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The New

Hungarian Quarterly

Pioneering on the Great Plain
by Ferenc Erdei

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Zsigmond Móricz, the Novelist
by Péter Nagy

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Hungarian Peasant Pottery
(with illustrations)

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Hungary's Economic Relations
with other Socialist Countries
by Imre Vajda

*

Thomas Mann's Unpublished Correspondence
with Hungarian Friends

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Excavations in Buda Castle
(with illustrations)
by László Gerevich

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Short Stories by Zsigmond Móricz
and Endre Illés

The New Hungarian Quarterly

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PIONEERING ON THE GREAT PLAIN

by

FERENC ERDEI

The town of Makó originated, grew and developed just like forty or fifty other towns on the Great Plain. In the Middle Ages their sites were occupied by a host of tiny serf hamlets, which were destroyed during the Turkish occupation. Only an occasional centrally situated settlement managed to survive those grim times, and there the remaining populace gathered. This was how Makó too became a town. Not only because the land and the people of some 10 or 15 villages were united here, but also because the population concentrated in the town would no longer let themselves be bound to the earth as serfs. Instead they won a measure of urban rights and a more or less free tenure of the land from the landowners who demanded the restitution of their former privileges. This was sufficient to enable life in these towns to evolve according to the laws of emergent capitalism, so that in our age it has been a society developed along capitalist lines that has here adopted the path of socialist advance.

Without now delving into the remote past, it must be pointed out that there was, at the beginning of the career of the present town—in the eighteenth century—an essential factor that exerted a decisive influence on later developments. This was that the town was composed of many different elements. Round the core of the settlement—the bifurcation of the Szeged-Arad-Hódmezővásárhely highway, also the fording place of the River Maros—two villages gained a foothold at the end of the Turkish period. One was the Calvinist Szentlőrinc, the other the Catholic Buják. And soon there grew up beside them the Russian-Rumanian and the Jewish quarters, while in the nineteenth century new districts were formed of the mixed surplus populations of each of the old quarters. This multiplicity brought about not only a rich variety of the various folk elements but also a social division of labour. The different elements of the popula-

tion engaged in distinct branches of production, or rather each represented one branch of industry or of trade.

Another decisive feature was the development of the growing of onions. This took place in the first half of the last century. The reason was by no means merely that the soil of Makó is especially suited to this culture. It is, undoubtedly, suitable, but there are also better onion-soils in Hungary and not a few that are of similar quality. The more important reason is to be sought in social factors. Some people started growing the onions, others engaged in trading them, so that fruitful cultivation and lucrative commerce proved to be mutual incentives.

The main driving force behind all further economic and social development was the technique of onion-growing and of the onion as a commodity. Together with onion-growing, other agricultural sectors also developed more rapidly, and increasing commodity production in agriculture promoted the capitalist development of production and of trade in general. Capitalism thus advanced to such an extent at Makó that a growers' and traders' bourgeoisie of increasing prosperity evolved, while the poor peasantry became a class of wage labourers who were also able to engage in various forms of petty enterprise (growing onions, greens and new potatoes, stuffing geese, fattening swine, *etc.*).

The character of the town, however, was determined not only by these relatively advanced capitalist relations, but also by the accompanying crises. The crises of the onion market came as regularly as did an occasional year of drought. After two or three good years there was bound to be a bad one, when there was a "slump" in onions, and in the spring the crop was poured into the River Maros or the pits on the outskirts of the town. Moreover, the larger recessions swept through Makó more disastrously—the most recent in 1929/30—than in the peasant-type villages, for commodity production was better developed in the former and even the farmer was more dependent on the market than in the predominantly autarkic villages.

Such then, was the economic basis of the town, and it is understandable that the inhabitants and the social set-up developed accordingly. In general terms we might say that, whereas in the country at large feudalism did not last only till 1848 but more or less up to 1945, at Makó it was overthrown during the last century. Its remnants may, it is true, have survived at the County Offices, the Gentlemen's Casino, and in the white gloves of the officer-cadets, but there were few people at Makó, even 20 or 30 years ago, who took them seriously.

Life in this town thus evolved as though feudalism in Hungary had been

abolished by the beginning of the century. Even fifty years ago, the peasants here were not of the type the landlords would have wanted them to be, and even before the liberation in 1945 the latter had a hard time of it, whenever they tried to play the squire at Makó.

What, then, were the people of Makó like? They were untiringly diligent, with a spirit of enterprise and even of speculation, extraordinarily quick to learn, and well versed in the various branches of farming. The onion-growers became masters of cultivation, the farmsteaders masters' of live-stock breeding, the artisans of their tools and materials, and the tradesmen of the tricks of the market. This, of course, had the concomitant result of making rationalists and sceptics of them; as the saying went, "they won't believe God himself." Another essential feature was that this was not one society but two. The *entrepreneur* bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie had evolved to the point where even a part of the peasantry, with their large and small lands, and of the onion-growers were absorbed by them, so that—as I have many times said and written—they were a "peasantry become bourgeois." On the other hand, there was the working class, composed, for the greater part, of various elements of the agrarian proletariat, though the urban wage-labour stratum of the industrial and commercial undertakings was not insignificant either. Class divisions were thus sharper at Makó than in the villages; and the labour movement had struck roots in the town by the end of the last century.

This, then, was how the town had developed, and it was in such an environment that the cooperative of which I should like to tell was born and grew up.

CHILDHOOD DREAMS

What were the thoughts of a boy, born in 1910, the offspring of a wide-spread dynasty of onion-growers, who apart from the school of the onion-fields had, from 1921 to 1929, acquired a modicum of knowledge about the world at the Makó grammar school (named "Chief Csanád," after the successor to one of the original Hungarian clan chiefs), and was also a diligent reader of the library of the Workers' Home? Evidently the same as those of any other young whipper-snapper of similar age, with the added feature that he also tried to discover the meaning and the goal of the world in which he lived, and he could not acquiesce in things as they were, but sought the clues to his problems and pried into the paths of the future. Since he had also acquired dangerous books which explained the laws of social development and revealed the socialist path into the

future, it was inevitable that he began looking at the world about him with this approach in mind.

The rest followed according to rule. It was not difficult to appreciate that what was to be seen at Makó was also a proof of Marx' and Lenin's teachings, and that the acute and oppressive problems of life, production and society could here too be solved in no other way than by following the precepts of socialism.

At any rate my child's brain set about working out a socialist farming system for Makó. I took the map of the town—its yellowing leaves are now again spread out before me—and began to sketch the manors of the collective farms, the rotation of crops for the fields, the roads and railways that would link the residential buildings and the farming units of production.

The notable thing about this foolhardy planning was not the fact that I thought about such things at all, but rather the detailed contents of my thinking. To begin with, I considered—and I may now add: I then *already* considered—that the town, with its 35,000 inhabitants and roughly the same number of *bolds* of land (49,000 acres), together with the farmsteads around it, was a single unit. The way I imagined the future order of things was that in time everyone would live in the town and there would be no living quarters at all on the farmsteads, but only farm buildings. Those going out to work of a morning would be taken there by trains and buses, which would bring them back in the evening.

Then I also decided that there should be vegetable farms and orchards on the side of the town towards the River Maros, while around the other outskirts there should be poultry farms, goose and duck ponds, fattening pens for swine, and dairy farms. The outer fields would be devoted to cereals and maize and to onions—the latter wandering to a different part of the district each year. In other words, I visualized specialized farming.

I even drew signs with coloured crayons on my map to show that the central part of the town—the "inner town"—should house offices, administrative and cultural institutions, and that the section along the railway should house the factories and processing plants, while the rest would be residential, with no livestock or farming whatever, only parks and little private gardens.

One thing, however, escaped my childhood planning. I did not puzzle over the steps that would lead from the given realities of the day to the new world order of my imagination. I also left it to the future to decide the conditions of ownership and organization among which my imaginary system of farming would develop. In particular, I did not ponder over what social

forces would bring about the new order and how they would do so. In this respect I had a general idea that there would be a Socialist revolution—I considered it natural that this would occur in the course of my life—and that then everything would follow of itself. What is more, this was not just my own childhood belief. As we planted onions, hoed the long rows of maize or worked at the threshing, I frequently talked of this not only with my father, but also my fellow proletarians of the land, and they had similar ideas. We believed that the change we desired would take place, but we did not even seek the means by which it would come about and the steps that would lead up to it.

ON THE WAY HOME

In the autumn of 1944, when the victoriously advancing Soviet Army reached the territory of Hungary—at Makó, incidentally—it was with a feeling of following a natural and obvious course that my family and I—we were then living at Szigetszentmiklós by the Danube in Central Hungary, still occupied by the Germans—decided it was time for us to return home. I immediately set out, first with my wife, and subsequently, when police intervention prevented us, with my younger brother, passing through Budapest, then still paralysed by the fascist mania.

On October 22nd we left the capital on the train for Kiskunhalas with the intention of going as far as we could by train, after which we would somehow cross the front line and make our way to Makó. It was at Kunszentmiklós that we first heard the guns rumble. The train took us as far as Soltvadkert. We managed to pass through the front lines at a farmstead near Kiskunhalas, and in a day and a half we were at Szeged. From here, however, there were as yet no trains or other vehicles running towards Makó, so we set off for our native town on foot, taking the ferry at Tápé and striking out on the old Szeged road.

It was a dimly sunlit day at the end of October. Not only did the joy of encounter with the familiar scene drive us to press ahead, but also the fact that we felt the historic change over the land of our birth at every step and that we were within tangible proximity to a future that was descending among the fields and farms like the mist of dawn.

The road led across fields now belonging to the Pioneer Cooperative Farm. It was over the unending stretches of black earth belonging to the Bishop of Csanád that we first felt the scent of our homeland. The people of Makó used to rent land here to grow onions, and we, the onion-growing folk of Makó, used once to look upon the silently plodding large-horned

oxen, the morose labourers and their long living quarters—always surrounded by swarms of dirty and ever hungry children—as though they were part of a strange, antediluvian world. The estate managers, cantering about in buggies, had become accustomed to the fact that we of Makó would not raise our hats to them, because we were “foreigners.”

We stopped at one of these estate labourers’ houses near Püspöklele. The people of the manorial lands were no longer as taciturn as we had seen them when we were children. They offered us the milk of the bishop’s cows as though it was their own, and their words expressed expectant uncertainty. What was to happen how? Would the bishop never come back? And whose was the land going to be? Their look still held a tremor of doubt, but a new light also shone in it—they realized that their old way of life had ended and that something new was to come. Even though they did not yet know what it was to be, they already had an instinctive feeling that it could only be better than the old.

By this time I knew full well that, though this historic moment was the beginning of the revolution, the time had not yet arrived when a socialist agriculture could be established. The land reform, the division of the land, land for the landless—these were the thoughts that stirred in us as we trudged along between the pitch-black fields, overwhelmed by waves of a regretful, but pleasurable emotion. These people would now be given land, as would the landless of Makó, but the large farming units, with their steam ploughs, tractors, lovely herds and huge stables, would be gone. When and how would they again become large farms?

The land of Püspöklele is separated from that of Makó by a dike, and, once we had crossed it, we were journeying among lands and farms each of which was associated with some childhood memory. Every person we met was an old acquaintance. Here was a plot on which we had once planted onions in the sharp air of early spring, kneeling on soil cold enough to freeze your knees. There we had had melons and would go tapping on each of their rinds of a summer’s dawn, to see which was ripe. Further off, a small grove of acacias surrounded a farmstead, with an artesian well in the courtyard. Each summer we had come here for water and had had to contend with the large white sheep-dogs and the withering glances of the farmer while we filled our pitcher.

Over there was the Ernő Nagy farm. The name conjured up memories of a famous farmer who had verged close on being a gentleman estate-owner. He had been chairman of the Farming Society, a town alderman, had several times stood for Parliament, was a committee member at the Chamber of Agriculture and a noted horse-breeder. Had he joined the

great flight and absconded with his squire friends? We knew he had plenty of reason to do so, and, indeed, we later found out that this was exactly what he had done.

Dimly, in the distance, loomed another great farm, that of the Mandls. A whole stretch of the country had been named after it, for it was not only the 110—140 acre farm that was famous in the region, but also its owners. They were one of the old onion-trading families of Makó, who had emigrated to Switzerland. They had struck up headquarters at Basle and become a world-wide firm of seed-onion and seed merchants. They had hung on to the estate partly on account of the income and the seeds it yielded, partly because of nostalgia for their native land. They employed village women in folk costume to cook for them, because no Makó woman would have been suitable for the part.

By the time we arrived in the town, one idea had emerged most clearly from among the many thoughts and tentative plans that stirred within us: that it was a pity there was no more land near Makó that could be divided up.

TEN YEARS

The Pioneer Cooperative Farm was founded on February 19, 1949, on Mandl's farm. It was the first in the town. That spring a number of other cooperative groups had also been formed and it was by coalescing them that the enlarged Pioneer Cooperative Farm emerged.

But between October 1945 and February 1949 much had happened at Makó too.

The land reform had become a fact, and it was also a fact that there was too little land that could be divided, so that the people of Makó were given land in the neighbouring villages as well—including Püspöklele. The situation was rendered the more difficult because only estates of over 140 acres could be divided up, and there were hardly any that big at Makó. The land distribution committee therefore sought out every pretext they could for distributing lands of less than 140 acres, and in this endeavour, both in the twisting and wrangling of paragraphs and in the revolutionary explanation of the law, they betrayed extraordinary ability, worthy of the times. Nevertheless, the greater part of the richer farmsteads were left intact, complete with buildings of various size, and it was by renting these lands that the organizing of cooperatives, including the Pioneer Cooperative Farm, got under way.

If history has noted the names of the 28 weavers of Rochdale as the founders of the first consumers' cooperative, let me, in this chronicle, note the

names of the 12 founders of the Pioneer, which, though not the first producers' cooperative, was among the first to be formed in Hungary. The founders were: Ferenc Bódi, János Czene, Márton Czukár, István Hadobás, Lajos Haluska, István Lengyel, József Lengyel, Mrs. József Jenei (a widow), Ferenc Medgyesi, Sándor Murvai, Pál Vajna and Ferenc Zsigó.

