbeth." But he prefers to make them appear as ghosts, which either encourage the hero in his struggle (as Hamlet is encouraged by his father's ghost), or weaken him (as Richard III is weekened by the ghosts of his victims). Miller's audiences believe neither in Greek mythology, nor in witches, nor in ghosts. He has, therefore, broken up the conventional theatrical style by personifying his hero's mental struggle, in the middle of a realistic scene. The procedure that Miller has resorted to is a corollary of the world outlook of our period, and not, as some might believe, an arbitrary action on his part. The less so since long before "The

Death of a Salesman" was written, Tennessee Williams had employed the same expedient *inter alia* in his one-act play, "Long Good-bye", which is likewise now being played in Budapest. This device is the result of a process of evolution, since it has a definite significance, not merely formal but also profoundly dramaturgical, in the play. For Willy Loman's tragic fate these memories supply not only antecedents but also dramatic motives. Would this tragedy appear as justified and as staggering as it is, if the scenes of the hero's past were related by someone, or if they were omitted altogether?

Communist "Style-breaking"

Or take another dramaturgic element—the monologue. The monologue is one of the most effective devices of Shakespearean dramaturgy for the revelation of the hero's mind. Naturalistic drama has rejected this device as not being true to life. It has not spared even the asides. Yet the drama, even when it portrays the social struggle in its broadest perspective, is in fact a struggle of individual characters, a portrayal of human types—it is always character-drawing. If it were to give this up, it would relinquish its *raison d'être.*

To portray man's inner struggle in all its complexity and tragedy; to make the invisible perceptible—that, too, is an essential dramatic requirement. Ehrenburg's warning that culture is no annuity, that it has to be re-created by every generation—applies to drama and stagecraft as well. Searching for media to serve this purpose is not a symptom of decadence but a natural consequence of progress. And if we have no monologues and asides, then the dramatist will try to find other, more modern, devices, such as the said projection of the products of the mind. Or, in Tennessee William's best known play, "A Streetcar Named Desire", the startling representation of elongated shadows and jungle-noises to illustrate the fulfilment of Blanche's tragedy—her mental derangement. And that this "breaking up" of dramatic construction is not the exclusive property of moribund, pessimistic, bourgeois drama is proved by the Soviet play "An Optimistic Tragedy", which, presented in Budapest after the nightmare of the counter-revolution, helped Hungarian Communists to regain confidence in themselves and faith in their cause... It is not necessary, I believe, to waste words in support of the argument that conservative theatrical styles are thoroughly inadequate to the task of conveying such a modern, and not in the least unrealistic or abstract, dramatic technique. Thus, theatrical style is always influenced, through the dramatic style, by the age.

Et nunc ad fortissimum... and now I have come to the main point—the essence, perhaps—of my contention.

The Voice of the Public

Every theatre aims at some sort of response from its audiences. A theatre without an audience is an absurdity. Of course, the theatre is not "always a moral institution" to everyone as it was to Schiller. But to us, in our type of society, it is even more than that—it is an institution that supports the people in working for a happier future, in their effort to build up Socialism. It does so above all by educating the audiences for Socialism, but also in other ways. Our principal concern is to find the most effective means of conveying our message to the audience. We theatre people never speak of "style-breaking." What we are concerned about is the stimulating quality of our production. We do not "break up styles"—we search for the style which would provide us with the most effective medium of expression. For us—as indeed anywhere, at any time—the public is one of the chief agencies in fashioning a modern theatrical style. This is a fact that some critics seem to ignore completely, thus losing sight of the mission of the theatre, a mission which could not be fulfilled without the approval of the audience.

This is not the first time that critics find themselves at loggerheads with the public. I do not mean to say that in their disagreement the public has always been in the right—nothing of the kind. On the contrary, on matters of content, of principle, truth has in most instances been on the side of criticism (progressive-minded criticism, of course), depending, among others, on what class, what social segment it was whose representatives filled the auditorium. But whenever disagreement between critics and audiences concerned questions of form, the latter were invariably right! It was not incidental that, censured and badgered on account of his dramatic style, Lope de Vega appealed to his audiences, and they cleared him of the charges of his critics and acknowledged his place among the immortals.

Effects—Dramatic and Theatrical

Anyone dealing with stage aesthetics—and every artist working in a theatre—must be aware of the difference between dramatic and theatrical effect. In the theatre, every form, means or method designed to help convey the message of the drama to the spectator's mind produces dramatic effect. Any form—or mere whim—which, effective though it may be on the stage, does not help convey the dramatic message, must remain only stage-effect and as such has no place in the production. Let me give an example. I have seen a performance of "Le Bourgeois gentilhomme", one of the great scenes in which is the dinner that M. Jourdain, a bourgeois fawning on the aristocracy, gives in honour of a count and a countess. In this production, the dinner went on in true Molièresque gaiety, and the audience was rocking with laughter. Nevertheless, what called forth such hilarity had nothing to do with Molière's spirit. And it was not even the low-comedy effects that seemed to me so distressing. For what happened here was that at this most distinguished dinner the actor who impersonated M. Jourdain produced knife, fork and spoon from his pocket, thrust his hand into the Countess' plate, and so forth. Yet one would suppose that M. Jourdain, ever so anxious to appear a gentleman and even hiring, to this end, the services of a fencing-master, a linguist-philosopher and a dancing-master, would go out of his way, on this occasion, to comport himself in a terribly refined way, trying to use knife and fork even for drinking water. This scene is supposed to make fun of M. Jourdain's snobbery, and not of his boorish manners.

Or, to sweep before my own door, I will mention one example from the record of my theatre. In our production of de Filippo's "My family" the "modern" *décor* is rather American—gaudy, asymmetrical, ingeniously fantastic walls. It was given a big hand every night. Yet the theme of the play is how the American Way of Life intrudes, through the agency of the young, into the home of a decent, hidebound middle-class Italian. Well, American Way of Life did not have to intrude into *this* home—it was right there from the outset.

All this goes to show that the theatrical style is sound only when it seeks to serve the dramatic message. When this striving is opposed in principle, formalism appears on the stage.

On the Same Train

I am fully aware of the necessity to protect the theatre from the influence of snobs and dilettantes. As Schiller put it, "the dilettante takes obscurity for profundity, lack of restraint for force, turbidity for boundlessness, and lack of sense for super-intelligence." We have no use for this kind of people. We want to remove the rocks that obstruct the path of the rising new drama. Conservative criticism is such a rock. Whenever we, theatre people, read such criticisms we cannot help feeling distressed. We and our critics are travelling on the same train, as the saying goes—on the Train to Socialism. What is more, we are sitting in the same compartment, the one which is carrying the theatre towards Socialism—and, later on, we hope, towards Communism.

Yet we see the world from different angles. It is as though we were sitting facing each other in our compartment and looking out the window. They, with their backs turned towards the engine, always see the countryside we have left, while we, facing the engine, fix our eyes on the places we are heading for. One has to acknowledge that "ars una, mille species"—Art is one, but of many kinds. No one may be called upon, or have the power, to fix styles *a priori*, whether old or new. That is something which—if we understand the mission of the theatre correctly—ought not to be pinned down with hard and fast rules. The "narrator" and other "style-breaking" devices have come under fire in the Press, and some pointed remarks are still being made on this subject. For some time, we ignored the dispute—and so did the theatre-going public, and went our own way. To soothe enraged or exasperated actors, I have often quoted for this benefit Dante's *guarda e passa!*—observe and go on—without bothering to explain that these words are spoken by Virgil to Dante when the latter is witnessing the torments of the indifferent in the third circle of the *inferno*. And I am now breaking our indifferent silence, because I see the conservative views or principles cropping up again and again in some criticisms which tend to halt, instead of stimulating, further progress... It is not now our business to decide how much of the present-day theatrical styles should be retained and for how long, or to guess what the styles of the future may be like. But an agreement must be reached on the fundamental principles without which our writers and artists cannot go ahead unimpeded in their search for the most effective ways of expressing their truth, which is, at the same time, the truth of our society.

József Czimer

ON STAGING SHERIDAN

Notes from a diary and reminiscences

End of December, 1959

We have been discussing Marivaux for weeks. Am busy translating one of his plays, passing each act on to the theatre as soon as done. Seems to be growing on the stage manager, who has had 18th century memoirs and illustrated books brought from the library. And do I detect already a faint overtone of la-di-da in the actresses' voices as they order their cups of coffee in the green-room? Marivaux is as yet a secret of the manager's office, yet with an intuition that is never devoid of a touch of telepathy the actors and actresses are already beginning to substantiate the *marivaudage* as a table-rapping séance does with the spirit of a grandfather whom no one has ever seen. Looks like the company's beginning to develop the proper frame of mind for a Marivaux *première*...