Who were they? There were two artisans among them—a smith and a carpenter—the rest were agrarian proletarians of the Makó sort, *i. e.* onion day-labourers, who occasionally also undertook share harvesting, threshing, share hoeing, half-share onion growing, working as general farm-hand or as rural watchman. None of them had received land, because there had not been enough to go round, so that they set up their cooperative group on the basis of land rented from the remaining large farms. This was how they too acquired land.

Those agrarian proletarians who—having received no land—started a “type I” cooperative group* on another farm, must also be regarded as founders, for by harvest time they were already operating according to “type II” regulations and in autumn they fused with the Pioneer. They included the present deputy-chairman Sándor Bíró and a later team-leader—now storesman—István Nagy. This was the Pioneer's core of agrarian proletarians at the outset of its career.

The next step was the formation, in the summer of 1949, of a cooperative group by the small onion-growers who had received land—tenants and half-share croppers; in the autumn they too joined the Pioneer, among them the present chairman, Sándor Mágori.

This group of newly-landed small onion-growers was the second component part of the Pioneer, and no less a character-shaping nucleus than the proletarian founders had been. It was thus that the Pioneer cooperative, by 1950, became a cooperative farm embracing 56 families, 83 members and 470 acres of land.

On this basis the Pioneer set out on its noteworthy career, leading to the present large cooperative estate of some 7,000 acres, with over 800 members. So successful has it been that in the spring of 1960 it won first place among the largest cooperatives in the country.

Let us now cast a glance at the progress of that career, to see what were the main steps that led to the attainment of the present level.

The number of cooperative members has increased evenly, and there were no large-scale defections either in 1953 or in 1956. On the contrary—the cooperative itself sifted its membership and removed “paper” members from its lists, as well as those who had been unable to fit into the com-

* See also p. 235.

munity. The membership thus increased to 360 by the fifth year and some 600 by the tenth. In 1960, as I have said, there were more than 800.

The farm area has grown similarly. By the end of 1958 the 470 acres at the end of 1949 had become 4,200 acres, and now the area has reached some 7,000 acres. It is worth pointing out that there were throughout about 7—8 acres per member, which is well below the national average.

Farming methods have kept pace with the increase in size. The crop off the land of the Pioneer was—apart from a few weaker years—generally and increasingly better than that of the individual farmers. Thus the average wheat crop over several years was 19.5 cwt. per acre, compared to the national average of 12 cwt. per acre and the local average of 14 cwt. per acre. The average sugar-beet crop over several years was 280 cwt. per acre, compared to the national average of 170 cwt. per acre. As a result of improved farming methods the common property of the cooperative has increased as has the members' share in the revenue. By 1958 the invested capital was 7.6 million forints, which was more than 1,900 forints per acre. The share-out per labour unit rose from the initial 21 forints to over 50 forints, while the national average was about 30 forints.

The cooperative is also notable in that it has achieved its increased prosperity mainly from its own resources. Thus in 1958 only 30 per cent of its total property of 12 million forints was due to credits.

A very important feature in the advance of the Pioneer has been the gradual development of the methods of management, the organization of work, and the permanence of the leadership. The chairman has been in his post for eight years, the deputy chairman for ten, and the team leaders too have held office for 5 or 6 years. This is not unique, but it is a fortunate circumstance that is not very frequently found, for in the initial period of cooperative farming—during the storms of revolutionary transformation—there have, as a rule, been frequent changes in leadership.

All in all, it may safely be said that the Pioneer Cooperative has developed into a truly socialist large-scale farm, excellently organized, engaged in lucrative farming year by year, in which the members work diligently and feel well, and their standard of living is not only far above what it used to be, but generally surpasses even that of the well-to-do individual onion-growers.

The Pioneer has, in the course of ten years' development, achieved all that could be attained by cooperative farming during this historical period. This is the more noteworthy since throughout this period it remained overwhelmingly a cooperative of small peasants—of agrarian proletarians and semi-proletarians—and achieved its supremacy in competition with

efficiently run individual farms, winning universal recognition locally and making a name for itself on the national scale.

FEBRUARY 19, 1959

It was on this day that the tenth anniversary of the Pioneer's existence took place, and that evening the cooperative and its guests celebrated like one great family. A long series of toasts was proposed in the course of which there was justified praise of the cooperative's many merits, of its leaders and foundation members.

On this day members and outsiders, local people and guests, all spoke about the reasons why the Pioneer had achieved such outstandingly favourable results, trying to solve the secrets of its success.

The chairman himself, speaking very modestly, but fully aware of their accomplishments, outlined the history of the cooperative, and his words enabled everyone to understand what the Pioneer had done. It was, however, only in the atmosphere that prevailed between the membership and the leaders that you could feel how they had attained their aims.

A book has since been published about the Pioneer, in which an expert seeks the secret of their successful development and finds the appropriate rational explanations. Nevertheless, the secret is not yet fully solved, and no particular branch of scientific investigation will alone suffice to solve it. What we are here confronted with is one of the basic questions of our new life, and the truth of the answer is of concern to millions. We must therefore make renewed and successive attempts at a solution, for otherwise people might well think the whole thing is not really true, or if true, only fortuitous. This brief chronicle will afford an opportunity more boldly and informally to seek the clue to the secret—using both the tools of objective scientific investigation and the subjective emotions that attach to one's native soil.

Let us first consider the general conditions. The Pioneer Cooperative Farm of Makó developed under the same nation-wide conditions as the rest of the cooperatives in Hungary. The movement began in 1948 with tenants' cooperatives operating according to various types of cooperative farming. We have seen that this was also when the Makó Pioneer was born. In subsequent years the progress of the cooperatives was determined by the fact that at the national level preference was given to producers' cooperatives of type III (where all production outside the homestead farms is done in common). These were helped in their development by having their lands favourably regrouped and enjoying many kinds of

State support. At the same time prescribed rules and fairly strict planning directives determined the operation and farming activities of the cooperatives. Amid such conditions the Pioneer of Makó developed continuously—it may even be said, evenly—and neither the crisis of 1953 nor the counterrevolutionary regression of 1956 seriously affected this cooperative. It not only weathered the critical periods, but remained firm in the midst of the storms.

The general features of nation-wide development were also present in the Makó Pioneer in that until quite recently it too was a cooperative of agrarian proletarians and small peasants. It held its own, as an island in a sea of peasant farms, and, more or less competing with the individually-owned farms, gradually built up its commonly-owned cooperative farm. Other cooperatives too did well in this competition, but the Pioneer may also boast that for years it has enjoyed the genuine respect not only of its fellow cooperatives but also of the individual farms and of public opinion in the whole town. Here are some indications that this is the case. I have for close on twenty years been living away from my native town. I asked relatives and acquaintances (including the politically reserved), whom they now considered the most respected persons at Makó. They each enumerated a different group of names, but the leaders of the Pioneer were always among them. Furthermore, I asked the adolescent children of my acquaintances, where they would like to begin work. Their answer, as often as not, was that if they were taken on at the Pioneer they would go there, otherwise they would look for something else. Or again, there is the opinion of the housewives of Makó that the best milk and dairy products are those sold at the dairy of the Pioneer.

But in the face of all this, we must, perforce, ask what extraordinary factors brought about a development on the part of the Pioneer of Makó that was not only better than the average but truly outstanding.

Was it perhaps the local town administration that was particularly favourable? With all due respect for the leading people and bodies of my native town, I could not, even with the best of goodwill, say that this had been so—if for no other reason than because their persons changed far too frequently.

Can it be said that the people of Makó, that Makó's social circumstances or the agriculture of Makó, are especially suited to the establishment of cooperative farming? This supposition can not in any way be substantiated, for it would be truer to say the opposite. Makó had no large estates, well-run small farms had developed, and capitalization had advanced further than in the rest of the country. Onions are, moreover, one of those

cultures which it is most difficult to mechanize, and to this day their cultivation in the cooperative is still mostly done by small-scale methods.

It might perhaps be thought that the agrarian proletarians and onion-growing small peasants of Makó were particularly keen on the idea of collectivization. This is hardly the case. The uncertain conditions on the onion-market and the larger or smaller opportunities for sundry forms of intensive agriculture had trained the small peasantry of the town to speculate and to try out the various paths to individual prosperity. Nevertheless the social character of the poor peasantry of Makó did play some part in the successful development of the Pioneer, though at the outset the other cooperatives of Makó consisted of similar members and were not able to develop in like manner. The fact is that the poor peasantry of Makó are industrious, enterprising, independent of thought, and that it is harder to organize them for collective work than many other strata of the poor peasantry. However, once organized, they are able to do more together, farming in common, than numerous other peasant associations.

The secret of the Pioneer's successful career is that it proved possible in a short time to weld the membership into a single collective team. And what was this due to? The leadership. The fact that in the course of work and the struggles carried on in the face of great difficulties, a corps of leaders came to the fore, in the very first years, capable of establishing among themselves and towards the members relations that withstood all the trials ahead.

But how did they succeed in setting up such a leadership? Was it, perhaps, the deed of one outstanding personality? No. The chairman is a wise and experienced man and does not lack the necessary tactical sense, he enjoys great respect and has been chairman for eight years now. Nevertheless, the cooperative does not rest on his shoulders alone. The deputy chairman is endowed with no fewer gifts and energies, and has not only proved his mettle in very difficult situations, but is also particularly keen on the new methods and possibilities of modern farming. He too enjoys great respect and has also held his post for ten years, but despite this it cannot be said of him either that his personality has been the clue to the whole cooperative. For, apart from these two, there are six team-leaders, a chief accountant, and the Party secretary, who are also pillars of the cooperative. The Pioneer has a truly collective leadership and this excellently functioning corps is the secret of the cooperative's successes.

It was over these problems that I pondered at the jubilee celebrations, when we drank one toast after another to the successes of the cooperative and cheered these grand people. I was, of course, not unaffected by the family warmth of the festivities and the experience of so special a historic

event. I would have denied both myself and my native town, had I not stood up to propose a toast. However, as I rose and looked at the familiar faces, I was suddenly overcome by all the many thoughts connected with this event—my childhood plans about this same land, the past and future of the peasants' existence, all the dramatic experiences of the socialist reorganization of our agriculture, the recruitment of members, the regrouping of the lands, the many worries of cooperative farming, the extreme veerings of policy that I had witnessed during these ten years—and it was no longer I who was in command of what I said, but the occasion itself. As a result, in the manner of a historical lesson that was both highly subjective and extremely abstract, I said roughly the following:

The Pioneer has achieved something that has won it country-wide esteem. We, who stem from here, know all it has been through before attaining its present stature; we know its birth pangs were at times so painful that many were frightened away. When I, as a child, drew up my little plans for socialist farming on this very same land, I thought it would all happen of itself and that only goodwill and expert knowledge were needed to put them into practice. Since then, however, I have thoroughly learned the historic lesson—it needs not only the diligence and skill of the peasants, but above all, the people's rule. And this cannot be achieved by any method chosen at will, but only in one way—the way that historically leads to this end: through the strength of the working class and the international solidarity of workers' rule. This is the path that also leads to the construction of socialist agriculture. The chief merit of the Pioneer is that it has obtained full marks for learning this lesson.

THE HISTORICAL LESSON

More than two years have passed since February 1959, and the Pioneer has achieved further notable progress in its soaring career. As the sports people say, it is holding its form and has been doing so for years now, furnishing convincing proof that its rise was not fortuitous, not just a sudden leap due to the chance encounter of fortunate circumstances. The results achieved have firm foundations, and this individual case provides a historic example of universal validity.

But in what sense can the example of the Pioneer cooperative of Makó be generalized? Is it perhaps that they have evolved some special organizational form for the construction of a large-scale common farm? A form that is a departure from that generally used and has made the cooperative path easier to tread? There are cooperatives that have done these things, but the

Pioneer is not one of them. On the contrary, this cooperative is an example of the very opposite sort. Here everything was organized as prescribed, and it was thus that they set up a prosperous common farm in which the people feel at ease. It is precisely this that enables the individual case of the Pioneer to be generalized as a specially precious historical example.

According to all the general rules, the organization of cooperatives amidst the conditions prevailing at Makó is difficult, or at least among the more difficult cases. Here there was no heritage of large estates, so that neither large-scale farm buildings, nor machines, nor tracts of large fields were available to form common farms, as had been the case in many places. The many plots of various sizes round Makó, and the farmsteads further out, had to be united one by one, to form a cooperative farm. Nor was the task rendered easier by the fact that the cultivation of onions, the main product of the town, is very difficult to mechanize so that to this day it is carried on by handicraft methods.

The social pattern of the town was also not favourable to the establishment of cooperative farming. Advanced capitalist commodity production and the sharp class stratification of the population had led to the complete disappearance of the old peasant communities, and the economic life of the town was composed of tiny units of various intensive cultures, which evolved in accordance with the laws of the market and the individual spirit of enterprise. And we have seen that the town developed much further along the capitalist path than had the neighbouring villages. The class stratification in fact took place in such a way that the maize-growing and stock-breeding farmsteaders, who were small or medium peasant owners, were separated by a world of differences from the stratum of small onion-growing tenant-entrepreneurs and the mass of day-labourers or share-croppers constituting the agrarian proletariat.

There was one element of this society which was to become a driving force of socialist development, though even this did not work unequivocally towards the establishment of cooperatives. I refer to the highly developed political life, as manifested in sharp struggles, and, within this, to the advanced development of the labour movement. Makó is one of the towns of the angle between the Rivers Maros and Tisza—the so called Stormy Corner—which in the past played a prominent part in the movements of the labourers, the agrarian socialists, and the opposition in general. It was such a hornet's nest in the old world that when, in 1929, Horthy came down to speak at the unveiling of a statue, his counter-revolutionary ranting was greeted by such growling from the crowd that he gathered up his papers and left the meeting in a huff.

Makó had already been an opposition stronghold at the time of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, and after the First World War a close and firm People's Front was forged here from among the bourgeois radical opposition farmers and intellectuals who belonged to the "Kossuth Party of 48," and from the Social Democratic Party which was largely under Communist influence. This People's Front achieved a sweeping victory at every local election and represented a fearsome force in both the town assembly and the county authority. At parliamentary elections the government party could only win by engaging in crude manipulations, and even then only with the help of the votes from the neighbouring villages.

The labour movement was especially strong and active. At the time of the Hungarian Soviet Republic, masses of people backed the rule of the workers and many would not be pacified even after the counter-revolution. In the course of the trials of Communists in the twenties, very many militants of the movement from Makó were cast into the "Star" prison at Szeged. The Communists were, throughout, the motive force in the Social Democratic Party and the Trade Unions, and even in the broader People's Front. However, a number of sectarian tendencies also developed in the ranks of the labour movement. Their belief in socialism and devotion to the class struggle occasionally led to Messianic tendencies and became the source of many factional struggles. This may have been one reason why the Arrow-Cross dope was unexpectedly able to gain a foothold at Makó and why, even after the 1945 liberation, violent inner struggles set the popular forces against each other and led to incessant changes in the leading personnel.

It was on this soil and after such antecedents that the organization of cooperatives was begun in 1949. We have seen that the initiative came from agrarian proletarians farming rented land and that the beginnings were very modest. Naturally, the Communist Party gave full support to the initiative shown, but it is a notable fact that there were no well-known or particularly active political leaders either among the founders or the first to join—and indeed there still are none among the present leaders. They had all backed the People's Front policy of old, some of them had even taken part in the labour movement, and after the liberation several became Communist Party members, while others joined the Peasant Party.

The founders of the cooperative, and the first people to join, were permeated by belief in the socialist future, but these people were not versed in the forms of political struggle. It was therefore without experience but with open and receptive minds—and especially with a profound belief and conviction—that they plunged into a hitherto unknown medium, the

world of farming in common. And an odd, though not altogether incomprehensible, thing now occurred. While several of those who participated in the direct political struggle were, in the course of the trials attendant upon the preservation and the exercise of power, swept into domineering ways or the danger-zones of financial temptation—we know that general conditions too played a part in this—and thus came into occasional conflict among each other and with the masses, the pioneers of collective farming fortunately avoided these dangers. Their full human worth and political convictions were turned towards the hitherto untried solution of this completely new task, this new situation—the establishment of collective farming. And faced with the frighteningly new problems, it was their everyday work and achievement that measured men's qualities and determined the position of each individual in the community. Herein lies the clue to the secret of the Pioneer's success.

It is a fortunate circumstance—though not purely accidental—that the incipient community did not come a cropper at the very beginning of the course whose aims indicated such infinite perspectives. Neither petty tyranny, nor selfish speculation, nor the exploitation of other people's work were tolerated in the atmosphere—at first somewhat confused—of the nascent community, and nothing happened to cause a breach in the unity between principles and practice. This, of course, is no miracle, nor even an unparalleled event. Nevertheless, such an embodiment of human values on a social scale (and that under not particularly favourable circumstances) was a historical achievement that reflected the extraordinary energy of those concerned—the grandeur of simple people and the creative power, in the strict sense of the term, of the people themselves.

That which happened here could be expressed in general terms by saying that *a people engaged in politics had become creative through economic organizing activity*. Indeed, this is a general feature of the recent political development of our country. It is an aspect of the system of people's democracy, which is developing in an ever more characteristic way—talent and creative energy are seeking an outlet in production, not for the benefit of individual enterprise, but in the service of a public, social aim.

It may now be better understood why the cooperative, though starting with the handicap of many difficult circumstances, did not choose the course of least resistance. For it would have been easy, amidst the circumstances—in many respects unique—that existed at Makó, to find various ways and means of by-passing their difficulties. Such opportunities would have been afforded by establishing a more primitive cooperative of type I and by the various possible combinations of direct financial incentives

for the members, and of relations between the common and the homestead farms. All these, however, were not adopted and the steepest road was chosen. The rules of the type III cooperative were applied word for word and each regulation contained in them was interpreted literally.

It must here be pointed out that these rules were later changed. There are now no longer such rigid regulations to govern either the organization or the remuneration of labour, and the plans of the cooperative are now really determined by the general meeting of the members. The Pioneer of Makó was, however, able to become a flourishing collective farm even under the rigid regulations then in force, and this redounds to its special credit. The rules have since become more rational and elastic, and they have permitted the mass of the cooperatives to develop fairly rapidly.

What happened in the Pioneer of Makó? They succeeded in filling with life the forms of collective farming that were cast in the rules, and found a solution to every problem of their common work within this framework. And this must be prized as a particularly valuable achievement. For what had happened was that we had recommended as the method and organizational form of collective farming a framework which had, it is true, been hammered out in the Soviet Union in the course of historical development, but which we nevertheless offered as an abstractly construed, ready-made pattern, amid completely different conditions. Moreover, a fairly large dose of bureaucracy weighed heavily in its application. Historical experience since then has shown that, under our circumstances, this was not the most fortunate form. Subsequently, several important features developed and changed, but some aspects did not prove satisfactory even then, so that in no small part of the cooperatives this form did not work well at all. The specially interesting thing about the Pioneer of Makó is that these abstract forms, which had not even been deduced from the experiences of an agriculture that had undergone capitalist development, even when planted in a fairly peculiar environment, nevertheless took root and the collective farm assimilated the forms to its own image. We must not consider this either to have been a unique miracle, for there were other such cases elsewhere. The special feature of the case of Makó is that it was in the soil of a strongly capitalized, formerly highly individualistic society that this implanted form of cooperative started to thrive.

The whole of the ten years' progress of the Pioneer is an unbroken chain of achievements through which the given, or rather the adopted, forms were filled with the varied flow of life, and work in common was transformed into a live process of assimilation to the point where it bore fruit. Thus the significance of the development of this cooperative lies

in its permitting general conclusions to be drawn about the trend of development of cooperative forms.

Some of the signs of this development may already be unmistakably observed and from them we may draw certain conclusions as to its future direction. This, however, is a matter of detail, for the specialist. The point of general interest is what conditions of further progress may be found in the present situation of the Pioneer Cooperative Farm.

From the picture thus far given of the farm's career, the reader might conclude that it had grown rigid within the sheath of a closed form, that it would therefore hardly be able of its own initiative to effect a further development in the organizational forms of collective farming. Progress, however, is dialectical, and the general rule is not that of uniform motion. The present common farming practice of the Pioneer rather goes to show that, within the given organizational framework, nearly every problem of the relations between people and the technique of production has actually been solved, and that the energies required for further advance are thus accumulating. It may be that in some cases they have not found the best solutions, but the ones they have are at any rate unequivocal and the accepted practice for all members. Thus everyone's experience is built on them—like the crystals clustering round a thread—and is gained day by day in their work and their relations to one another. The increasing quantity will in its turn one day change into a new quality, and the accumulated experiences of the cooperative membership and of collective farming will burst the present organizational forms and demand new ones. The winds that herald this change may already be felt, and the time is not far distant when the cooperative farm, like a butterfly issuing from its chrysalis, will of its own strength assume new and higher forms of organization, farming and leadership, corresponding to the level of social and technical development that will then have been reached.

This, then, is the historical lesson. The fact that it has been achieved by the Pioneer Cooperative Farm of Makó obviously does not prove that we recommended the best forms of organization and methods of farming to the cooperatives in the first ten years of the socialist reorganization of our agriculture. But it does show that in this way too a flourishing collective farm could be built and socialist relations among people established. The Pioneer of Makó, by carrying this out and through the new achievements based on this foundation, is contributing to the full establishment of the new socialist order in Hungarian agriculture and Hungarian peasant life—just as other cooperatives that have developed successfully are enriching the common stream by striking other springs.

HUNGARIAN PEASANT POTTERY

by

MÁRIA KRESZ

English literature on pottery may be considered singularly rich in and also most appreciative of the fundamentals of ceramics, of simple medieval vessels, and of slipware, such as the Staffordshire dishes of the 17th century. In seeking the background of the stoneware industry, which in its economic effects influenced the whole European art of pottery and porcelain, humble workshops were discovered and slipware of popular style, something of a peasant art. For someone like myself, acquainted with the peasant art of Hungary, it is a joy to read the aesthetic valuations of English authors, such as Bernard Rackham, W. B. Honey, Arthur Lane, or the eminent studio-potter, Bernard Leach, who endeavours to unite the inspiration of both the West and the Far East. Already in the 1880's the collector and potter, L. M. Solon, defended this art, "always sound, fresh and rational," and wrote: "Few things, indeed, can hold their own by the side of a mellow-toned and richly-glazed slip piece..." Nor does American literature lack appreciation of popular art in ceramics; the presence of Pennsylvania Dutch "tulip ware" accounts for good works on the subject. With this high sense for the beauty of a sincere, functional and lively style in ceramics, it is all the more regrettable that Hungary, along with Eastern Europe, is almost completely beyond the vision of English authors, even in comprehensive works on the general history of ceramics. Yet a few works do exist in English on Hungarian pottery, and it is interesting to remember that one of the earliest books which appeared on the peasant art of Hungary was the volume by Charles Holme published in 1911 in the Studio series.

Among Hungarian authors on the subject, Károly Viski's booklet on Tiszafüred pottery, one of the most interesting of the Great Hungarian Plain, appeared in English also. Of recent works, "Hungarian Peasant Art," a book with many coloured photographs, written by Edit Fél,

Tamás Hofer and Klára K. Csilléry, custodians of the Ethnographical Museum of Budapest, may be mentioned.

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The successors of both the shapes and the decorations of medieval vessels are to be found among Hungarian peasant ware of the 19th century and are sometimes surprisingly similar to early English specimens. Thus the most important vessel of all and the simplest in form is the plain cooking pot, the vessel—universal all over Europa—from which the very name of the craft derives. It was essential that cooking pots should be made out of fireclay, to be found only in the hilly part of the country, where numerous potteries worked to supply the demands of far-away districts. There were whole villages where every second man was a potter and pots were produced in enormous quantities and in all sizes up to huge one-yard-high “wedding pots” used on open fireplaces for cooking the stew in, at weddings (See fig. 1.). Such enormous pots were reinforced with applied thumb-impressed ribbons, a decoration reaching back to prehistoric times. The handles too were thumb-impressed at the bottom and sometimes along their whole length to strengthen their hold. Cooking pots were usually only glazed inside and on the lip, and on the unglazed surface bands were painted with a brush in reddish brown. Such brush painting—typical of medieval ware—was also used on unglazed jugs and is sometimes remarkably similar to English jugs of the 13th century. Similar painting is found between the applied ribbons of a large water jug (fig. 2.) with an inscription telling us that it was made by Mihály Hallai in the town of Kalocsa in 1801 and adding:

Food, drink and sleep,
These three you need,
In summer indeed.

The type of water jug with a filter on its narrow neck developed during the era of Turkish rule, in the 16th and 17th centuries; but later it became rare and was of late made only when the jug was intended to be specially festive and decorative. A form has developed which can be considered most characteristically Hungarian, a water jug with a filter inside the neck and with a few earthenware pebbles in the interior to keep it clean. These rattle whilst the jug is being carried to the well, a task that formerly

fell to young girls. Usually there is a spout to drink from on the perforated handle, and so this type of jug came to be called "csöcsös korsó", *i. e.*, "spouted jug" or "csörgős korsó", *i. e.*, "rattling jug." Water jugs were made both glazed and unglazed, or glazed only at the lip and at the little spout. In the small town of Tata unglazed water jugs painted with red pigment are made to this very day. The old potter's wife who paints them can state the name of each pattern; the fishbone pattern is called "rosemary," the triangular pattern a "hut," a wavy line "serpent" and the spirals "snail."

Talking of unglazed ware, mention should be made of black pottery, especially well-known from the Great Plain where it has recently been revived. József Szabadfalvi, who has studied the art and craft of black ceramics in Hungary, mentions over thirty places where it was practised. The process consisted of reduction through throwing damp fuel on the fire and closing down the openings of the kiln. It was mainly water jugs that were fired black, and the potter who specialized in making jugs (black or red) was called a "jugmaker", "korsós," a profession that occurred as a family name as early as the beginning of the 15th century, proving that there was a differentiation already at that time between the craftsmen who made pots, and those who specialized in making jugs. On figure 4. a large black storage jug is shown with combed and incised bands, the plain surface polished with a pebble. The handles are edged by a row of thumb impressions. Polished decoration is shown on figure 3., too.

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Large green wine pitchers, often a foot high and ornamented with applied relief work, form a group of their own. They were made for the use of various guilds. Usually the emblems of the guild are placed in front in a wreath or in a coat of arms, sometimes the various implements of the craft are also represented and perhaps even a small figure representing the artisan, a potter with his wheel, a smith or a mason, as the case may be. The guild jugs usually carry a date (end of the 18th or beginning of the 19th century) and the names of all the leaders of the corporation. They were used to bring wine up from the cellar when the masters were having a feast, a pretty frequent occasion, for during the era of the guilds, which in Hungary officially lasted up to 1872 and unofficially even longer, every excuse was good for merry-making, and the means of entering the guild was not so much the skill of a master as the ability to afford the dinner with which the elder masters celebrated the entrance of a new member. Large green wine pitchers were also made for Protestant churches

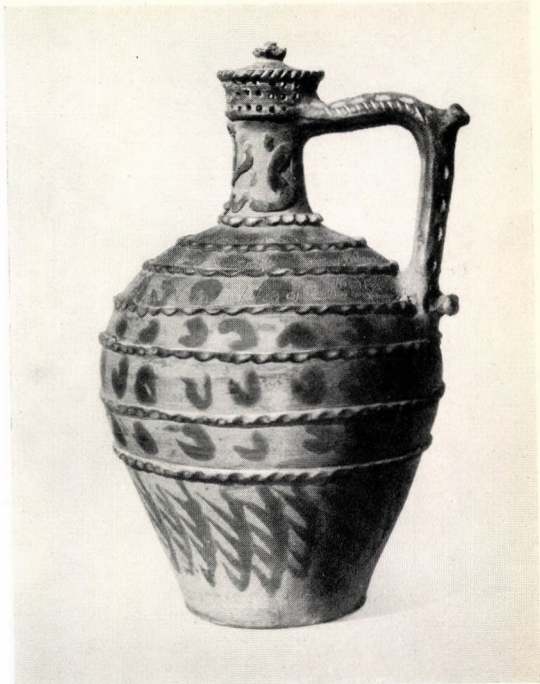
to hold Communion wine, and it is such a pitcher, made in 1837 that our illustration shows. (Fig. 4.)