After such antecedents, being well-acquainted with the ways of theatrical life, I am not in the least surprised to hear the theatre-manager declare, on the day of decision, that for the time being they are shelving Marivaux, but are going to produce —and "most urgently" at that—Sheridan's "School for Scandal" instead. Well, well, the reading of all those illustrated books on the eighteenth century theatre hasn't been wasted after all.

As in a flash of revelation, when all things acquire a new significance, it suddenly dawns on everyone that this theatrical company and Sheridan were destined for each other and have, indeed, for heaven knows how long been waiting for each other like true lovers; for, as in some rare constellation, it is in this company that you can find the perfect Sir Peter and Lady Teazle and an Uncle from India such as has never been seen before, it is this company that boasts that charming loving couple which Sheridan must have dreamt of in his moments of deepest emotion, not to speak of those dimmer stars who will burst into brilliance as soon as they are cast for the other parts in the play.

This is a rare moment of enlightenment, such as is experienced by none but the great philosophers and people who cast plays. It is only about the lackeys that there is a bit of bickering. Now, however, even the smallest part is in the best of hands. It is one of those moments of *praestabilita harmonia* when one can almost hear the music of the spheres as at the dawn of Creation...

Pandemonium usually breaks loose the day after.

Early January, 1960

"The style...!"

"The style...!"

"But the style...!"

For the third day in succession the debate has been raging. The Hungarian version of the play has been finished some time go and a copy is just out of the typewriter—yet the beginning of rehearsals seems a more distant prospect than at any time before. Everything is now ready, only we are unable so far to agree upon the theatrical style. The first night seems to be receding steadily into a hazy, uncertain, hopeless distance. It is almost as though we have been whirled back over the years to a time when Sheridan hadn't yet been born.

My apartment is littered with coffee-cups, books and glasses of brandy. The stage-designer is studying the settings once used at Drury Lane: he walks to and fro in my rooms as if it were the slandermongers' drawing-room. He side-steps imaginary pieces of furniture and bumps against the real ones. All of us are walking up and down anyway, as we find it impossible to cogitate otherwise. The stage-manager, also running round and round, was reading aloud—this is part of our concerted search for a style—from the memoirs of a London courtesan of Sheridan's time. Every now and then he exclaims:

"You know, we'll have to make it a modern production!"

There is a consensus of opinion on that.

He is no longer arguing with us, but with his future critics.

I suggest that we should have someone write background music to the play. Rococo music, of course, with a mildly ironic note in it. Modern instrumentation for an old style. The future is that of musical comedy!

"Good. And maybe we can get Mihály Székely just to step round from the Opera House and have a shot at the grand Slander Aria, eh?"

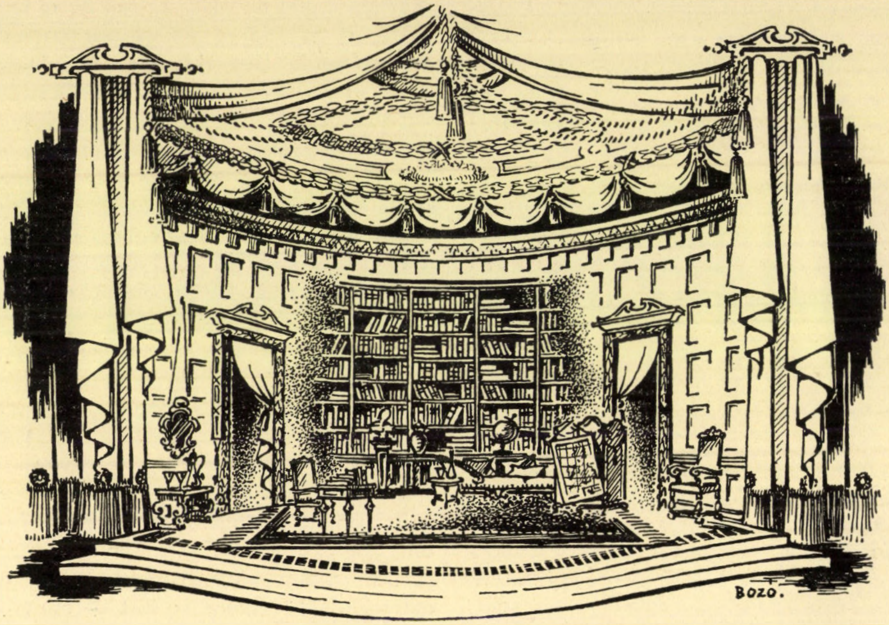
That finishes off the music theme. Once again round-and-round the mulberry tree. What does the public want?

"You've got to make the dialogues pointed so they will go straight to the hearts of the audience. Make them see that the story is about themselves. For they too are being slandered and are slandering others. We must be topical!"

"Audiences don't like topical allusions—they'd believe the play's been rewritten for their use, to educate them."

"But audiences don't like hearing allusions aimed at people they don't know. Who the hell's interested in this Miss Prim who has allegedly eloped with her dancing-master? Of course, if it was Brigitte Bardot... or if you put in—Ah well, never mind."

And so it goes on. More suggestions are included:



The Library of Charles Surface
Stage design by J. Bozó

(1) Transfer gossiping scene to a London modist's showroom. That'd give you a chance to watch each lady who is being slandered dress and undress behind a folding-screen—her silhouette, of course.

(2) Put in an interlude in pantomime between each two successive scenes, to illustrate the spreading of slander.

(3) Present Gainsborough's elegant figures in Hogarth's trivial situations—or the other way round.

(4) What about really having the Slander Aria sung?

(5) Plant a few actresses among the audience and let them engage in gossip during the performance: gossiping spreading beyond the footlights, gossip as a Universal Phenomenon.

(6) Keep up a continuous flow of gossip, but make it inarticulate so no one can make out what the gossip is about. See Ionesco.

(7) Every spectator should, along with his or her cloakroom ticket, be given an anonymous letter so written as to put him or her in a truly wrought-up state of mind with which fully to appreciate the performance.

And so forth.

After these preliminaries I daresay it was to be expected that, when rehearsals were started the following day, and when the *première* took place six weeks later, the play was produced exactly as Sheridan wrote it, that there were no modists' showrooms, and music only where required by the author's directions. No actresses were planted among the audience, and the hat-check girl slipped no anonymous letters into people's pockets.

After so much dispute and after so many barren ideas the company successfully realized the most modern style—loyalty to Sheridan.

About Six Weeks Later

We've brought off the *première.* Spirit of Loyalty upheld.

Settings and movements strictly Georgian. The Hungarian version reminiscent of the style which in Hungary corresponds to the Georgian Age. The style of the Transylvanian magnates' correspondence with Voltaire and of the enlightened writer-officers of Maria Theresa's Life Guards.* But the costumes are modern.

If I weren't afraid that it might be thought a paradox, I'd say that even the modern costuming of the Budapest production is designed to help create the proper period atmosphere for Sheridan's comedy.

"Creation of the proper period atmosphere"—is quite a different task in a theatre than, say, in a museum. It is true that in the theatre you can if you want get things genuine and faithful to a given period down to the last tin tack—at the end of the last century that was the chief ambition of every theatre-manager. They must have reached a point, one is inclined to believe, where it was no longer the dramatic action that mattered, but that anything that happened on the stage should appear in genuine period costumes and with the aid of accessories that were genuine period pieces. The theatre of that time went out of its way to seem trustworthy and respectable like an art-dealer of good standing. This was the time when deception was banished from the theatre. The gilding of the Escorial, on the stage, was as genuine as the filth and grime in "The Lower Depths." It must have been a most reassuring thought indeed for every box-hiring industrialist that the bed on the stage in which Count Cenci was done in was a genuine Renaissance piece like his own bed at home (in which, however,—thanks to better police protection—he would sleep safely).

But an audience that comes to a performance in order to derive comforting impressions from it is hardly what the theatre needs. The theatre wants to thrill you—by a scream of death as well as by pieces of furniture, dresses and props and by the adjectives and adverbs used in the text. And just as every action on the stage develops with a certain air of tension, so theatrical style is effective and living only if it is charged with some hidden tension, if it is built on counterpoints. For what is the use, on the stage, of the most perfect museum authenticity if it is dead, if it doesn't rivet the audience's attention by its vibrance, if it is not itself converted into action? Dramatic representation, if the action represented is to be accepted at all, cannot do without the counterpoints of style, without the play of light and shade.

It was such a counterpoint that both the dramaturgist and the stage-manager of the theatre sought to find for the Budapest production of The School for Scandal. And they have found a happy counterpoint in costuming all the members of their cast according to present-day fashion—in a stage-setting that is otherwise faithful to a nicety to the period of the play.

It was this counterpoint that served to make the eigteenth-century atmosphere more tangible to the audience.

Of course, the fashion of our days has in its extreme form something "costumy" about it and is not far removed from the fashion of that century of adventurers and philosophers. A goodly part of our younger generation—let alone their elders—would be delighted to be able to dress in the wonderful colours of Gainsboroguh's Blue Boy. You can come across the colour-scheme of Reynolds' Two Gentlemen on the best pages of the latest fashion magazines for men.

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* The 120-strong Hungarian Life Guards were founded in Vienna in 1760 by Maria Theresa as an act calculated to emphasize her position as Queen of Hungary. Into this body, whose duty was intended to consist of turning out at parades, the Hungarian counties sent hand-picked young men and these Life-Guardsmen—who also served as couriers for the cabinet and in this capacity travelled a good deal—became the chief agents through whom the French enlightenment found its way into Hungarian thought and letters. Their Vienna palace was one of the workshops of modern Hungarian literature. *(The Ed.)*

The fashion of our time is as exhibitionistic, motley and harlequinesque, as if it were meant straight for the stage. Cocteau's confession about his newest anthracite-coloured dinner-jacket comes to mind. Characteristically enough, he made his statement in — of all publications, — a men's fashion- magazine. He said he'd had it made for the Vienna production of "Oedipus Rex", in which he was going on the stage as the nar-rator and could thus mingle with actors and actresses wrapped in Grecian draperies. There is no breach of style between the Greek *himation* and an anthracite-coloured dinner-jacket—so very "costumy" are both these garments.

To produce an authentic Sheridan, with just the dresses tailored according to the latest fashion, and just a trifle overdone in the colour scheme, so that the modern clothing might be turned into a symbol of itself, into "costume"—that was, more or less, the idea conceived by both the theatre's dramaturgist and its stage-manager. It must be said that during the rehearsals, while the tailors and seamstresses were working on the costumes, we were all conscious of a growing anxiety, wondering how it would all turn out at the dress rehearsal and at the *première*.

Well, the initiative has been vindicated by the success. The scene turned out like a fine reception in some ancient palace where nothing had changed for centuries.

It doesn't even occur to a large section of the audiences to find a contrast between the classic play and the costumes. On the other hand, the actors and actresses have a glorious time of it in those top-smart clothes that are tailored after the most secret patterns of their hearts. They even seem better able to savour the joys of running down one's fellow-creatures.

The audience itself is only conscious of having a better time than usual.

*

During the intermission someone raised the question: "I wonder if Sheridan with coloured dinner-jackets is the same thing as the various Hamlet productions in modern dress?"

I don't believe so. You see, Hamlet in tails went in the direction of abstraction. Turned tragedy into oratorio. On the other hand, the same treatment, applied to The School for Scandal, has made the production more concrete, increased its *vis comica*. Take the case of Miss Prim, who never enters on the stage, and of whom we learn in Act One that she has eloped with her dancing-master. How irresistibly her lapse tickled our funny-bones!

Costume and Philosophy

The last sentence of the play—Charles Surface's romantic words about women's eyes that guide men along the "virtuous path"—has been uttered. Now only those remain on stage who were good at heart or have become good—that is to say, the "positive" characters in the play. The concluding song is sung: "Though thou, dear maid..."

Here Sheridan laid down his pen. *Curtain drops*. At this point the Budapest stage-manager has added another twist—the only one for which he didn't take his directions from Sheridan. Its merit is open to dispute, but it certainly ought to be recorded, lest it be forgotten.

The curtain does NOT drop. Indeed, it is as though the play were starting all over again. The footman enters and again announces Mrs Candour. And, as in an eerie *déjà vu*, in comes Mrs Candour, London's most assiduous gossip, with the same lines, word for word, as in Act One, and she keeps talking and talking till she gets to the triumphant passage "... there's no stopping people's tongues."

Indeed it all looks as it did at the opening of the play. The same words are spoken with the same stress. Everything, it seems, goes round and round in a circle. *Retour éternel.*

Still, the malicious circle has spiralled higher by two centuries. While Mrs Candour is talking, the other members of the cast have lighted cigarettes, and somewhere off-stage, a hidden wireless set begins to drone out some soft jazz. Now the modern dresses are costumes no longer. They are modern dresses sheathing—our contemporaries.

To the end of the play—laid in the past—the stage-manager has appended a philosophical question-mark: Suppose it were laid in a modern environment?

Thus modern costuming, which appeared to be no more than a pretty whim of the stage-manager's while the performance was on, turns out in the end to be a bridge to this idea.

Sheridan on the Hungarian Stage

In his book on New York Paul Morand tells us that the American theatre promptly took inspiration from Sheridan when his plays were piping hot. What's more, the first American comedy—Royal Tyler's "*Contrast*"—reflected Sheridan's influence, due to the fact, he writes, that "The School for Scandal" had been produced in New York at such an early date, i. e. in 1775(!).

That is indeed sensational speed, considering that Sheridan's play had not yet been written at that date.

By contrast, Hungary, it would appear, decided to play safe, and waited till the play was written and produced. In fact, she waited rather a long time even after that—some sixty years. She couldn't help waiting, since at the time of the French Revolution Vienna would have none of theatrical art for Hungary. Even book publishing was subject to Austrian censorship. So Hungary had first to set up the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and organize a new, permanent Hungarian theatre in her capital before Sheridan could be translated and put on the stage. But the generation of what is rightly called the Reform Era did not idle away its time. Forty-five years of persistent struggle were crowned with success when, in 1830, the Academy of Sciences was founded.

Immediately on its foundation the Academy got busy on a number of projects; one of the first things it did was to draw up a list of classical dramas that would have to be translated into Hungarian, and the academicians got to work on the translations. The expenses were borne by the Academy. That first, top-priority list included also two of Sheridan's plays,—"The School for Scandal" and "The Rivals." (The Academy recommended to its members 71 plays for translation—25 of them English, 20 German, 18 French and 8 Italian plays. Among other eighteenth-century English plays the list included The Gamester by Edward Moore, one of the early contributors to bourgeois drama.)

The National Theatre, built from public donations, lost no time either—it billed "The School for Scandal" in February 1838, half a year after the theatre was opened. The great poet of the age, Mihály Vörösmarty, hailed the new play with enthusiasm: it was "a great play," he wrote, and he praised its well-drawn characters and lively situations. On the playbill were some of the legendary names of the heroic age of the Hungarian theatre—Miss Róza Laborfalvy (later married to the celebrated novelist Mór Jókai) impersonated little Maria while Károly Megyeri (immortalized for Hungarians in a light-hearted poem by Petőfi) appeared as Sir Peter Teazle; Charles Surface, finally, was played by Gábor Egressy, wellknown both on the stage and in public life.

I first encountered Sheridan over a hundred years later, in the summer of 1940. My first drama (in which the inmates of a lunatic asylum organize themselves into a "race of supermen") had been billed by the National Theatre a year or two before, but the latter now displayed—quite understandably—a growing reluctance actually to produce it. On this summer morning, as I came out of the University, the theatre-manager's car pulled up at the kerb.

"Jump in," he called to me. "The Germans have entered Paris. Now it's all up with your play. Still, as I see it, you've a flair for social satire. You should prepare an adaptation of *The School for Scandal* for us. Will you?"

I promised.

And after twenty years the *première* took place.

Perhaps it's just as well it didn't materialize earlier. Youthful anger at the world is at once too much and too little for Sheridan. I now believe I can understand the enigmatic sentence in André Gide's Diary, written on reading Sheridan as a grown man: "I regret and am glad that I have only now read The School for Scandal."

Miklós Hubay

HUNGARIAN LIFE AS REFLECTED IN FILMS

Does Hungarian screen art have a national character, and if so, what is it that gives it an unmistakably Hungarian flavour? This question formed the subject of an interesting debate in the columns of Hungarian art journals two years ago. Finally one of the participants in the debate advanced the opinion that we Hungarians are not really competent to answer this question, for it is not at all certain that the features we regard as national in, say, the Italian films, are considered a manifestation of the national character by the Italians themselves, and similarly little things which do not appear specifically Hungarian to us, may be held pre-eminently Hungarian by foreigners.

Obviously then, the reader of this article is better qualified to settle the problem than the writer. A foreigner is bound to register more sensitively the peculiarities of the Hungarian temperament as expressed in acting, speech, gestures, and must react more definitely to the atmosphere of the Hungarian landscape and to the character of its people, to the odds and ends of Hungarian life, than we do, who take all this for granted, though—perhaps unwittingly—they reveal a specific national character.

There is, however, another side to this question, one that is more realistic and probably easier to gauge—and this we have to answer ourselves—namely, to what extent do Hungarian films reflect present-day Hungarian life, to what extent do they express the problems raised by modern living and the history of our time?