However, most of the Hungarian peasant pottery in museums and private collections represents glazed slipware, pottery covered with a transparent lead glaze on a basis of slip with decorations under the glaze. It is this pottery which shows similarities to both English slipware and Pennsylvanian tulip ware, and the very term "slipware" is one which hardly has an equivalent in any other language but English. "Slip" is a liquid clay of various colours, used both to coat the whole surface and to paint decorations on. The transparent lead glaze may be colourless or may be tainted yellow (with iron), or green (with copper), or occasionally blue (with cobalt). Lead-glazed earthenware must be distinguished from pottery covered with tin glaze or enamel, called "faience," "majolica," or "Delft," which does not employ slip. Tin-enameled ware, *i. e.*, faience, was made in Hungary too and was used by peasants all over the country, but this is a subject requiring separate discussion. It is a little-known fact that Hungary was the first country in Europe, after Spain and Italy, where faience was produced. At the end of the 15th century King Matthias had potters come from Italy who made tin-glazed tiles and dishes in his court; this has been proved by their kiln recently excavated in Buda. After the king's death, however, the work was discontinued and tin-enameled ware was reintroduced in the 16th century by anabaptist ("Haban") potters, who settled in various districts of the country, bringing with them the direct influence of Italian pottery. Recently Béla Krisztinkovich has added new data to this problem, much discussed and misinterpreted in the international literature on ceramics. In the 18th and 19th centuries the descendants of the "Haban" potters worked mainly to meet the demands of the peasantry, and their products reached the villages of almost every region. Yet the art of making tin-glazed ware was generally not attempted by Hungarian peasant-potters, and it is rather in designs and colouring that the "Haban" influence is still to be found in peasant ware.

So, besides unglazed earthenware, it is mainly lead-glazed slipware that has to be dealt with when discussing Hungarian peasant pottery. The history of lead-glazed pottery is not as clear as that of tin-glazed ware (or of porcelain). Lead glaze, discovered in the Orient, was used in later Roman times and reappeared in Western Europe in the early Middle Ages. Lead-glazed slipware was made in the Byzantine Empire and in the Islamic World; in China it already appeared in the Han ware of the 3rd century B. C. and especially under the T'ang dynasty. In Hungary the earliest pot glazed on the inside derives from the end of medieval



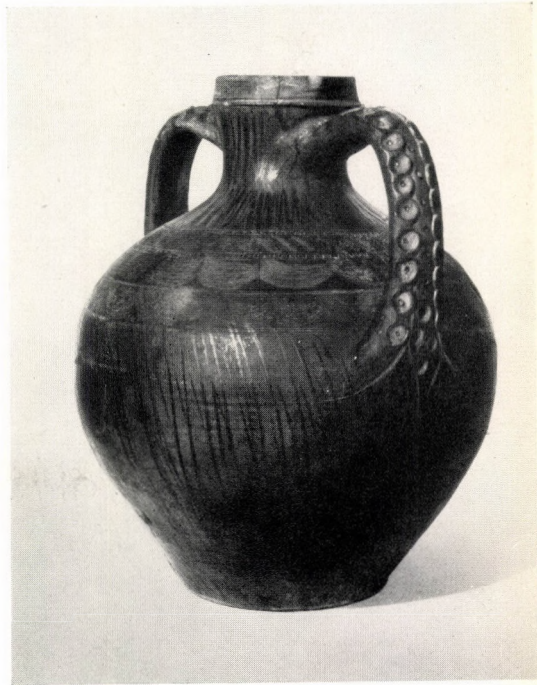
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- 1 COOKING POT FOR WEDDING FEASTS. *Upper Hungary*. H. 18 in.
 2 UNGLAZED WATER-JUG. *Kalocsa*, by *Mihály Hallai*, 1801. H. 20 in.
 3 BLACK UNGLAZED VESSEL FOR DIPPING CANDLES. *Great Plain*. H. 14 in.
 4 UNGLAZED JUG. *Great Plain*. H. 18 in.



5



6



7



8

SLIP-TRAILED PLATES, diameter about 8 in.

5 Bereck, Széklerland. 6 Mezőcsát, Great Plain. 7 Siklós, Southern Transdanubia. 8 Mórág, Southern Transdanubia.

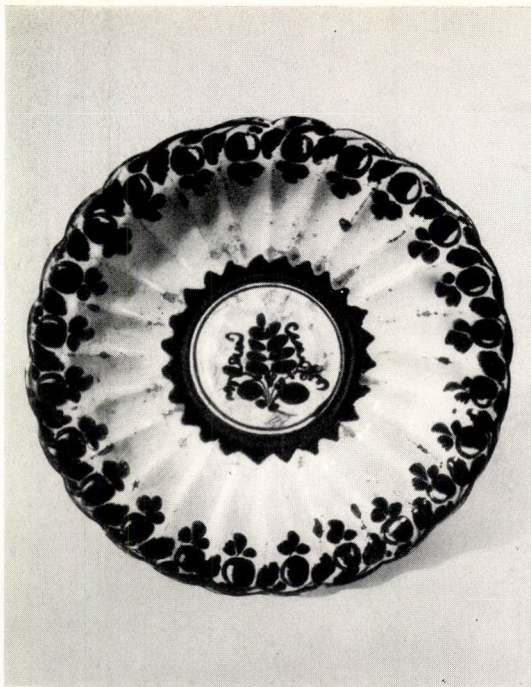


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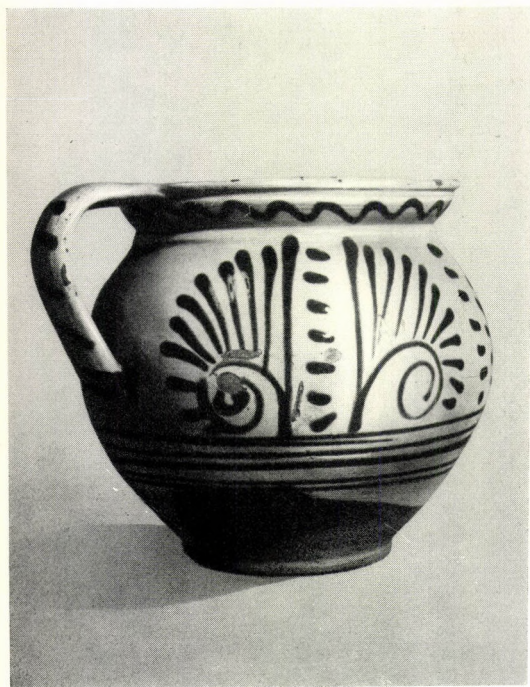
9 SLIP-TRAILED BRANDY JUG WITH YELLOW GLAZE. *Hódmezővásárhely*. H. 16 in.



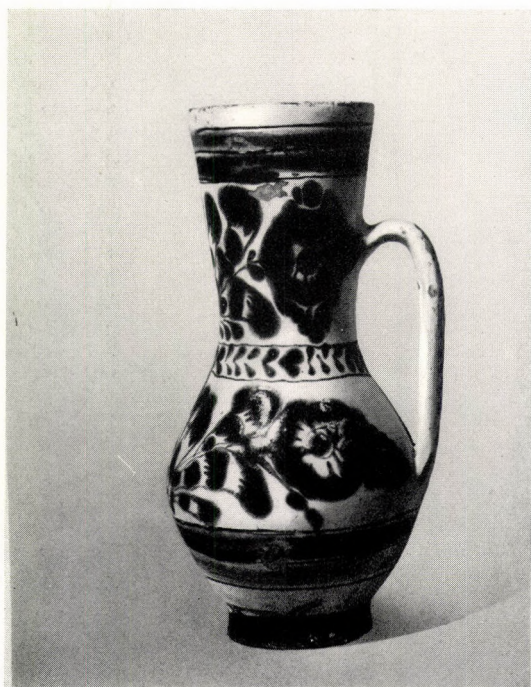
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VESSELS IN WHITE AND BLUE.

10 BRANDY FLASK. *Hódmezővásárhely*. 11 DISH from *Hódmezővásárhely*. Diameter 10 in.

12 POT from *Dés, Transylvania*. H 8 in. 13 JUG from *Torda, Transylvania*. H 10 in.



14

14 WINE JUG FOR ECCLESIASTICAL USE, *glazed green. Vári, North-East Hungary. H. 20 in.*



15



16



17

15 THREE BRANDY FLASKS WITH SGRAFFITO DECORATION. *Hódmezővásárhely*. H. 8—10 in.

16 JUG WITH SGRAFFITO DECORATION. 17 PUZZLEJUG



18 Two "MISKA" JUGS. *On the left, from Tiszafüred, by Mihály Nagy, 1847, h. 11.2 in.; on the right, from Mezőcsát, by Dániel Kovács, 1858, h. 14 in.*



times, and in the court of King Matthias not only was faience of a high standard produced, but also fine lead-glazed tiles and dishes, mostly green and yellow, fit for the court of a Renaissance ruler. However, it was mainly the 16th and 17th centuries, the time of Turkish rule, from which slipware sherds derive in the greatest quantity. These sherds were antecedents of the painted pottery represented in the far-famed peasant ware of the 19th century. The pottery of this era has been most thoroughly studied by Olivér Soproni, and he distinguishes a type of decoration "Turkish" in style, and another that is "Hungarian," both of which are to be found especially on plates and dishes. The Turkish style is mainly characterized by variations of geometrically arranged patterns, combed on white or dark bands of slip under a yellow and green glaze, the design covering the whole surface. Such combed decorations occur but seldom in later Hungarian peasant pottery, though the use of both yellow and green glaze remains very typical. However, the "Hungarian" style of the pottery of the 16th and 17th centuries has maintained itself up to the present and mostly consists of slip-trailed floral designs, sometimes the figure of a bird, an animal and even a human being. Olivér Soproni sees an Italian influence in this art and style.

To understand the significance of slip-trailed decoration, it is necessary to say a few words about the decoration of slipware in general. Of all branches of ceramics, it is lead-glazed pottery that allows the greatest variety in decorative technique. Relief work, moulded or shaped by hand, impressed and incised work, colour-effects through letting the slips or the glazes flow, feathered and combed decoration, stripes and bands, all are possible, yet there are two methods specially characteristic of the ornamentation of slipware (neither of which is applicable to faience or porcelain). One is "sgraffito" and the other is "slip-trailing." *Sgraffito* is a term used to denote the incising of a pattern on generally white slip, the incised lines showing up in dark colours, covered with a transparent or a coloured glaze. This method reached its height in Italy during the 15th century, yet it was known in early Islamic ware, in China during the T'ang period, and practically everywhere where lead-glazed pottery was made. The significance of the other important method of decoration is less known: "slip-trailing" is a term used for letting the liquid slip trail in linear designs, by using an instrument with a quill in its spout, a pipette, slip-trailer or slip-cup. There is no definite English equivalent to designate the instrument, though it was used by English potters, particularly those in Staffordshire, and is considered very characteristic of their art. In Eastern Hungary and Transylvania a horn is used for the purpose, and

it is called "szaru," "szaruzó," *i. e.*, "horn," like the German "Malhorn." In Central Hungary the instrument is made out of earthenware and is called "gurgulya" or "íróka," *i. e.* "writer," "drawer." Lead-glazed pottery decorated with slip-trailing is known in the peasant pottery of most European countries, and—going back in time—in Byzantine and Islamic earthenware. It was already used in Roman Gaul, as proved by a slip-trailer found in Lezoux. Slip-trailing is not confined to glazed ware; a red terracotta ground may very effectively be decorated with a white or dark slip-trailed pattern, quite frequent in Hungarian peasant pottery. The technique of slip-trailing may antedate the use of glaze on pottery and may reach back to prehistoric times. Slip-trailing always results in bold, definite patterns, because the flowing liquid forces the hand to hasten and so the rapidly drawn design has to be strongly conventionalized. Such patterns have the flavour of popular art and are typical of the pottery used in peasant societies. Sgraffito, on the other hand, enables careful designing and is therefore a technique more suitable for elaborate ornamentation. In ages when lead-glazed pottery was made as a "high" art for noble circles with designs aiming at realism, sgraffito was cultivated (*e.g.* the Italian sgraffito of the 15th century), whilst when finer branches of ceramics, faience and porcelain exiled lead-glazed slipware to the lower strata of society, as in 17th century Europe, bold slip-trailed patterns resulted. However, the two methods of decoration were often practised side by side, sometimes on the same dish, or—as we have had the opportunity of observing precisely on Hungarian peasant ware—the wholesale pottery made to be sold at markets was decorated with slip-trailed patterns, whilst individual items such as wine jugs and brandy flasks, made to order or as keepsakes, were decorated and inscribed in sgraffito.

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Rich floral and occasionally figured designs characterize the Hungarian earthen ware of the Turkish era, the usual colour scheme being a whitish ground, the slip-trailed pattern reddish brown and green, the outlines dark brown. Later this colour scheme becomes more varied, and the ground may be reddish brown or dark brown, almost black, the outlines white, and thus the whole effect bolder and more "peasant" in taste. In some pottery centres a bright antimon yellow is included, in others blue and manganic brown occur, the latter showing the influence of faience colouring. The richest decorations derive from those potteries which specialized in making flat ware, plates and dishes, especially those of the Great

Plain and its surroundings, where fireclay was not available and kitchen ware could not be made. Dishes and plates were literally made by the hundreds and thousands in certain workshops, and the potters appropriately called themselves "dishmakers." Earthenware was made in such quantities not only because it was used to eat from and to lay the table with at weddings, but also because it was customary to decorate the kitchen wall with a rich array of brightly coloured crockery. Examining the sherds of dishes deriving from the Turkish era, some of which were about two feet in diameter, it may be observed that each has a perforated knob at the back, which means that already at that time painted dishes were used as mural decoration.

In our illustrations four plates from various parts of the country are shown, carrying slip-trailed designs done in different colours. The plate with a bird (fig. 5.) was fashioned north of the Great Plain, in Mezőcsát, a small centre with but a dozen potters, who did not even belong to a guild, but who yet developed an extraordinarily varied art, of which hundreds of examples have survived. It was especially dishes and plates that were made, also glazed pots for carrying meals to the field, or, in another shape, for carrying food to a young woman in childbirth; milk jugs, brandy flasks jugs and pilgrims' flasks for wine; salt-cellars and paprika containers to hang on the wall; figures and man-shaped jugs of which we shall speak later. Two plates (fig. 6, 7.) come from southern Transdanubia, a district rich in every aspect of folk art, with pottery always in very vivid colours and often with a flowing and feathered decoration on the brim or even in the centre of the plate. The first plate (fig. 4.) derives from a very different region, from eastern Transylvania, the village of Bereck in the Szeklerland; here many pearshaped jugs called "bokály" were also made, jugs hung in a row on the pegs of dish racks above the table in the corner of the room, and occasionally used to drink wine from.

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A most artistic effect is achieved when the white slip-trailed pattern appears under a yellow glaze mottled with green, a rich brown colour or, if dark slip has been used, almost black. This brown-yellow-green colouring is especially typical of Hódmezővásárhely, the largest and most significant pottery centre in the whole of Hungary. In this huge agrarian town in the south of the Great Plain there were several hundreds of potters in the 19th century, mostly dish-makers, and the number of extant specimens of their work is well over a thousand. Many are dated, the early

ones deriving from the beginning of the 19th century. One of the first known pieces is the puzzle jug in fig. 17., made in 1798. Especially fine and monumental are the large brandy jugs (to be distinguished from water jugs which they resemble in shape)—vessels full of dignity, veritable sovereigns among earthenware. Greatly favoured were small flattened brandy flasks, mostly green, sometimes yellow or mottled, with decorations and amusing inscriptions in sgraffito. The inscription usually names the proprietor of the flask, the date when it was made; sometimes the name of the potter is included and a curse is added on anyone who dares steal the flask: may he push a barrow in Pest Buda and become "king of beggars" there! A bird or a cock is a favourite design, also a branch of flowers growing out of a vase, on the simpler ones just a wavy line or curves. Inscriptions are invaluable to the researcher, as they enable him to differentiate between the various makers and thus to confirm the personalities of certain artists, always a difficult matter in folk art. Sgraffito was also used combined with various colourings, of which a fine example is the Transylvanian Szekler jug in fig. 16. with the figure of a lying stag delicately incised and coloured with yellow and brown glazes that form flowing patches.

Coloured sgraffito designs adorn the body of the man-shaped "Miska" (Michael) jugs—reminiscent of the Toby jugs—made exclusively in the Great Plain, and especially in the two places mentioned (fig. 18.). In the Museum of Ethnography in Budapest there are some fifty examples. Greatly treasured by collectors, they are among the most interesting and problematic objects of folk art. The features, and the buttons of the Hungarian-style dolman are moulded by hand, the hat is high, as worn at the beginning of the last century, and on the belly there is often a large snake. Generally there is an inscription below the handle and thus the makers of many a type can be named. How the fashion of man-shaped jugs came to Hungary, what connection it has with the German "Bellarmine" and the English Toby jugs, whether it may be considered a more or less local development related to water jugs with the head of a man or woman, made in many regions of Hungary—these are questions still to be solved, as man-shaped jugs have not been found in excavations.

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To return to the effect of various colour schemes we mentioned that blue occurs especially frequently under the influence of tin-glazed faience. In the history of ceramics the effect of Chinese porcelain on European

faience is well established. After the manufacture of porcelain had gained a foothold in Europe and faience had spread among the lower strata of society, it was the turn of peasant slipware to imitate faience and, through faience, also porcelain. It is to this that we attribute the popularization of white and blue slipware in many a rural region of Hungary. Among the many dishmakers of Hódmezővásárhely, for instance, those living in a particular quarter of the town started making white ware from the second half of the last century and were accordingly nicknamed "white dishmakers," "porcelain makers." Sometimes a dash of red or green was used too, as for instance in the moulded dish with its flowered pattern, used to decorate kitchen walls (Fig. 11.). In some places the designs are rough, but effective copies of finer designs are to be seen on tin-glazed ware made by the descendants of the "Habans," as for instance the pottery made in Torda (Transylvania), by women like Julia Turi and Julia Simonffy, who were able to paint as many as 40—50 pieces a day with their "horn." In other places old and ancient patterns were carried out in expensive cobalt blue, like the pot made in Dés, also Transylvania, a place where the Hungarian guild of potters was formed as early as the 16th century (Fig. 12.).

Our last illustration shows a human figure modelled in a spirit and humour similar to that of the English "pew groups." Such figures were not pure ornaments, each had a practical use as well. Most of them are, in fact, brandy flasks, and the best come from Mezőcsát and Hódmezővásárhely. Our example from the latter town represents a man smoking a long pipe and wearing the wide white pantaloons that were once traditional. On one brandy flask the man is represented wearing a huge mantle of sheepskin; the "fur" is made by pressing clay through a sieve or a stocking. Furry bears were modelled in like manner, for use as tobacco holders, of which the English counterparts are also known. The tobacco holders are made in the form of a jolly peasant's head, with a fine mustache. Very rare are curtain holders in the shape of a mermaid wearing a bonnet, the mermaid holding a child bonnetted exactly like herself.

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In surveying the art of Hungarian pottery, the question naturally arises as to how much of this is still alive at present. To give an idea of the present situation, a few data, partly statistical, will suffice. In 1900 a census was made in which, among others, the potters were counted in each village. The total proved to be about 2,300 in the territory of present-day Hungary, twenty per cent less than a quarter of a century ago.

Half a century later only about 110 remained. Industry-made stoneware and enamel cooking utensils had submerged the potters' craft. At the turn of the century government courses endeavoured to rescue their art, with the result that traditional designs and colourings were altered in a very unsatisfactory manner. In the 1930's the ethnographer István Györfly tried to persuade potters to return to the old traditions; thus it was through his influence that Sándor Kántor, a potter in Karcag, decided to revive the extinct patterns and forms of Mezőcsát and Tiszafüred. This movement was officially encouraged from the fifties on, when handicraft (including pottery) was given support both morally and financially. Today it may be said that the style of almost every important center has at least one master who endeavours to keep it up, and in a few places there are also cooperatives or factories doing the same. The potters are talented, ambitious and highly self-respecting men, eager to learn and develop their craft, and may already have developed, more or less, into studio artists. The art of Hungarian studio potters on the other hand is not a direct off-spring of peasant pottery, yet it would not flourish as it does without the milieu of folk art and the occasional return to it for further inspiration. Simple peasant potters, working for the needs of a local market and the surrounding villages, are very few in number and mostly old in age, the last representatives of a declining craft. Yet from the point of view of the ethnographer, these men and their workshops are of utmost importance. In Hungary, ethnographers are in the rare position of being able to reconstruct and sometimes even to witness traditional peasant life as it was lived when folk art was in its prime. There are still workshops in use with their kick wheel, with a simple grinding stone; the kiln is mostly a round, up-draught bottle kiln, often built out of doors, similar to the ancient Greek and Roman and the medieval English type. The shapes thrown on the wheel are still mostly traditional; sometimes also decorations and occasionally the names of old patterns are still alive. At country fairs a potter or two may be seen selling his wares. Certain vessels, for instance milk jugs, are still generally earthenware. Though the crockery that used to adorn the kitchen walls in abundance has usually wandered up to the attic, the name and function of each piece is still known. The Hungarian student of pottery is able to combine the study of the material collected in museums with the investigation of the actual uses to which it is put in the countryside, of the function of ceramics in the life of the people, among the potters who made the articles and the peasants who appreciated its usefulness and its beauty. Through interviewing potters and merchants and mapping the enormous material collected in museums,

it is possible to define the geographical distribution of various types and the market sphere of individual centres. It is our conviction that, with a many-sided ethnographical approach towards ceramics, taking account of technical, historical, sociological aspects besides those of art history, the study of Hungarian peasant pottery can perhaps contribute its share towards the general history of pottery and porcelain.

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CALCULATIONS OF THE RENTABILITY OF INVESTMENTS

ZSIGMOND MÓRICZ THE NOVELIST

by

PÉTER NAGY

1

Your essayist is perforce at a loss when confronted with the noble yet difficult task of introducing Zsigmond Móricz to the English-speaking reader. He is seized with the excitement of discovery, but also the anxiety of the poor man who is about to pay a Sunday visit to his rich relatives—his national pride is at odds with the feeling that the term “a proud nation” has always had a somewhat grotesquely exotic connotation. He is fired by enthusiasm for his subject, and at the same time rendered despondent by the knowledge that the Western, and more especially the British, reader has met with so many kinds of enthusiasm and eulogy as to be justly suspicious if they stem not from a compatriot of his, but from a fellow citizen of the writer whom he is asked to discover, and whom he forthwith suspects of artistic or political contraband.

How are we to bridge the gap of language, particularly disturbing in the case of a writer of prose steeped in popular idiom, a writer of whom it may well be said that he recreated a folk language in the semblance of his own genius? For the magic and the success of Móricz lie in no small measure in the power, the beauty and the freshness of his language. Then again, there is the distance that separated the stage of social development which Hungary had reached, from that of Britain in the first four decades of the present century. How are we to compare one contemporary with another, when the world in which they lived, the medium in which they moved, lay so far apart? The same may, in consequence, be said of the situation of the characters in these societies and their relations to each other, of the forms and the possibilities of expression of their feelings, as well as of the very problems that occupied the author.

Móricz was born in the same year as E. M. Forster, while Gide and Proust were ten, Jack London and Sherwood Anderson three years his seniors, and his birth, in turn, preceded that of Roger Martin Du Gard

and of James Joyce by two or three years. This list is not only oppressive but also inspiring, for these names conjure up the vision of the whole of intellectual Europe watching over the simple peasant cottage, concealed in a remote corner of Eastern Hungary, where Zsigmond Móricz was born in 1879. He was a child of the Victorian period, and, as if wishing to maintain a distant kinship to the favourite milieu of the Victorian novel, he, too, stemmed from close by the country vicarage; his mother was the orphan daughter of a clergyman, who struggled on the verge of destitution. That was why her family chose the "realistic" solution of a marriage to a promising smallholder. Bálint Móricz did not have much land to contribute to their union—in fact the girl had more land as a dowry than her husband possessed. But he did contribute untiring perseverance, a restless ambition and an indomitable spirit of initiative, with whose help he raised the family from the peasant level to the verge of the lower middle class standards of a respected craftsman. From the remote little village they moved to bigger towns, then to Budapest. All this, of course, did not take place without stress and excitement, successes and failures, periods of prosperity and of deep distress.

For Zsigmond, the oldest of six children, the events and emotional contents of his childhood were, and continued to be, among the fundamental experiences of his life. Not least of these were the figures of his father, enlarged to the dimensions of a hero who dared do anything, and of his mother, enriched to a symbol of preservation, of a guardian and provider, of sacrificing everything for the family. The first of the six children, and in his wake the other five, set out from the village of their birth to go to grammar school. It was a thing unheard of in the Hungary of those days—especially in the countryside and in a peasant family at that—for them all to take the path from the world of manual labour to that of the middle class.

Móricz was born and brought up in a period when Victorianism was not a purely British phenomenon, but a set of moral and aesthetic standards that were dominant throughout Europe. He grew to the stature of a thoughtful young man at the turn of the century, a time when more and more fissures began to appear on the smooth and hitherto stress-free *façade* of Victorian stability, betokening the presence of inadmissible and uncontrollable forces behind that *façade*. The Queen Victoria of the Hapsburg Monarchy was Francis Joseph, and Francis Joseph's India was Hungary. Here, on the occasion of his rare visits, the king himself would shake hands with the rajas and the nabobs, but if the pariahs—the workers and the agricultural proletariat—stirred, volleys were ordered to be fired at them by the police and army officers of the ruling class.

This was the background against which the childhood and youth of Zsigmond Móricz was spent. In the small-town grammar schools or at the University—first in Debrecen and later in Budapest—he read the works of those who could reveal to him these unutterable and uncontrollable forces: the books of Büchner and other scientists, of Dostoievsky and Maupassant, of Tolstoy and Zola, of the British and French classics. For after the completion of his secondary schooling he went to Debrecen, mainly, in obedience to the wishes of his mother, to read Calvinist theology. But the unbelieving theology student soon turned his back on the hypocritical and narrow-minded atmosphere of the Theological College of Debrecen. He had a go at law and later at philosophy in Budapest, but did not take a degree in either.

University studies were not an aim in life for him, only a means of satisfying the vanity of his family ("My son should become a university graduate!") and their striving for security. Soon he gave way to his real urge. From his early childhood days he had longed to be a writer and now he trimmed his sails to catch the wind that would make him one. He became a journalist. In the Hungary of the turn of the century there was, in fact, little else that a writer could do but take a desk at a newspaper office—unless, of course, he had a landed estate large enough to relieve him of financial worries. The suddenly expanding press of a country that was then in the process of becoming capitalist eagerly attracted both the talented and the untalented to its fold. Society, on the other hand, was still so thoroughly ridden with feudal prejudices that it was loath to see mere "scribblers" in the official positions of County and State, which were reserved for "genuine gentlemen." The press was at once a despised and an admired power, and the journalist a feared and yet an unaccepted person in the ranks of society. He was admitted, but was not allowed to be at his ease anywhere, except in the smoky, gossip- and argument-laden atmosphere of the all-night coffee-houses. Móricz, however, never really felt at home in this world. As a fledgling journalist he did not appear to be at all gifted, but this was where he came to know the magic of the press—the daily contact with the public through the medium of writing. This contact he was never more to renounce. To the very last day of his life he required the press, the publicity of periodicals and newspapers, like Dickens or, for instance, Priestley in our times. Beyond all that he could convey in novels and short stories, he felt a further need to discuss his most recent experiences and the latest events with his readers in reports, articles and personal notes.

The poor country lad, proud of the traditions of his Calvinist clerical ancestors was at first a stranger to this volatile environment that had no respect for established authority, but tended rather to undermine it. He endeavoured desperately to cling to the ideals and standards he had inherited from his family and acquired at school—he may even have appeared to the impatient to be a devotee of reaction, both in art and in social matters. It was two great experiences, acting side by side, that brought about the decisive change—his encounter with the peasantry and with Endre Ady. In order to supplement his income, he had undertaken to collect ethnographical material in the district where he was born, at the same time as Bartók and Kodály set out on the collecting expedition that was to determine their path in life. The task in hand and the bidding of his genius urged Móricz not just to view the peasants' mode of living from the vicarage and the magistrate's office, but, in order the better and the more accurately to collect his folk-songs and tales, to sleep in earth-floored peasant-cottages and become an observant participant in the lives of the peasants. Thus it was his own direct experience that taught him the difference between real peasant life and the literary picture the gentlefolk had formed of it. He saw the tragedy, the suffering, the destitution and the passion that lay pent up in the conditions and the souls of the peasantry. Simultaneously, he came to know the poetry of Endre Ady, who, with a power and a passion rarely equalled in literature, succeeded in linking the symbolistic expression of all the complexities of the modern artist's soul with a poetic presentation of the forces of impending explosion in the structure of Hungarian society. Ady's poetry soon became the object of both scandal and adoration throughout the country. Its extraordinary power helped Móricz to find his subject-matter, his tone, and his vision.