Hungarian critics and reviewers are very much aware of this question. As a matter of fact, the problem is by no means restricted to Hungary, but is a universal one. It seems to be a general phenomenon all over the world that the "big" pictures go back to the past—at least ten or twenty years—for their topics. Very rare, indeed, are the films which have something important and genuinely topical to say to the man of today about his own world. There are many reasons for this. In Western film production the different methods of human portrayal have been elaborated into tried and tested patterns, most of them worn thin by overuse, and therefore Western film production finds it increasingly difficult to say something new. In contrast, in the socialist countries it is the very newness of social problems, the rapid development of society and the consequent lack of experience in methods of portrayal suited to the new circumstances, that—together with the absence of historical perspective—make it difficult to translate the new into the idiom of the screen.

Hungarian film art, which has achieved its best in depicting the life of the peasants and the struggles of the working-class movement under the Horthy era, far from being unafraid of these difficulties, considers them a challenge. In the last two or three years an increasing number of films has been produced which draw their topics from present-day Hungarian life, and even if we have to rate some of them only as tentative steps, as first approaches to the heart of the problems raised, their pioneering spirit is encouraging.

If we examine the subject-matters of these new films, we find that Hungarian film artists focus their attention on the problems of socialist public and individual morality. The standards of human solidarity and socialist living are the principal motifs of recent films, appearing, of course, in many different forms—sometimes serious and sometimes humorous.

In *Micsoda éjszaka* ("What a Night," directed by György Révész) the kernel of the comic conflict is how a consciously and deliberately selfish man, disappointed in life and people, turns into a selfless person deriving real joy from the feeling of human solidarity as he spends a whole night hunting for a rare drug needed by a sick child he has never met. Our hero goes through fantastic adventures and does not hesitate to risk his own life in the effort to save another human being.

Human solidarity is also in the centre of the comedy *Kölyök* ("Our Kid," directed by Mihály Szemes on the basis of a scenario by György Palásthy and Miklós Markos). The heroine is a gawky teen-ager who makes such a mess of everything—of her life as well as of her work that practically none of the work-shops of the new Danube Iron Works welcome her presence. Finally, of course, sympathy and good will triumph, and the girl finds her place and mate in life.

In *Szerelem csütörtök* ("Love on Thursday," directed by Tamás Fejér, film-script by György Moldova and János Gantner) all the chauffeurs of a motor-transport enterprise and later all the drivers of Budapest join forces to secure a flat for a newly-married colleague. The apartment is to be let by an excentric old woman to anyone finding her lost parrot. And so the hunt gets under way...

Another group of films approaches the problem from the opposite side. In the last six months or so, two films have been released which raise the problem of careerism and opportunism. The principal character in *Gyalog a mennyországba* ("Walking to Heaven," directed by Imre Fehér and written by Péter Bacsó) is a young engineer who gives up his scientific ambitions for the sake of an easier life and in order to remain with his sweetheart. Later he realizes that his life has become empty and returns to his real calling, for in no other way can life and love have real meaning. *Megfelelő ember* ("The Right Man," directed by György Révész, scenario by István Kállay and György Révész) is a still sharper exposé of opportunism, though its weapon against the careerist who is so harmful to society is the pointed ridicule of farce.

The problems of social co-existence figure in our films not only from the angle of public morality but also with reference to private life. In *Szombattól hétfőig* ("From Saturday till Monday," directed by Gyula Mészáros and written by Zoltán Hegedüs) the difficulties and love of an unmarried mother, and in *Vörös tinta* ("Red Ink," directed by Viktor Gertler, film-script by Magda Szabó) the sufferings of a girl in her early teens whose father falls in love with her teacher, provide the background for dealing with the socialist ethics of love and family life, and although they naturally cannot give answers of general validity to the issues raised, both films certainly indicate the greater sense of responsibility and increased humanism evident in socialist morality when facing the problems of life.

A fourth, and perhaps the most successful, group of films devoted to a modern topic is directly connected with the events of 1956. Two widely acclaimed productions deal with the problems of those difficult days. One of them, *Éjfélkor* ("At Midnight," directed by György Révész from the scenario by Iván Boldizsár) recalls the December days of that year and reveals the conflict between patriotism and love in seeking an answer to the question of whether to remain in the country or to abscond, while the other, *Tegnap* ("Yesterday"), and its sequel, *Virrad* ("The Day is Breaking"), both produced by Márton Keleti and written by Imre Dobozy, takes place in October and gives a direct picture of the storm which shook Hungary in those days and wrought such great spiritual and material havoc.

We have deliberately refrained from giving a critical evaluation of all these films, merely wishing to illustrate the orientation of those Hungarian films which deal with up-to-date topics. As a matter of fact, the films listed include productions of diverse value. They include films of second-rate quality and even failures. Nevertheless, it can be regarded as a definite achievement that there is this spirit of experimentation, of striving to get closer and closer to the problems of present-day life in our film art, an art which, in its portrayal of the past, especially of life under the Horthy régime, made a noteworthy contribution to the international treasure-chest of significant films: *Valahol Európában* ("Somewhere in Europe"), *Talpalatnyi föld* ("The Soil under your Feet"), *Körhinta* ("Merry-go-round"), *Különös házasság* ("Strange Marriage"), and so on.

The greatest problem—though in many respects a great virtue—of Hungarian films concerned with our present is that they approach life from the moral angle, while they, as a rule, fail to approach the commands of morality simultaneously from the side of life. In this way the heroes of Hungarian films often become mere "mouthpieces of ideals"—as Marx expressed it—mere paragons and statistical averages, instead of growing into real heroes and artistic types. In this respect Hungarian film production is still at the stage where it transfers the characteristic conflicts of capitalist life into the developing socialist order and examines how they function, what effect they exercise in the new medium. Of course, this is an interesting and useful venture and probably an essential approach to portraying the present, for similar phenomena are evident in the art and literature of every period of transition. However, the real responsibility of Hungarian film art is to reveal the peculiarities and specific conflicts of the present days. The fulfilment of this task is impatiently awaited both by Hungarian critics and film-goers. Some episodes and situations and numerous figures on the screen have already given us aspects of the present, and, if this effort is coupled with the artistic vigour which is a characteristic of the best Hungarian productions, we may anticipate an authentic and genuinely artistic expression of the pleasures and problems of modern Hungarian life.

ERVIN GYERTYÁN

LIPÓT FEJÉR
(1880—1959)

Thumbing through the latest copy of a mathematical periodical in the lounge of the Princeton Institute for Advanced Study in 1948, an American mathematician found it contained seven papers written by mathematicians of Hungarian origin. He turned to me with a smile and showed me the magazine, saying: "The Hungarians are the *Herrenvolk* in mathematics."

Apart from the unpleasant connotations of the word "Herrenvolk," this was a nice compliment, motivated by the fact that the two Bólyais, father and son, Frigyes Riesz, and Lipót Fejér have indeed raised Hungarian mathematics to world standards—not to mention the Hungarian-born János Neumann and others. János Bólyai died, hundred years ago, János Neumann died in 1955, Frigyes Riesz in 1956, and now Lipót Fejér has left us, closing what has hitherto been the most illustrious period of Hungarian mathematics.

Fejér was born in Pécs on February 9, 1880. A solemn obituary would now continue by saying that "his talent for mathematics became apparent in his early youth..." In his case, this is both true and false. In his first four years at secondary school he encountered difficulties over the rule of three which could only be resolved by engaging a tutor. In the upper forms, however, his abilities began to flourish. He was one of the most active contributors to the "Középiskolai Matematikai Lapok" (a mathematical periodical for secondary-school students) which had been started recently. This journal was one of the world's first periodicals of this type and played an important part in the development of Hungarian mathematics. One of the pupils of László Rácz, the mathematics master who then edited the paper, is still alive to tell us that Rácz in his school study group often discussed the solutions sent in to the paper and frequently began his remarks by saying "Lipót Weisz has again submitted beautiful solutions..." He was especially attracted by geometry, and the geometrical outlook accompanied him throughout his work, even though the subject of none of his works was directly geometrical. During his university studies he spent a year in Berlin, where he aroused the attention of one of his professors, H. A. Schwarz, by producing at the end of a lecture a much simpler version in place of the elaborate geometrical proof expounded by the professor.

These, however, were only the first trials of strength. His studies in Berlin directed his attention to the theory of what are termed trigonometrical series, to which the most varied physical problems had led from the middle of the eighteenth century onwards, and which appeared to have reached an absolute deadlock in about 1900. A paper of a few pages written by Fejér as a fourth-year student, which was to be the kernel of his dissertation, gave this theory a new impetus.

Hardy, writing in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* in 1922, said of his theorem that "this fundamental result has been the starting point of a mass of modern research." The recently published second edition of an excellent monograph on this subject by A. Zygmund, an outstanding mathematician of Polish origin, has now been expanded into two volumes, but it contains very few pages that could have been written without Fejér's discovery.