After long years of sterile experimentation that had a flavour of epigonism and led to few results, the talent of Zsigmond Móricz now unfolded with eruptive force under this dual influence. His first short story in *Nyugat* ("The West"), the leading periodical of the revolution in art that developed in Ady's wake, immediately drew attention to him as one of the most gifted story-tellers of the younger generation. From this time forth, a flood of short stories, novels and reports, vying one with another in craftsmanship, flowed from his pen, and in them he explored every nook and corner of the Hungarian scene, of Hungarian society, and of the Hungarian soul.

The first short story, *Hét krajcár* ("Seven Pennies"), was a surprise due to the novelty of its tone. It was able at one and the same time to speak with

sentimental emotion and with natural simplicity about the world of the poor, about the peasant home where not even the utmost efforts availed to find the seven pennies needed for a cake of soap, and where the sunshine of happiness and of humour nevertheless managed to penetrate for all the misery and disease the house lodged. This short story is a mixture of the elements of the old and of the new approach which together form a fortunate blend. Its sentiment and humour belong to the past, but its naturalness, inner authenticity and precision are new, and these were the elements that later constituted Móricz true greatness. His immediate, sweeping success was due to the story's being recounted in a seemingly old-fashioned, patriarchal, somewhat condescending way, though the effect was far from reassuring, nor even one to produce a smile. On the contrary, the story served to make the outraged reader's blood boil. It was precisely with the elaboration of these new elements that Móricz became the author we know: a master of modern realistic prose. He was himself aware of this, for he considered that the greatest value of this short story was that "I have severed the cord that bound me to the navel of 'the Public Order.'"

Early twentieth-century prose in the West was generally characterized by a neglect of social problems and preoccupation with intellectual and psychological adventure, as a reaction to the rigid view of man and of society taken by the naturalists. The nineteenth-century French novel, just as its British counterpart, had looked first for the "social animal" in man, but in the twentieth-century, man in his individual self came ever more to be at the centre of things, complete with his personal characteristics. He is laden with his own particular memories and consciously carries his own plans for the future or is a vehicle of subconscious processes. Hungarian literature, which had been able to keep abreast of the novels of the first half of the nineteenth century, itself became petrified at the romantic stage in a society petrified, after the defeat of the Hungarian revolution of 1848, in its feudal trappings. The writers who voiced the needs of the period or tried to satisfy them all perished in turn, during the second half of the century, partly because they came up against the conspiracy of the "elder generation" which firmly held the reins of power and partly because they had to meet the backward and stagnating requirements of the reading public. It was only the literature of the early twentieth century that was able, in consequence of the rapid progress of capitalism, to attempt to make up the arrears. This was how the poetry of Endre Ady became the embodiment simultaneously of both symbolism and of the surpassing of symbolism, while the prose of Móricz represented a Hungarian version of naturalism and also the surpassing of naturalism in the direction

of a broader and more complex realism. From naturalism Móricz learned that literature could, like life itself, pass beyond the bounds of Victorian propriety and that all that was really life could find its distillation in literature. From the very outset, however, he rejected the biological determinism and mechanical materialism of the naturalists and adopted a more differentiated view both of psychological and social phenomena. The tuberculosis of the mother in *Seven Pennies* could have been a naturalist prop to cast the shadow of coming doom over the children, had it not been an actually observed and generally observable feature of rural reality. There was no need to import tuberculosis into the Hungarian village from the pages of French literature, for though the disease was by no means an inherited burden, it was one of the curses of contemporary social reality.

In *Sárarany* ("Muddy Gold"), his first novel, the dank, erotic atmosphere is just as fully due to the influence of the naturalist school as is the strong sense of his origin in the peasant hero. Nevertheless, the meaning and the horizons of the whole are altered by the fact that the dank atmosphere is a precipitation of the tense desire for action that pervades the village and is personified in the hero. His urge to break out of the peasant's semi-feudal bondage towards a bourgeois way of life finds no outlet save in the sexual field. His strong sense of his origin is not a vehicle for a touch of lunacy and a mechanical motivation for irrational action, but rather the spiritual motif and vehicle for the endeavour to break free, to achieve a change and attain human equality. Móricz never wrote works that were illustrations to theorems, but in each and every one of his works, from the smallest to the very greatest, he could transcend the immediate meaning of the story. Each of his writings is more than the mere sum of the sentences, characters and scenes in it, for each is permeated and, as it were, multiplied by a deeper significance, which, even if not explicit, is none the less intelligible.

This deeper significance is nearly always of social importance and revolutionary novelty. The very fact that he wrote in his short stories and novels of the village, of peasants, landlords, magistrates and teachers—but mainly of the various strata of the peasantry—in a new tone, fraught with passion, itself destroyed the hitherto dominant illusion that peasant life was idyllic and that the feelings and thoughts of the peasantry were radically different, inferior and primitively unsophisticated. His tone was novel because he broke with all convention and wrote of life as he actually saw it, of the concrete reality of the contemporary period; his work was of social significance, because it opened up new horizons in both the literary and the social spheres. His characters are torn by love, by a

hunger for land, by greed and jealousy—not a single one of them toys with intellectual speculations. Their passions explode with direct overttness, expressing their real situation and portraying a raw, cruel and brutal world in place of the patriarchally meandering anecdotes of yore. Was Móricz a pupil of Maupassant's? Assuredly he was, but also of Dostoevsky's, whose lantern lights up the dark recesses of the soul. He was a pupil of both, but an imitator of neither, for he was fascinated not so much by literary form and the exciting minutiae of his workshop as by the seething realities around him, of which he also felt impelled immediately to tell his readers.

3

His was a rare artistic power and a rich life-work, which undoubtedly made him the greatest of Hungarian prose writers. But he was not without antecedents. One of the proofs of his greatness is that, though both he and those around him clearly appreciated the revolutionary novelty of his art, he never wished to make a radical break with his predecessors. While embodying in his own art all the utilizable achievements of the great Hungarian *raconteurs* of the nineteenth century, of Jókai, of Kemény and Mikszáth, he, at the same time, surpassed them and created works that were really novel and really modern.

Móricz made his name as a short story writer, and his stories voiced human passions with the impelling force of dramatic writing. From the very first, it was the depth and authenticity of his characters and their social background that struck his reviewers, and the extraordinary dramatic power that made even the apparently most insignificant event exciting and breath-takingly tense. His characters, moreover, were remarkable for their emotional profundity; for though at the outset he too was perhaps a trifle addicted to an over-emphasis of the instinct mechanism, he soon achieved a more differentiated mode of expression and a psychologically more authentic solution.

A typical and characteristic example, dating from his mature period, was the story entitled *Egyszer jóllakni* ("One Square Meal"). The story itself may be said to be no more than a provincial crime item. Its true richness and depth are imparted to it by its author through the fact that a broad scale of human emotions—some individual, some social—is adduced to motivate the fatal deed. The murder committed by János Kis is the outcome of the realization of his own hopeless position in the society of the day, of his passionate revolt against that position, of the exhaustion due to working throughout the day and all through the night—all these are

causative factors at least as much as his love and his jealousy. It is not merely a case of the agricultural proletarian mutinying against the landlord but also of a man who is in love and yet, in consequence of his lowly position, at the mercy of and completely helpless against the rival with whom he cannot compete. The deep psychological perception of the author is evidenced by the fact that it is not the Count whom János Kis stabs on the fateful night; instead he commits what seems an *action gratuite* deed in murdering the unsuspecting gendarme. As the story unfolds, however, the act becomes perfectly logical, for the Count is so high above János Kis that his knife cannot reach him. Hence it is the gendarme whom he must kill—the person who represents and defends the morals, the order and the power of the Count within Kis's own world.

Another outstanding example of the interest Móricz showed in social and psychological problems is *Kiserdei angyalok* ("Angels of Little Grove").* This is actually not the usual terrain for Móricz, the place of the peasant world being here taken by the proletariat of the slums. From the 'thirties, Móricz displayed growing interest in the working class. As in the case of the proletarians of the land, he again sought undiscovered examples of the essential features of existence and purity of character. "Angels of Little Grove" is in one respect a survey of sociographic accuracy revealing the contemporary situation of the inhabitants of the Kiserdő slum, but this sociographic report is rendered plastic by the gift of the writer for breathing life into his characters and situations. In this environment, in a few scenes of masterly choice, he has a twin drama of human destinies enacted. The drama of the hopeless lives of the lad and the girl, which poison even their love, but are—in the wake of the last, moving and symbolic episode—nevertheless brightened by a ray of hope, that of salvation through the solidarity of man.

4

The emergence of the story writer was followed shortly by that of the novelist. The mellifluous and idyllic approach of the early writings now disappeared completely. *Sárarany* ("Muddy Gold"), the previously mentioned first novel written after his success as a short story writer, is a chronicle of wild passions seething around a peasant hero grown to the dimensions of a veritable myth. His next novel, *Az Isten háta mögött* ("At the Back of Beyond"), though no more than a short novel in size, is a masterpiece. It tells the life story of a small-town teacher's wife and her quest of adventure—an excuse for the writer to penetrate into the most secret recesses of a woman's soul

* Reprinted in this issue, pp. 47—65.

(of which this ruggedly masculine writer was a peerless connoisseur), and expose through the pettiness of her fate the hopeless dead-end life of the Hungarian provincial intelligentsia at the beginning of the century.

Móricz enthusiastically supported the revolutions that marked the end of the First World War. He considered that the time had come for a life worthy of human beings to be vouchsafed to the most downtrodden and exploited people, and he expected the revolution to provide it. At the beginning of the Horthy regime, he was persecuted and imprisoned in retaliation, and for a short time not even permitted to publish. For the same reason he was never granted the official recognition he merited. He depended upon his pen and his gifts for a living, but it was only now that his talent broke into full bloom. He wrote his *Légy jó mindhalálig* ("Be Good unto Death"), a novel about childhood that ranks with the best of its kind in world literature. Healthy sentimentality and an eye that incorruptibly perceives the society before it join forces in this story. In portraying the main protagonist, the author has tackled the well-nigh insuperable task of letting the reader perceive and believe in the budding and unknowing genius of the well-behaved, scholarly little boy, who is awakened to the nature of his gifts by the first great pain he has to endure. The features of the plot itself, the solitude of a talented child of poor parentage, his loneliness and his longing for affection at the Debrecen College, the unloving world of grown-ups that surrounds him and at the very first opportunity groundlessly persecutes him—these features are again not significant in themselves, nor particularly eventful. Their real content is imparted by the portrayal of the child's rich spiritual world and the provincial Hungarian town of the end of the century, which is delineated through apt and authentic types.

After this, Móricz began his great historical trilogy, *Erdély* ("Transylvania"), which takes the reader to the world of seventeenth-century Transylvania. From the middle of the sixteenth to the beginning of the eighteenth century, Hungary was split into three parts. The troops of the conquering Turkish Empire occupied its larger, central part, the Hapsburgs, who possessed the title of King of Hungary, held the western and northern parts of the country, while Transylvania was an independent principality, though owing allegiance to the Sublime Porte. Móricz took one of the most interesting periods of the Principality of Transylvania for his subject—the epoch of the rule of Gábor Báthory and of Gábor Bethlen. Báthory was an irresponsible feudal tyrant, who in the pursuit of his ambition to achieve a great-power status for his country led it to the brink of disaster and destroyed its moral, political and economic foundations. Bethlen, the puritan Calvinist ruler

who was his successor, had no other aim than to serve his country and do his duty. As a result his small principality became one of the influential powers of the period, which intervened in the disputes of the Thirty Years' War, repeatedly defeated the armies of the Hapsburg Empire, and kept the Turks away from its frontiers. Gábor Bethlen did what history required him to do, and his every deed thus hastened the advent of the bourgeois order which, in turn, raised the small country to the status of a significant power. Bethlen, however, could not enjoy happiness and contentment as a ruler, for his own life was consumed between two emaciating, mutually exclusive loves. In this novel Móricz presented innumerable magnificent characters and unforgettable situations. In addition, he gave a hitherto unsurpassed model for the language of the Hungarian historical novel, blended from the profoundly understood and deeply felt language of the period, the living idiom of the peasantry, and his own linguistic inventiveness. He did more, however; he used the world and the people whom he had called into existence as subjects for an experiment—to examine what could have become of Transylvania and of Hungary if bourgeois development had been able to proceed along the path marked out by Gábor Bethlen. In the canvas of Bethlen's life Móricz clad the great crisis of his own marriage in the guise of history—for in the twenties his hitherto unclouded marriage became a burden to him and he fell in love with a very beautiful, fashionable actress whom he married after the suicide of his first wife.

History was for him not an escape into the past, but a test for the present and the discovery of the roots of his own period. This was how he came to write *Úri muri* ("The Gentry on a Spree") where, compressed into a couple of uproarious days and nights of the gentry in a provincial town, he tolled the death knell over the whole of Hungary's ruling class. His truly promising hero has no other choice left than to commit suicide. Sentence was pronounced even more sharply and harshly in *Rokonok* ("Relatives"), where one of the corruption scandals which were so characteristic of civic life in the provincial towns of the twenties, provided an opportunity for Móricz to unmask the conduct of a civil service based on the policy of "one good turn deserves another."

5

Summaries in single sentences, such as the above, must perforce make these novels seem as though they were primarily political tracts, whereas that is the last thing they really are. Each carries a wealth of human values,

a great array of beautifully observed characters analysed down to their ultimate motives, and all the differentiated detail of the inner dialectics of human relations. And at the same time—incidentally, as it were, and without too much emphasis—Móricz was a great experimentalist in the sphere of the modern Hungarian novel. In no two of his novels does he use the same method. We have spoken of his broad-flowing trilogy, which is construed with the polyphonous method of the historical novel, and of his novel on a childhood subject, which created a particularly dramatic form of the *Erziehungsroman* (educational novel). In *Úri muri* the traditional anecdotal structure of the Hungarian novel was revived. One of the most perfect of his smaller gems is *Pillangó* ("Butterfly") in which, through the idyllic story of a peasant girl and a peasant boy, the author uses the power of love to rise from a tragic panorama to nearly fairy-tale heights.