I need mention only three things to illustrate the importance of the subject for *the whole* of mathematics. Riemann was led to the first precise definition of the concept of the integral, and thus to the real function-theory in the modern sense, by the problems treated in Lipót Fejér's habilitation paper on trigonometrical series. The great French mathematician, H. Lebesgue, after the first direct applications of the integral concept, which he had introduced and which in most respects proved more useful than that of Riemann, immediately tested its efficacy on the theory of trigonometrical series (e. g. by means of a generalization of Fejér's theorem). Finally, the brilliant originator of the theory of sets which is so important for the foundation of mathematics, G. Cantor, made his discovery while generalizing one of the remarkable theorems concerned with trigonometrical series.

Although Fejér achieved a number of important results in utilizing his discovery, he did not take part in the race that developed around the formulation of the complete theory. The reason is to be sought in his nature. Creative mathematicians—and this perhaps applies to all branches of science—are either founders of schools, or creators of theories. The latter follow up their ideas themselves in all their details and with tremendous energy. The former are content to lay the foundations of a theory, and leave others to elaborate the details. To belong to the latter category requires an enormous degree of specialized concentration of which Fejér, as a result of his multiple intellectual interests and his intensive links with life, was never capable.

Musicians and authors, aestheticians and philosophers of law, all treasured his opinions. When he was appointed as a university professor in 1911, the literary periodical *Nyugat* published a special article, though it was by no means in the habit of registering the occupancy of university chairs so far removed from the realm of the arts.

Fejér's artistic trait was also reflected in his mathematical papers. At the present rate of mathematical production, there is rarely time to let a paper mature, and some foreign periodicals even request their contributors to be as concise as possible, in order to reduce printing costs. Fejér's papers were mature in content and infinitely polished in form. He marked out precisely the place of the results, with lucid proofs of utmost brevity, and at the same time with a thought-provoking style possessing force and unity. At long intervals he would return to a subject if he did not find the proofs already published sufficiently neat or simple. There were occasions when he succeeded in producing a more polished proof that was more to his taste twenty years after having published the original work. One might think that aesthetics are not important in science;—the excellent German physicist, Boltzman, once actually bade us to "leave elegance to tailors and shoemakers." The untenableness of such an attitude, even from the point of view of research work itself, is shown precisely by the proof of Lebesgue's theorem found twenty years later by Fejér, which first made it possible to extend the theorem to several variables.

It would, however, be wrong to think that Fejér's mathematical work was confined to trigonometrical series. To mention only one example, all books on complex function-theory today use the proof discovered by Fejér and Frigyes Riesz for the basic theorem of so-called conformal mapping, set up with a deficient proof by Riemann at the middle of the last century.

Rapid successes brought speedy recognition. In 1905, when he was hardly 25, Fejér became an honorary lecturer—(privat dozent)—of the university of Kolozsvár (Cluj); in 1908 he was elected a corresponding member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and in 1911 the University of Budapest invited him to take over one of its chairs of mathematics. This he occupied—save for his retirement during the German occupation which was immediately revoked after the liberation—to the day of his death. His scientific reputation was so great that the International Mathematical Congress held at Cambridge in 1912 elected him as one of its vice-chairmen. In 1925 the Department of Mathematics and Physics of the Scientific Society of Göttingen, in 1954 the Bavarian Academy, and in 1959 the Polish Academy of Sciences elected him to an external membership. In 1930 he was elected honorary member of the Mathematical Society of Calcutta, and in 1933 he was made an honorary doctor of the University of Providence together with Niels Bohr. His recognition at home was interrupted after the first World War. Horthy's Hungarian Academy of Sciences, which 12 years later refused to admit even as a corresponding member János Neumann who had by then achieved considerable scientific prestige, but welcomed Archduke Joseph Hapsburg and even elected him president, also prevented Fejér's election to ordinary membership in 1923 and approved it only in 1930.

After the liberation he was among the first to receive a Kossuth prize, and in 1950 an honorary degree was conferred on him by the Science and Arts Faculties of the Loránd Eötvös University of Sciences.

Fejér alone has so far succeeded in creating a coherent mathematical school at a Hungarian university. It was made coherent by the character and trend of its work, for in the geographical sense it was soon dispersed, Horthy's Hungary being unwilling to give even a secondary schoolmaster's job to all of the school's members. In 1927, two of Fejér's pupils became university professors in the same week—one at Lund, the other in Jerusalem. "But," he remarked when told about the event, "this does not happen every week."

The establishment of this school was undoubtedly due not only to his works and his fascinating lectures, but also to his personality and ingenuous character. His pupils could talk to him not only at his seminars, for these—especially in his younger years—would continue in long discussions at some café. Many an important paper would, if it could, confess that the first outline of its content had been formulated on the marble table-tops or the bills of the Erzsébet café in Buda or the Mocca of Pest, during or after a conversation with Fejér. He animated these conversations with his unique charming humour, and this trait at times returned to him even when the inexorable progress of disease had extinguished nearly all the lights of his brilliant faculties. It was as though his humour, rising above all vicissitudes, had been rooted in the very depths of his soul.

Fejér received very many invitations to the chairs of foreign universities. He always refused them, even when the threat of fascism grew ever more imminent. He loved his country and its cultural heritage,—not with great words but with his heart and through the numerous roots he had struck in its soil. It was his homeland, in whose earth he has now gone to rest and which will treasure him as one of its great sons.

PÁL TURÁN

LITTLE FISH — BIG FISH

by

LÁSZLÓ FELEKI

"From our Budapest Correspondent."
This is the somewhat odd title of a column in the Budapest satirical weekly "Ludas Matyi."
Here's a handful of this "correspondence."

Philosophy

The little fish—if they but could—would swallow the big ones.

It is easier to invent wise precepts than to obey them.

Some people do not think; yet they *are.*

What is disappointment? It is the realization that others are hardly any better than ourselves.

To err is human! To admit error is superhuman.

A philosopher who has never been confuted is not worthy of the name.

The principal business of philosophy is to seek questions to answers.

What is leisure? It is the reassuring feeling of not being engaged in any useful activity.

It is easier to make others believe a thing, than to believe it ourselves.

How brief is life! You barely have time to get fed up with it before it's over.

Worshippers of images are level-headed people: they only believe what they see.

If the universe is infinite, then every human being is indeed the hub of the universe.

There are some extremely complicated scientific problems which I am prepared, if need be, to explain, but not to understand.

Homo Sapiens

I take care of myself, for there is but one "I." The others are plentiful, and are therefore easily replaceable.

Prudent Nature has created the hen to deal with the caterpillar, the fox to deal with the hen, the tiger to deal with the fox, Man to deal with the tiger, and Man to deal with Man.

X is a good man, only his deeds are bad.

Cannibals—especially the gourmets among them—truly love their brethren.

Cain is better-known than Abel. The latter is only remembered as the man whom Cain slew.

It is only disgust that prevents many people from knowing themselves.

To be virtuous all our lives is to deprive ourselves of the edifying feeling of mending our ways.

Poor old maid! What a lot she hasn't been through!

X's life is an open book. And a bad book, at that.

The lion's courage does not await the green light.

How mortifying for a mountain peak to know it's been scaled.

There are those who will be playing cards on board the spaceship.

It will be the acme of mechanization when Man can do without himself.

Rather forget your grievances than wait for their redress.

Loving your enemies will at least humiliate them. Which is better than nothing.

He who is fond of talking and wants people to listen to him, should be either a head of state or a plumber.

Beyond the exciting question of whether there is life on Mars I'm also interested in whether there will be life on Earth.

Doctor and Patient

Patients are to the doctor what cracked pans are to the tinker.

The healthy have no idea of the intoxicating sense of recovery.

Dyspeptic rulers insist on their subjects practising abstemiousness.

The sick have a rightful claim to solicitude. Many a person has to break a leg to get a bit of tenderness.

People keep discovering wonderful medicines for which they have yet to find the diseases.

War and Peace

Mankind may become extinct as a result of war or of morals.

Mankind has achieved self-sufficiency even in regard to the end of the world.

The Neptune-dwellers should understand that, since they and we share the same solar system, we must strive to reach a peaceful settlement.

Children should never be lied to. Why do we give them only toy soldiers, toy swords and toy guns to play with? Why not add toy cripples and toy corpses as well?

It's odd how some newspapers can write horrified accounts of fatal accidents caused by shells exploding in this or that ammunition works. After all, what else is a shell supposed to do?

Nuclear scientists in search of honours and fame please note: If you want your name remembered by mankind, mankind must be there to do so.

When Einstein first set down the equation $e=mv^2$, some Hiroshima schoolboy may just have been kicking a ball, unaware that an event in mathematics had occurred, which was to prove so fatefully significant in his life.

If you can observe the effect of a hyper-super-bomb, the test has not been successful. If you can't, it has.

Arts and Letters

The spoken word flits by; the written, unfortunately, remains.

Mozart knew the secret of immortality. So did Köchel.

Music has a soothing effect on one's nerves. Yet it is essential not to be nervous at the time of listening to it.

The finest death for any actor is to be slain by an incensed audience while he is acting the villain in the piece.

Artists aspiring to immortality are excessively confident of human memory.

The hack writer is a man who has contracted a marriage of convenience with the Muse.

Artists and authors deliberately creating for posterity are like bakers making bread for the coming generation.

Whatever the difficulties a writer has to face, he can always find a comforting example. If he begins to write at too mature an age, he can point to the world-famous Pirandello, who took up writing at 55. If he writes too little, he has the example of the world-famous Flaubert, whose lifework comprises only five novels. If he doesn't know how to write, there's the world-famous... Oh, sorry!

(*Author's Note.*—Readers who deign to follow my precepts are invited kindly to let me know of their experiences. For if these precepts should prove their worth in practical application, I may consider giving them a try myself.)

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Bóka, László (b. 1910), literary historian, novelist and poet, professor at the Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest. László Bóka has contributed monographs about János Vajda, an important poet of the latter part of the 19th century, and Endre Ady, the most original personality of 20th century Hungarian poetry. Other publications include a volume of essays entitled *Tegnaptól máig* ("From Yesterday till Today"); two volumes of poetry *Jégvirág, Szebb az új* ("Frost Flower," "New Beauties"); and more recently the novels *Alázatosan jelentem, A Karoling trón* ("Have the Honour to Report," "The Carolingian Throne").

Ottlik, Géza is a writer and literary translator, who is now 48. He studied mathematics and physics at Budapest University. His short stories have been appearing since 1931. He has translated many works by French, German, and particularly British prose writers, including Dickens, Shaw, Hemingway, Evelyn Waugh and Osborne. His book of short stories *Hajnali háztetők* ("Rooftops at Dawn") and a novel *Iskola a határon* ("School at the Border" published in 1959) attracted wide attention.

Ortutay, Gyula, ethnologist, is a university professor in Budapest. He was one of the founders of the Association of the Young Artists and Writers of Szeged, which did pioneering work in exploring village life. In the thirties he conducted extensive ethnographic research. Between 1947 and 1950 he was Minister of Education. Since 1946 he has headed the chair of Folklore and in 1957 became Rector of the Eötvös Loránd University. He is general secretary of the People's Patriotic Front. His main works are: *Székely népballadák* ("Transylvanian Folk Ballads" Budapest, 1935), *Nyíri és rétközi parasztmesék* ("Peasant Tales of Nyír and Rétköz" 1935), *Fedics Mihály meséi* ("Mihály Fedics Tells Stories" Budapest, 1941), *Magyar Népművészet* ("Hungarian Folk Art" Vol. 1—2. Budapest, 1942), *Parasztságunk élete* ("Life of Our Peasantry", also in English, Budapest, 1947), *Magyar Népmesék* (in German, *Ungarische Volksmärchen*, Berlin, 1957).

Fekete, József (b. 1922), assistant head of the secondary school department of the Ministry of Culture writes of himself: 'I was born in one of the suburbs of Budapest, my father was a carpenter's assistant and is still a worker in a large factory. I am thirty eight years old, and a secondary school teacher by profession. I first taught history and geography and took my doctor's degree in historical science. My curiosity about nature spurred me on to take a degree in mathematics and physics as well. I have been teaching physics only for nine years. For six years I was the director of a suburban "gymnasium." Cultural and educational questions began to interest me early, perhaps as early as the 1929—1933 economic crisis when with many of my friends from poor families I felt bitterly the lack of training and educational opportunities. It was my interest in cultural policy that took me to my present post in the Ministry of Culture, in order that I might help to advance the culture of the masses.'

Vajda, Imre (b. 1900) is an economist. He lived for nearly twenty years in Austria as a political *émigré*, and spent the last years of the Nazi regime in a concentration camp. After 1945 he held various posts as Minister of Foreign Trade, President of the National Planning Bureau and so on. He was appointed a professor of economics at the University of Economics, Budapest in 1948, a post he still holds, and was a member of the Hungarian delegation to the 11th session of the United Nations. He has written numerous articles on economics and is the author of "International Trade," published in 1959 in Budapest.

Tanner, József has given the following particulars about his life: 'My father was a poor peasant in the village of Egerszalók. After years of dire want I finished my studies at a teachers' training college in 1930, but for a long time could not find a post owing to the economic crisis. At last, with the support of the poor peasants of the village, I was elected as teacher of my native village in the year 1935. After the liberation I was appointed secretary to the local organization of the Hungarian Communist Party. In this capacity I took an active part in the re-allotment of land, then worked in several important spheres; in the meantime I studied history and graduated at the Eötvös Loránd University. At present I teach philosophy at the University of Agriculture, and furthermore do some writing and ethnographical research.'

Dobozy, Imre (b. 1917), writer, journalist, General Secretary of the Association of Hungarian Writers. In his narratives and literary reports he depicts in the first place the transformation of Hungarian peasant life since the liberation and the problems of socialist development in agriculture. He wrote the scenario for several successful films, for instance that of *Tegnap* ("Yesterday"), a film about the counter-revolution of 1956, already shown in several countries outside of Hungary.

Németh, László (b. 1901), writer, one of the most versatile creative personalities of Hungarian literary life. His often self-contradictory social-philosophical contributions were widely contested before the war and have formed the subject of discussions ever since 1945. Mr. László Németh has expressed himself in a series of essays, novels and dramas. Some of his novels include ruthlessly frank autobiographical elements: *Ember és szerep* ("Man and Role," 1934); *Magam helyett* ("Instead of Myself," 1943). Others offer a panorama of the society of his time—in the first place of the intelligentsia and the middle class: *Kocsi szeptemberben* ("Coach in September," 1937); *Alsóvárosi búcsú* ("Fair in Lower Town," 1939); the well-known *Gyász* ("Mourning," 1935) and *Bűn* ("Guilt," 1936) were followed in 1947 by *Iszony* ("Horror"), the self-confessions of a frigid woman, perhaps his most significant novel, and in 1956 by *Égető Eszter* the novel of a generation. In his historical plays *Galilei*, *Gregory VII*, *Széchenyi* etc., be analyzes the relationship between great individualities and historic forces, and in his social dramas *Cseresznyés* ("Cherry Farm") and *Villámfénynél* ("By Lightning") depicts the intellectual protagonist tormented by the problems of his day and age. At present László Németh is working on a drama dealing with the Bólyais, the great mathematicians, father and son, who lived in the first half of the 19th century. The essay published in this number is a preliminary study for the drama.

Bartha, Dénes (b. 1908), musicologist, studied musicology at Berlin University under Abert, Blume, Wolf, Sachs and Hornbostel. From 1930 he acted as assistant librarian at the National Széchényi Library. In 1935 he became an honorary lecturer at Budapest University and professor at the Academy of Music, Budapest. His principal works are monographs on the theoretical compendium of László Szalkai (1490, Latin text), on the Avar double-shawm of the 7th or 8th century found near Jánoshida; on Hungarian melodies of the 18th century; on the folksong collection of Ádám Horváth (from 1813); on Bach and Beethoven. Since 1960 he has been on the editorial board of the new complete edition of J. Haydn's works (Cologne).

Genthon, István (b. 1903), is an art historian. Since 1945 he has headed the modern foreign department of the National Museum of Fine Arts. Among the large number of his publications we should mention his comprehensive topography of historical monuments entitled *Magyarország műemlékei* ("Historic Monuments of Hungary"), his volume *Új magyar festőművészet* ("New Hungarian Painting") and his album on the life and art of *József Rippl Rónai*.

Vas, István is a poet and literary translator. He was born in 1910 in Budapest. He has written poems, criticism and essays since his early youth. His earliest works appeared in socialist periodicals, and later he became a contributor of the periodical *Nyugat*. In 1936 and in 1948 he was awarded the Baumgarten Prize, and in 1951 and 1955 the Attila József Prize. He translated—among others—works of Shakespeare, Molière, Goethe, Schiller, Racine, Apollinaire, O'Neill, Huxley, and published recently a volume of verse entitled *Rapszódia egy őszi kertben* ("Rhapsody in an Autumn Garden"), etc.

Faragó, Vilmos, journalist and teacher of literature is a member of the editorial board of *Népművelés*, a periodical dealing with culture for the masses.

Pethő, Tibor (b. 1918), is a journalist writing on foreign affairs. He is the author of several volumes of political journalism. *Magyarország a második világháborúban* ("Hungary in World War II," 1946); *A Kárpátoktól a Balti tengerig* ("From the Carpathians to the Baltic Sea," 1955); *Szuez* ("Suez," 1958) and others.

Surányi, Imre was born in 1913 in Budapest. He had very little time to idle away because with many of his contemporaries he constantly had to experience historic changes. Fortunately during his formative years he went to a school which allowed plenty of time for self education. Many things interested him, but he was most drawn to literature and history. He took a doctor's degree in Arts at Budapest University. Living among the little people of the suburbs he quickly learnt his lesson, joined the working class movement early and worked in its press. Putting his ideas into practice, after the liberation, he became active in the movement of the working class concerned with children and edited youth papers. At present he is teaching history and Hungarian literature in the Budapest Petőfi Gymnasium, is persuing historical studies and writes articles and essays in his spare time.