Móricz' career, like that of any author, was not without its pitfalls. The novels in which he tried to portray the life of the capital and of its intellectuals were—though they contain several excellent parts—generally below the standard of his writings on village and peasant life. Perhaps it was in acknowledgment of this fact that, beginning with the thirties, he again turned increasingly towards the theme of the peasantry, or to put it more precisely, of the poorest of the poor, the agricultural proletarians and labourers. The result was a series of masterpieces. In *A boldog ember* ("The Happy Man"), a poor agricultural labourer (his model still lives in the part of the country where the author was born) recounts in the first person the story of his youth and his happiness in a past which, to the outsider, could seem nothing but a source of misery and unhappiness. *Életem regénye* ("The Novel of My Life") is a blend of the methods of the novel and of the essay. Here the dire conditions of the Hungary of Francis Joseph are revealed through the story of the first ten years of the author's life and that of his family. In *Árvácska* ("The Little Orphan Girl"), the depth of feeling of a biblical psalmist and the most modern means of description meet to sing a bitter song of mourning over the fate of a foundling. Finally, there was *Rózsa Sándor* ("Sándor Rózsa"), the new historical trilogy whose completion was prevented by the author's death. This novel is a canvas of extraordinary intensity, depicting the life of peasants and gentlefolk in the middle of the nineteenth century, in a style replete with poetic and idiomatic beauty. The plot centres round the figure of a highwayman of legendary fame. Sándor Rózsa was the Robin Hood of the plains, feared by tyrannous landlords, county sleuths and press-gang gendarmes, but to this day living in the folk-songs of the people around Szeged as a champion of the people's cause. In 1848, when

the Hungarian revolution broke out, he and his armed band joined Kossuth's flag and achieved eminence among the fighters for freedom through their daring heroism. This life-story has provided the author with an opportunity to paint a broad picture of contemporary society and at the same time to give descriptions of poetic beauty of the ancient Great Plain, with its unregulated backwaters and primitive conditions of life. The chapters on the Hungarian War of Independence revive the great figures of the period, Kossuth, Petőfi and others, through the author's highly individual and artistically authentic portraits.

6

Móricz died suddenly in 1942, at the age of 63, exhausted by his ceaseless toil, but full of new plans. In the dark night of European fascism he peered anxiously toward his people's future.

His unfinished life-work is one of the grandest edifices of Hungarian literature. It was not built, like the churches of the renaissance, according to strict plans and in obedience to the rules of geometry, but rather like a medieval castle that managed, with the passage of time, to establish harmony between the commands of momentary exigencies, tempers and fears. This too is why his life-work is nearly unsurveyable in its richness. According to one of his commentators, Móricz' characters would suffice to populate a whole county. This county-full of people, indeed, is an image of the entire nation, for one of his strongest features was the playful ease with which he gave his characters three dimensions—a past, a present and a future. All of his figures and his situations breathe the breath of life; their authenticity arises from the very extremity of their nature, and very rarely does he descend to the flatness of photographic faithfulness. He never sought reality in the humdrum, but rather in the extremes that most intensively expressed it.

The conceptual language we have perforce to use has led to the greatest emphasis being devoted to the social content of our author's works, since it is best suited to this linguistic means. But—and this cannot be stressed too often—every work of his is vastly more than this. To illustrate or analyse this is, however, a difficult task if there are so few works at the reader's disposal to authenticate what we say. The most remarkable of Móricz' abilities was his gift for portraying people, and this was best expressed through his dramatic outlook. His characters are thus nearly always set in dramatic situations, so that the full content of their souls may be opened up.

One of the special methods Móricz uses to attain and enhance a dramatic

effect is the *monologue intérieur*. He needed no foreign examples to lead him to a discovery of this method, for he used it contemporaneously with Proust and Gide and a good deal before Joyce, though not in as extreme a form as the latter. On the other hand—and here we touch upon a particularly interesting feature with which contemporary criticism frequently reproached him—while in Western literature psychologizing was the fashion, and in the *monologue intérieur* intellectual *finesse* was the order of the day, Móricz no longer sought the refined intellectual in his characters, but individuals with intensely emotional lives and whose reasoning faculties were not especially developed. He never set the *monologue intérieur* up as an exclusive principle in constructing a novel. The interaction of the outer and the inner world always interested him more than the somewhat artificially geometrical games that could be played with inner contents that were closed within themselves. The interior monologue was with him a favoured and ever more frequently used instrument for the characterization of his cast and the clarification of their position. A rare, masterly example of the exteriorization of an interior monologue is "The Happy Man," one of the greatest of his works.

He liked to laugh and make his readers laugh as much as to make them grind their teeth and cry. It was not his disposition, but rather the world that surrounded him, which was at fault in forcing him more frequently to take the latter course, rather than affording him an opportunity for the former. The intermingling of humour and of tragedy, which we consider to be so modern, was a natural tendency with him. Tragedy looms behind nearly every one of his amusing situations and characters, and, though his tragedies never become ludicrous, the sad fates and situations nevertheless usually conceal a potential for grotesque humour.

Móricz considered himself a realist, and posterity cannot, indeed, call his art by any other name. Zsigmond Móricz has so far been the greatest Hungarian realist *raconteur*. His realism, however, never stagnated, but always tried to push forward. His greatest achievements, perhaps, were those he attained with the extraordinarily swift-moving dramatic structure we have mentioned, which concentrates events and tensions in the climax of a single day or night, as in "At the Back of Beyond", or *Kivilágos kivilirradtig* ("Revelry until Daybreak"). This novel-building technique, which is really that of the short story writer, he also used in novels whose sequence of events was somewhat longer—say two or three days. At the same time, he also made use of the traditional technique of narration (e. g., in "Muddy Gold") as well as of the technique of continuous progress in time with repeated flash-backs to expand and explain events (e. g., in

"Relatives"). Beside the rectilinear structure concentrated on the story of a single character, he was also sure-handed in the polyphonous construction that moves large numbers of people, and he applied this with particular effect in his historical novels. He made a successful attempt at blending the methods of the essay and of the novel, of sociographic, historical studies and of lyrical reminiscences (in "The Novel of My Life"). He also had a try at extreme tricks with time (in *Míg új a szerelem*—"When Love is Young"), where not only the novel takes place on three plains (the present of the narration, the recent past and the associated remote past), but the writer himself appears in the present tense and argues with himself and his readers about the progress of the novel, telling of his physical and spiritual condition, etc.

Apart from the technical experiments and masterly achievements of structure, some of Móricz' works also surprise the reader through the wealth of the means employed. Beyond the interior monologue and the flash-back of which we have spoken, Móricz frequently uses the instrument of parodying style to characterize a person or depict an atmosphere (*Kerek Ferkó, Betyár*—"Ferkó Kerek," "The Outlaw"). He even avails himself of rhythmical prose that occasionally approaches the level of a prose poem, thus maintaining his kinship with the tones both of modern free verse and of exalted sixteenth-century psalmistry (as in "The Little Orphan Girl" and "Sándor Rózsa").

7

While, in the preceding pages, we have concentrated on Móricz' importance for Hungarian literature, his significance for world literature should not be underestimated. At a time when throughout Europe formal toying was the dominant trend in prose, Móricz was able to make progress in matters of form, to try out new paths, without for a moment losing sight of essentials. He did not perfect his art in isolation, for art's sake, but always to serve an end and to investigate with a purpose: to investigate his people and to serve the progress he hoped for. It is hard to find his equal in the Europe of his period—his closest literary relatives, perhaps, are Caldwell, whose brutal exposure of all that he saw in the American South was written with such raw passion, or Hemingway, who expresses conditions of the soul through observations of the body.

His fame in the world comes nowhere near that to which he could justly lay claim. *Habent sua fata—et auctores* we might say, thus acquiescing in what we cannot explain. Nevertheless, perhaps there is an explanation. It is a characteristic fact that throughout Eastern Europe—in the case of

Hungary's neighbours, the Rumanians, Yugoslavs and Czechs as well as the peoples of the Soviet Union—Móricz has in the past few decades become a well-known and respected writer. For them, too, he speaks of a world they know. The social development of Hungary and of the neighbouring peoples was sufficiently similar for a work born here to find an echo there. This has so far been one of the obstacles to the spread of his works towards the West, for every one of his characters and each of his stories is so deeply rooted in the conditions of the Hungarian society of his time, and his thoughts, feelings and reactions to events are so much determined by that world, that this has in itself frequently been an obstacle to the interest of readers who have had no experience of the world in which he was nurtured, so charged with feudal remnants, yet not sufficiently distant to enchant them with its sheer exoticism.

In the thirties, several of his works were published in foreign languages, mainly in German. They did not, however, evoke any considerable response, for the times were not yet favourable for their general acceptance. But this in no way diminishes our conviction that his place is at the side of the great men of world literature. This place now stands vacant, like that of the heavenly bodies whose places the calculations of the astronomers have pointed out, but which the telescope has been unable to see. We are certain that new and more worthy translations will soon serve to reveal to the Western reader the authentic and profoundly human world that is contained in the works of Zsigmond Móricz.

ANGELS OF LITTLE GROVE

A Short Story

by

ZSIGMOND MÓRICZ

I

There were two hundred and forty women in the vast ballroom. Blondes and brunettes, some short, others tall, young ones and old ones—you find all sorts among two hundred and forty women. A hundred more were in the adjoining room, the one with the mirror-lined walls.

And there were altogether ten to twelve males for that multitude of women.

"And yet they know how to lead us a dance, darn them," grumbled Mrs. Kátai, who would never join in the chit-chat of her neighbours, except when she had a chance to put in something venomous and unpleasant.

"The Little Grove folks aren't easily scared," a girl shouted across to her. It was Gitka.

"No, not them," murmured Mrs. Kátai. "Even if you had as many as twelve men to one girl."

Suddenly, the women stopped talking, for they saw the engineer approaching. The engineer—a rosy-cheeked, youthful, pleasant little fellow—was much respected: he was the paymaster.

Two gentlemen accompanied him—visitors who had come just to have a look at this strange ball.

The women hardly ever glanced up; their eyes were bewitched; none of them would ever look to right or to left. As far as they were concerned, anything might happen—they didn't care a rap; they just kept their gaze riveted on their busy fingers.

One of the visiting gentlemen plucked up enough courage to say things like—

"What a galaxy of angels!"
and—

"What a bachelor's paradise, this! . . . That little blonde over there . . . this little brunette here . . ."

But the women never even broke into a smile—dead earnest, they went on looking down at their fingers, which were working indefatigably, never losing a moment.

They were sorting peas.

2

A few odd words from the information the engineer was giving his visitors drifted to the women's ears. But they had hardly any idea of the business they were part of, anyway.

"The Dutch company have realized that Hungary is the world's best seed-growing land. The peas grown here, in particular, are of unrivalled quality. Hungary exports five hundred waggon-loads of peas, all of which are grown here. Especially the flat country of Borsod is eminently suited for peas. Germinating capacity is higher than ninety per cent—and that's something you can't beat anywhere in the world."

"Neither can they bring together so many pretty girls for sorting out peas," one of the visitors remarked.

The engineer, who took things as seriously as did the women and ignored such quipes, went on with his businesslike lecture.

"Here we sort them out and prepare them for distribution in every part of the globe. For use as seed. They're going to be packed in small sacks and paper-bags and will be retailed in China and Africa and Australia—in short, all over the world. Here we only do the selecting—sifting out seed that is defective, stunted, brown or otherwise bad—to supply the firm abroad with uniform, choice-quality produce. Even so, the Hungarian farmer stands to gain by the transaction. For one yoke yields him twelve quintals, and as he gets sixteen pengő's per quintal, one yoke of land will bring in 192 pengő's; whereas, if he were to grow wheat, he would have eight quintals, which, selling at seven pengő's a quintal, would make fifty-six pengő's per yoke.

"And what do these beauties get?"

With these words, one of the visiting gentlemen dived in his pocket and produced a biggish packet of cough-drops.

"Any girls from Little Grove here?"

"Certainly. Here we are," Gitka responded.

"That's for the Little Grove girls."

Gitka snatched the packet of drops, and looked around.

"Little Grove, ho!" she cried.

One out of every two or three women looked up. Gitka threw the drops one by one, and they caught them.

Mrs. Kátai did not look up. The sweet fell on her table and bounced off. She didn't stop to look for it. She was working.

3

Their workday ended at a quarter to seven. Then they began dressing with lightning speed, for closing-time was at seven, and most of them still had to do some shopping for dinner.

A fine autumn dusk had fallen by the time Mrs. Kátai, carrying her cloth shopping-bag, reached Boráros Square. The sun had left some lingering red streaks in the sky, but the yellow light of the street-lamps was drowning out the sky's tints and spreading a motley twilight over the street.

Trams were coming and going, their bells clanking. Lots and lots of trams converged on this square. Here most of them had their terminus, and there were change-stops for several lines.

Gitka was standing at the stop in front of Széchenyi Café, her short locks of auburn hair tumbling from under her small beret. She wore a dignified mien, like some ticket controller, and was inspecting the tram-tickets which small chits of girls were bringing her.

The little moppets were nimble as sparrows, and were picking up from the pavement tram-tickets people had thrown away.

Doing this sort of thing called for a high degree of art, for the policeman was standing there, in the middle of the roadway, all the time, and one could only grab the tickets when he was concealed behind some passing tramcar. Some of the older girls went so far in their recklessness as to jump on to the moving trams and snatch the thrown-away tickets from the floor.

Mrs. Kátai watched these goings-on full of rancour. She took no part in this clandestine organization, and observed Gitka's movements on the sly, as the girl would cast fleeting glances at each ticket and announce whence and whither it was valid or whether it was still good for a transfer in the direction of Ferencváros Freight Yard, immediately handing out the good tickets to the lucky ones among the girls who would make a dash for the right cars and steal a ride to the Little Grove without any compunction.