Czimer, József (b. 1913) is dramaturgist to the *Vígszínház* (Gaiety Theatre) Budapest. He began his career as a psychologist. Apart from his books *A régi Magyarország és az új* ("The Old Hungary and the New") and *Hollywoodi boszorkányok* ("Witches of Hollywood") he has published numerous articles and essays in Hungarian and foreign papers and periodicals.

Hubay, Miklós (b. 1918), dramatist. His first play *Hősök nélkül* ("Without Heroes") was staged in 1942 by the Little Theatre of the National Theatre. In that period he was working on the editorial staff of the Nouvelle Revue de Hongrie and the Hungarian Quarterly. After the war his drama entitled *Coq d'Esculape* appeared in Paris. Up to 1949 he was the head of the Hungarian Library in Geneva and a full-time delegate to the Bureau International d'Éducation. His film *Bakaruhában* ("Sunday Romance") whose scenario he wrote from a short story by Sándor Hunyadi, was shown in a number of countries. His plays: *Egy magyar nyár* ("A Hungarian) Summer", *István napja* ("Stephen's Day"), *Egyik Európa* ("One Kind of Europe"), and one-act plays. He translated plays by Musset, Sartre, Marceau, Miller and Sheridan.

Gyertyán, Ervin (b. 1925), is a literary translator, film aesthetician and member of the editorial board of *Filmvilág* (Film World).

Turán, Pál, a mathematician, is professor at the Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest and a regular member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. He was awarded the Kossuth Prize in 1948 and 1952 for his scientific work.

Joós, F. Imre a writer and journalist, was borne in 1912. His volumes are: *A pokol furulyása* ("The Piper of Hell", verses, 1947); *Szent Péter a tanyán* ("St. Peter on the Farmstead", a novelette, 1948) and *Kaponya Szilveszter kalandjai* ("Silvester Kaponya's Adventures", a satirical novel, 1957).

Feleki, László writes about himself: I was born in Szatmárnémeti in 1909, the year Lous Blériot flew across the Channel for the first time and the Union of South Africa was established. History will judge which event was the most important. In my boyhood years I was attracted by sports, but as I was hopelessly bad at games I began to write about them. In the summer of 1944 I was called up. It was in vain, howewer, for Germany soon lost the war. In 1954, I covered the football World Cup Tournament in Switzerland for the Hungarian sporting daily *Népsport*. This time Germany won—defeating Hungary, incidentally. It may seem strange to you, but actually. *I* was blamed for our débacle, an was subsequently sacked. My fault was, it seems, that I failed to score a single goal in the final, reporting the defeat instead—a proceeding that immensely upset public opinion in Hungary. Thus ended my career as a sports journalist. Much put out, I turned to humour and became a humorist on the staff of the Hungarian satirical weekly *Ludas Matyi*. I have secret hopes of being awarded a Nobel Prize, for I believe short writings are better appreciated nowadays than lengthy ones.

A SHORT ENCYCLOPEDIA

of some places, historical events, personalities and institutions mentioned in this number

AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES. Their origin dates back to 1948, when the first cooperatives were formed on the basis of voluntary association by peasants who had received land under the 1945 land reform for the purpose of exploiting the advantages of large-scale, mechanized farming. During the past ten years the country-wide producers' cooperative movement has developed by stages. In the simpler forms, the producers' cooperative groups, only crop farming is done in common, the livestock remaining individual property. In the more advanced forms, the so called cooperative farms, all means of production, including the livestock, belong to the farm. The distribution of the earnings of the farm is done on the basis of labour units accomplished by the members. Beyond this the members also receive ground rent from the cooperative for the land they contributed when they joined. (See p. 104)

ARANY, JÁNOS (1817—1882) was the greatest Hungarian poet of the 19th century beside Petőfi and Vörösmarty. He gave voice to popular realism and raised it to the level of artistic perfection. His realism assumed its richest and ripest form in his narrative poems (the Toldi trilogy). His ballads occupy a unique position in his own work as well as in the whole of Hungarian lyrical poetry. Their tragic, sometimes visionary atmosphere and dramatic mode of expression are given unity by masterly construction. Arany's original poetic works have a worthy supplement in his translations of Shakespeare's plays. His career suffered a tragic jolt by the suppression of the War of Independence and the death of his friend Sándor Petőfi in 1849. The bulk of his works was written in the years from 1850 to 1860, amidst struggles and discord. During this period he was for a time general secretary of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. (See p. 158)

BAUMGARTEN PRIZE. This prize was the most important literary recognition in the years before the Second World War. It was named after its founder, Ferenc Baumgarten, "the literary gentleman." (See p. 235)

BÜKK. A group of hills in the Northern Middle Range of mountains lying between the Great Plain and the Czechoslovak border. An important industrial region has developed along the northern and eastern section of these hills. This is where we find the great industrial town of Miskolc (pop. 150,000), the second largest city in the country, with a university for heavy industrial technology; Ózd (pop. 31,000) which is famous for its metallurgical works, and Kazincbarcika, one of the centres of the Hungarian chemical industry, which was developed into a socialist town from two villages in recent years. (See p. 89)

CASINO. *(Országos Kaszinó.)* A club founded by István Széchenyi after the English model, for the exchange of political and economic opinions. (See p. 46)

CHEAP LIBRARY SERIES. *(Olcsó Könyvtár.)* The starting of this series early in 1954 and its great success are the most eloquent proof of the extent of public interest in reading in Hungary. This series makes available the finest works of foreign and Hungarian literature, both classics and modern, between 3 and 4 forints (the price of 3 or 4 postage stamps from Hungary to England). Usually about 50,000 copies are printed of an edition, but "Anna Karenina" was issued in 100,000 copies and so were Maupassant's "Une vie" and Zola's "Germinal." About 160 works have been published in 300 volumes since the Cheap Library Series began. (See p. 14)

CSONTVÁRY, TIVADAR (1853—1919), painter. He worked as a pharmacist for many years. Contemporary art critics and the public could not comprehend the artistic message of his expressive, dreamy paintings and bold colour effects. It was only in our days that he joined the ranks of the great Hungarian painters. One of his works was shown at the Brussels International Exposition in 1958 at the Exhibition of 50 Years of Modern Art. (See p. 241)

DEBRECEN. The largest town (pop. 130,000) in Eastern Hungary, and centre of the region beyond the River Tisza. It is a university town. Its College has played a great role in Hungarian history and in Hungarian education. In the past it was a stronghold of Hungarian Calvinism. It was here, in April, 1849, at the time of the struggle for Hungarian independence, that the National Assembly declared the dethronement of the Hapsburgs. (See p. 48)

DEBRECEN PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT. In December, 1944, before the liberation of Budapest, a Provisional National Assembly met in the already liberated town of Debrecen and a Provisional National Government was formed which signed an armistice with the Soviet Union. In 1945, on March 15 (the anniversary of the outbreak of the 1848 revolution and struggle for independence), the reform law abolishing the system of landlordism and the distribution of land among the peasantry and agricultural workers was published. (See p. 48)

DERKOVITS, GYULA (1894—1943). An outstanding painter who began his career as a carpenter and became an artist mainly by self-education. His works, in which he depicts features of the difficult, struggling life of the Hungarian proletariat between the two world wars, are characterized by dramatic strength and deep poetry. His more significant works include "The Writ," "Beside the Railway Tracks," "Generations," the "Dózsa" woodcut series. (See p. 241)

EDUCATIONAL MONOPOLY. Prior to 1945 secondary-school education in the gymnasium and higher schooling at the college and university level were in practice restricted to the children of the upper and middle classes. In 1937—38 the proportion of students of working-class or poor peasant decent was only 2.7 per cent in the Hungarian colleges and universities. In 1958—59 working-class students made up 32.4 per cent, and the children of working peasants 19.6 per cent of the total enrollment figure. As a consequence of the pre-war monopoly, the absolute number of secondary-school and university students was comparatively low. In 1937—38 only 52,000 students attended the 285 secondary schools, while in the 1959—60 school year 204,000 students were admitted to the 435 secondary schools of the country. (See p. 19)

EGER. A town (pop. 34,000) in the centre of the Mátra Mountains west of the Bükk hills. It played a specially prominent role in the sixteenth century, when the commander of the Fortress of Eger, István Dobó, successfully halted Turkish armies attacking with many times superior forces. The onetime archbishopric is today a favourite excursion town. Its wines, especially the "Bull's Blood" of Eger, a dark dry wine, are famous throughout the world. (See p. 89)

EGRESSY, GÁBOR (1808—1866), was a great Hungarian character actor. His book "On Acting" was the first Hungarian theoretical work on the art of acting. (See p. 225)

EMIGRATION AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY. At the end of the nineteenth century, and even after that, the poor peasants and landless, unemployed agricultural labourers who were being strangled by the large estates emigrated from the country in vast numbers. Up to the end of the century 300,000 Hungarians emigrated to America, primarily to the United States and Canada. By 1914 the number of emigrants reached two millions. (See p. 90)

ESZTERHÁZA. Domain of the Esterházy-family in Western Hungary. Today: Fertőd. (See p. 139)

HUNGARIAN FALLOW. This term employed by István Széchenyi to express the backwardness of Hungary, has become a generally known and frequently quoted phrase. (See p. 42)

HUNNIA is the name given to Hungary in some early belletristic and political works. The name rests on the erroneous mediaeval conception that the Hungarian people were direct descendants of the Huns. (See p. 44)

ILLYÉS, GYULA (born in 1902) is a poet, a writer, a leading and influential personality in modern Hungarian literature. In the middle thirties he joined the movement of the "people's writers" and his most outstanding works were written during the radical phase of the movement: "*Puszták népe*" ("The People of the Puszta"), a literary sociography, and "Petőfi," a biography of the greatest Hungarian poet, containing elements of self-revelation and aesthetic analysis. Since the liberation, besides poetry and prose works, he has also written several plays on the problems presented by various decisive phases of Hungarian history. (See p. 207)

JÓZSEF ATTILA PRIZE, a prize for *belles lettres* awarded each year. (See p. 235)

KOSSUTH PRIZE. A distinction awarded since 1948 by the Council of Ministers of the Hungarian People's Republic to artists, writers, scientists, physical and intellectual workers for outstanding achievements serving the spiritual and material progress of the Hungarian people. The Kossuth Prize is accompanied by a considerable cash award. (See p. 236)

KING MATHIAS (Matthias Corvinus) reigned from 1458 to 1490. He was the son of János Hunyadi, the national hero of the campaigns against the Turks, and became one of the greatest national kings that ever ruled over Hungary. He built up a strong central state, and humanist culture achieved full blossom under his reign. His library, the "Corvina"-codices belonged to the best of the preprinting age. Countless legends grew up around his personality. Ever since the rule of Mathias, popular stories praising the king for his justice have been associated with Mathias, and in the hard times following his death it was commonly said that "Justice died with King Mathias". (See p. 40)

LAND REFORM, carried out in 1945, finally put an end to the feudal system of large estates which existed in Hungary until that time. According to statistical data from 1935, large estates of over 1,000 cadastral holds (1,420 English acres) made up 30 per cent of the total tillage area of the country. A considerable proportion of the agricultural population were either entirely landless, or possessed only such a small strip of land that they had to hire out as day labourers. That is why Hungary was often referred to as "the country of three million beggars." During the Land Reform more than one third of the total area of the country—6,9 million acres of land—were re-allocated. The landless peasants and dwarfholders received 4,1 million acres out of this, while the rest of the land (largely forests) was taken into state or community ownership. Altogether 642,000 peasants, among them 370,000 entirely landless, received land through the Land Reform. (See p. 100)

MARTINOVICS CONSPIRACY. At the close of the 18th century a small group consisting of progressive members of the Hungarian intelligentsia and nobility founded a secret society after the Jacobin model, to overthrow Habsburg rule in Hungary and form a democratic republic. The movement was organized by the abbot Ignác Martinovics, a university professor, and was joined by eminent writers, professors, and lawyers of the age. They gave expression to their ideas in political pamphlets and philosophical studies. The organization was soon discovered; Martinovics and his companions were beheaded in 1795 on the square in Budapest known ever since as *Vérmező* (Field of Blood). Many of the participants were imprisoned, including Ferenc Kazinczy, an eminent leader of literature in that period. (See p. 42)

NATIONAL SZÉCHÉNYI LIBRARY. *(Országos Széchényi Könyvtár.)* The largest national collection, which was founded by Count Ferenc Széchényi, father of István Széchenyi, in 1802. The library now has 3,718,000 volumes. It has an internationally known collection of codices and incunabula. It is in Budapest VIII, Múzeum krt. 14—16. (See p. 41)

PALATINE. *(Nádor.)* From the 15th century the Palatine was the highest administrative dignity in Hungary after the King—the deputy of the king who in accordance with the feudal constitution, mediated between the Estates of the Realm and the throne. The Hapsburgs completely destorted the Palatine's function, and from the 18th century appointed members of the dynasty to fill this office. The post was swept away by the revolution of 1848. (See p. 44)

PARTIUM. When Hungary was torn into three parts as a result of the Turkish conquest 16—17th centuries), a few counties were annexed to the principality of Transylvania. From that time these annexed parts figured also in the title of the Reigning Prince of Transylvania *(Dominus partium regnum Hungariae.)* (See p. 44)

QUONDAM FIEF HOLDERS. *Serf farmers.* Before 1848, the peasant who had land in villein tenure was a fief holder. Quit-rent had to be paid after villein tenure. "Copyholder" is the corresponding term in English history. (See p. 90)

REFORM LAWS OF 1848. These were the achievement won by the 1848 revolution. For years a political struggle had been waged to secure the reforms. The political leader of the struggle and head of the opposition in the last feudal national assembly convened in 1847 was Lajos Kossuth. The young poets, articled lawyers, attorneys and university students who are known in Hungarian history as the Youth of March, played an important part in the spiritual preparation of the reforms and the organization of the March 15, 1848, revolutionary action of Pest which set the course of later events. Their leaders were Sándor Petőfi, Hungary's greatest poet, Mór Jókai, the great novelist of later years and Pál Vasvári, a young teacher of great learning, leading figure of the university youth. Under pressure of the demonstration of the people of Pest, the feudal Assembly accepted the March demands and King Ferdinand V (1835—1848) sanctioned them on April 11. These laws ensured the principal demands of the bourgeois revolution: the emancipation of the serfs, general and proportionate sharing of taxation and the chief condition for the achievement of economic and political independence, the establishment of an independent Hungarian ministry. The laws upheld the system of landlordism and other privileges, which stemmed largely from the fact that the movement was led mainly by the nobility with medium-sized estates. The 1848 laws, however, essentially abolished the feudal system—although far from completely—and opened the way to bourgeois development. (See p. 46)

SOCIAL SECURITY INSURANCE. All workers and employees as well as members of producers' cooperatives are entitled to free sickness insurance and to old-age pensions. Beneficiaries of the scheme pay only 15 per cent of the cost of medicines and medical accessories such as spectacles. Employees kept out of work by sickness usually receive 75 per cent of their pay in sickness allowance, if necessary for a whole year, and, in case of tuberculosis, for two years. In 1959 as many as 7.2 million people—over 70 per cent of the population—were covered by the scheme—either as employees or as dependents. This figure is almost two and a half times the number of people insured in 1938. The only contribution of the workers is 3 per cent of their pay toward the old-age pension. Men may retire at full pension at the age of 60, women at the age of 55, provided they have been in employment for 14 years. The pension amounts to 50 per cent of the average monthly earnings of the last year of employment with one per cent extra for every year of employment since 1929. (See p. 102)

SZEKFÜ, GYULA (1883—1955) was the most important Hungarian historian in the first half of the 20th century. His monographic works represented a conservative attitude in the interpretation of the past of Hungary. His views were greatly changed by the sudden advance of fascism to power. (His series of articles published during the war, in 1943, in Magyar Nemzet, the most significant daily of the time, under the title "Off the Right Track," made a deep impression, for he openly abandoned his earlier conviction that Hungary was destined to find its place in "Christian-German" Europe.) "After the Revolution" (1946), expressed his approval of the social and political changes that had taken place in Hungary. (See p. 38)

TÁNCSICS, MIHÁLY (1799—1884) was a revolutionary descended from serfs. He travelled all over Western Europe, where he studied the writings of the early socialists and the life of labourers' associations. In the 'forties, he was jailed by Austrian absolutism for his seditious political writings, but on March 15, 1848, the people of Pest freed him. The paper he edited, Workers' Daily, was the most radical newspaper of 1848. In 1868, he became the first chairman of the General Labourers' Association (trade union) founded that year. (See p. 40)

TISZA. The country's second largest river. Its source is in the Ukraine, in the Northeastern Carpathian Mountains, and it flows through the centre of the Great Plain. The section in Hungary is 362 miles long. It flows into the Danube in Yugoslavia. (See p. 210)

TURKISH CONQUEST. The century and a half of Turkish occupation of Hungary's central region, the Great Plain and a part of Transdanubia (1526—1686). (See p. 89)

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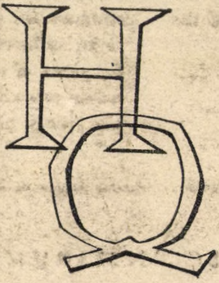

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