"Going to land you in jail one of these days, that is. Will serve you right, too!" Mrs. Kátai hissed spitefully.

"You oughtn't to be so envious, you know," Gitka said gravely. "It's bad for your bile."

"Yes," the woman panted so violently that the cheap knitted bonnet, with a tassel on top exactly like the ones little children wear, flapped about on her head. "Pretty things you teach the young! You're the ringleader in this business, always!"

"Go on home. Your kids must be hungry by now."

"But I'm going to call the policeman first."

"That'd be like you," said the girl as she examined more tickets and handed them round.

But the woman gabbled away furiously, foaming at the mouth with malice and envy. There were tickets here for everyone but herself. For she wasn't in on this conspiracy, she had always been an honest person and would never do anything that was against the law, not on any account.

But the Little Grove folk had only one law—the same as that of the sparrows swooping down on food that has dropped on the street, no matter where it came from, and picking up whatever they find good for themselves.

Now, all of a sudden, the sparrows rose in a flurry and were gone in a moment, leaving at the stop only the woman, the girl, and two young fellows who were eyeing Gitka with hungry looks.

The policeman strode up with dignity.

"What are you loitering about here for?"

The boys looked at him pugnaciously. They were bold, for they hadn't a single ticket in their hands.

"You've picked up a ticket from the ground, too," said the policeman, turning red in his anxiety to prove them guilty.

"I've done nothing of the sort. Have no need to," the boy said and, producing a commutation ticket bearing his photo, held it up before the policeman's eyes.

"You live in Little Grove?"

"No. I live in Lónyai Street."

"Then what are you loitering about for here? I'll take you to the police station."

"You can if you like, officer. You'll have to let me go anyway, so why take me along?"

The policeman looked around helplessly. The whole place around him was now empty, but he knew that, as soon as he walked away, the corner would again be swarming in a moment. He couldn't possibly be everywhere at the same time. He'd have to have a hundred pairs of eyes and two hundred arms to nab these pilferers. He looked at the girl standing there like an angel.

For a fleeting moment, his eyes seemed to fasten on the pretty wench, radiant in her girlhood. Not that he cared anything about that. Let him but once catch her red-handed, and he would run her in like any other scum.

At this point a tall, husky young man came along and walked up to Gitka, and the two of them turned into Mester Street.

They vanished from sight.

Mrs. Kátai crossed over to the other stop, took the first Number Twenty-two tram that came along, and rode home.

4

At Ferencváros Freight Yard, she shuffled down from the tram, and on reaching the terminus turned the corner for the Little Grove colony. She dragged herself along wearily and in very low spirits. Beside her, young girls were jumping off and disappearing, like tiny animals or little birds hopping about. She envied them for their youth and cheerfulness. How could anyone in this death colony be young and cheerful?

She went jogging along through the narrow alleys of the shanty town. Day after day she had to walk all the way down these alleys, as she lived in the farthest corner of the colony.

It was the strangest world in the world. Row after row of shanties. Plank hovels the size of a rural outhouse, each fenced with a hedge, so there was some order in the colony. The little alleys and footpaths that ran between the hedges wound about angularly. There were hundreds, nay thousands of these shanties. Inside some of them there was light—the glow of kerosene lamps filtering through the tiny windows. Those were the abodes of the rich. For most windows were dark; at best, there was a faint glimmer from a fire inside, here and there. The mothers came home from their workplaces late in the evening and were now cooking a hasty supper for the children they had left at home. For of children there was a profusion here—two or three to each home; even six or eight were no rarity.

She had not even a shanty of her own. A widowed woman took her in to live with her. She was very old, that other woman, her aged husband had died recently, and as the two women came from the same part of the country, she had taken Mrs. Kátai in as a lodger, so as not to be left alone.

Mrs. Kátai passed by the church.

It was very much like the shanties, built, as they were, of salvaged old planks and boards. The house of God was no better than the dwellings of the flock—as was only fair.

On reaching the hovels with four-figure numbers, she perceived that the girl was there, too. Why, of course, they had made a short cut, those two, and on young legs, at that. They had been quicker than she, who had paid sixteen fillérs for her tram ride.

As she came to her own hovel, she found her two little children out of doors, playing.

"Mummy!" they cried and clung to her skirt. "Have you brought supper?"

Morosely, she shook herself free of the little ones.

"Stop tugging at me! If there's anything to eat, you'll get it."

The old woman stood in the door of the hovel. She was a wizened little thing, toothless and lisping from old age.

Mrs. Kátai just nodded to her, by way of greeting, and went into the darkness. There was no lamp, no fire, as they had neither kerosene nor fuel. She opened her bag in the darkness and fished out some bread, broke off a piece for each child, then shoved a knackwurst each into their little hands.

The kids screamed with delight.

"Knackwurst! Knackwurst!"

She sat down—she could find her seat, even in the darkness—and, with tears in her eyes, began chewing her own portion.

The old woman shambled up to her bed. She saw that the other had brought nothing for her, and, without any rebuke or complaint, just started making her couch. Two beds stood in the room. By and by the eyes got used to the darkness—the tiny window let through some dim light.

"The small hen has laid no eggs," the old woman mumbled. "They say she's not going to any more this winter."

Mrs. Kátai was in no mood to answer. The knackwurst began to feel hot as fire in her hand.

"They didn't give me any ticket for next week," the little old woman said. "From now on, they're going to give tickets for only two weeks each month. They give you nothing but skilly, by the church. Skilly in the morning, skilly at noon, skilly in the evening."

Suddenly, Mrs. Kátai felt the food stick in her throat. Angrily, as if she were going to tame an enraged dog, she pushed that quarter-piece she had left of her knackwurst plus a piece of bread into the old woman's palm, and said:

"There. Eat that!"

For a moment, the old woman stared in mute surprise. Then she began munching the way little children do, who know that one must take one's

time over meat, over nice good horse-meat sausage, to enjoy the heavenly flavour as long as possible.

Only when she had been sucking at it with her toothless mouth for some time did she speak.

"So you too are shaking down to it, after all..."

"Shaking down to what?" Mrs. Kátai snorted.

"Acting charitable, the Little Grove way," said the old woman, and tears began to trickle down her cheeks in the darkness.

5

Gitka didn't go into the hovel yet. *Her* people had a lamp burning. And a fire. And a meal cooking. *She* found supper waiting for her when she came home of an evening.

She just went up and knocked on the door to announce that she was there, then came back and, leaning against a slender acacia by the hedge, tarried with the young man.

"Tell me, Gitka," said the young man, "do you think you could love someone?"

She burst out laughing.

"Why do you ask?"

"I'd like to know." He felt a lump in his throat.

"When you've got a job, you may ask."

"If I had a job..." he groaned.

"You wouldn't care for us, then, would you?"

The youth pulled her towards him, grabbing her arm so vehemently, he nearly tore it from its socket. She didn't even wince.

"What a beast you are!"

She laughed.

"Beast?"

"Yes, beast."

"What kind of beast?"

"The beast of beasts."

"Is that something different?"

"It's the beastliest beast of all."

"Then it's all right." And she laughed even harder. "Do you say that because I'm faithful like a dog?"

He was silent. Of a sudden, his thoughts turned in a new direction. Maybe, she *was* faithful. Who could tell? All he knew was that the whole way homeward every boy turned round and stared at her. For she had some-

thing about the way she moved that seemed to evoke the curiosity of all the young men, and even of the older ones.

And he wished very ardently she were not like that. He had been going with her quite a while, and sometimes it seemed to him that he had caught her, had laid a firm hold on her, and yet she wouldn't stop that swinging, wriggling, tempting hip-walk, that flirtatiousness of hers. And he was getting blacker and blacker in the face with rage because of his bad luck and because he couldn't find a job and didn't possess a blessed penny. Today, as yesterday and the day before yesterday, he was just idling away his time, knocking about, coming and going and talking, and offering his services, and unable to catch hold of a single penny. He hadn't seen the look of half a fillér in two weeks. Last week, he had asked and got a loan of three pengő's—he ought to pay it back. But in vain had he given his word of honour to pay it back—it was just impossible; so he was now compelled to give a wide berth to the Józsefváros district, where his friend lived who had given him the loan. And it was on her that he had spent all that money—he had told her it was his earnings.

Why, he hardly dared go with her, for she was earning money. And a person who earned money knew the value of a livelihood very well, and she fancied herself a bit.

And soon the cold weather would set in. That was the worst of it all. The wind blowing, the snow coming down and crunching under your feet. That was even worse than hunger.

So what was he to do with this girl? She had got into his system, yet it was impossible for him to take her with him, though all he would have to say to her was "Come on." But where to?

What could they do but hurt each other? He with fierce and rude words and grabbing, for he wanted to tear her to bits and kill her, so she wouldn't even have a thought for other fellows; she with her catlike sleekness and her wheedling, as though she wanted to slip from between his hands.

For a long time they stood like that. He was holding her hand, and she let him. That was all. That was all he had of her.

He found it impossible to speak anymore. He just kept thinking, thinking hard, thinking terrible thoughts. Thoughts that, should they ever materialize, would cause everything to be devoured in a blazing fire. First the Little Grove colony, then the whole city, and the whole world too.

Gitka's mother called from the house:

"Gitka!"

For a while, they made no reply.

"Gitka, my girl! Are you there?"

"Yes. What is it?"

"Come in and eat."

"Right-o. Coming, both of us."

"I'm not coming," he muttered.

"Yes, you are," she said, laughing.

"Not me."

"Well, then I won't either."

Gitka's mother put two and two together.

"You can come along, Jani," she called. "There's plenty of food."

"Then it's all right," the boy muttered. "In that case you can eat your fill, all of you."

Gitka giggled.

"When you get a job, you'll help too."

With this she seized the boy's hand and began pulling him the way kids do.

He felt terribly hungry, and thought that Gitka was right there: if he ever had money, he would throw a big blow-out. Those three pengōs, he hadn't spent them on himself, either—he had only bought himself a glass of mulled wine, as there had been a nip in the air and he hadn't wanted to go near her chilled and shivering with cold. Then he had brought along everything that could be bought for three pengōs. And he hadn't been inside the house since then, and so her parents would believe, perhaps, that he wasn't too badly off. For the only bad thing was when people *knew* you to be a beggar. If they had a high opinion of you, you might even afford being pretentious.

So she had her way, and dragged the boy into the hovel.

The little room was stoked up hot as an oven. You'd scarcely been in there a couple of minutes when you began to perspire.

"Good evening."

There was Gitka's father, the upholsterer, and her mother, a woman who was still quite good-looking, and Gitka's two younger sisters. Four of them. And now, with the newcomers, there were six in that small room.

"Never mind. There's room for all of us," said the upholsterer, who had only one leg, having parted with the other in the war.

The boy sat down on the edge of the bed. Gitka seated herself next to him, and across the table, facing him, were her father and mother. The man was sitting in a big arm-chair he had brought along from some place where he had once been given a job to do and where they had wanted to get rid of the chair. He had repaired it, and it was a very smart arm-

chair and would have made a fitting piece of furniture in the parlour of any respectable home.

"Father's sitting like a king in that arm-chair."

"You can have it for twelve pengő's, my boy, and keep what you get for it above that price."

That got a laugh. The upholsterer thought they considered it too expensive, so he went into an animated discussion of its merits, explaining that it was stuffed with horsehair, and that its brocade, now he had cleaned, washed and darned it, was worth more even than a new one, as real toffs called it an antique. And it was so strong it wouldn't go to pieces in thirty years, not even in this place, where his wicked brats insisted on hopping about on it when he was out. In short, it was well worth seventy or eighty pengő's at the least. True, he had found no one who would buy it. An antique dealer had offered to take it for eight pengő's, but he wouldn't let it go for that little—rather, he'd sit in it himself. He was willing to sell it for twelve and not a fillér less, not even to Jani, though he was very fond of him.

Mama brought in the food. The whole room filled with an extremely appetizing smell of goulash. The young man didn't say a word, for the smell had aroused in him an unholy hunger, and he thought to himself that, if he now had to leave without eating, he would go and hang himself.

Plates were got out, and knives, forks and spoons. Mama cut slices of bread, wonderful, big slices of bread. You felt your head turn and you almost fainted with giddiness, for hunger is most biting when the scoff, the nice, good scoff, is right there before your mouth and hasn't yet got inside it, between your teeth.

That moment came round too. He didn't even notice when he began wolfing that wonderful goulash. It had potatoes in it, too, and its gravy tasted so good he thought he would die of pleasure. In general, everything put him in mind of death, and he didn't speak, just kept tucking it away. The only thing that gave him a little trouble was his desire to hide his terrible ravenousness from these people. But try as he might to eat slowly, he was still ten times as fast as the others. He found it impossible to chew his meat, just gobbled it up like a spoonbill. After that, he waited a couple of seconds, then swallowed another dollop. He looked neither to the right nor to the left; he dared not look up at anyone before he had somewhat appeased the wild beast in him, for he was afraid they grudged it him, and if he saw that, he might throw his spoon down and bolt. For even if you had been feeding off nothing but crumbs and offals for two weeks, yet you retained your self-respect.

Not a word did he speak while Gitka heaped his plate with a second helping. Only when she had already filled it, did he say softly:

"Matter of fact, I'm not hungry."

He owed that much to her; since she had brought him in here and treated him, it was only fair that he should try to put on side.

6

After dinner, the company were in high spirits. They had cleaned up everything. The kids ate their fill every day; but, then, kids are just the sort of creatures that *can* eat. They had even got the stew-pan on to the table, these moppets, and licked it clean.

Gitka alone was less hungry than the rest. And her mother too. Mothers, in general, are never hungry. *They* can take their fill by watching their children eat. But her one-legged husband, he had been tucking in heartily, without speaking a word while there was anything on his plate. He had eaten up an awful lot of food, although he had one leg less to feed.

At last, they had done away with all the food down to the last bite and the last crumb, and they heaved a sigh of relief.

"In the war," the upholsterer said, "whenever the field-kitchen failed to turn up, there were times when we would get no grub whatever for as many as three days. And the tins, you couldn't touch them, for my best chum got a bullet put through his head for opening one with his bayonet and wolfing the stuff out of it. Now, you wouldn't want to get hit by a bullet from your officer's revolver, would you," he said, chuckling. "So we just kept fasting good and solid."

There was nothing the upholsterer liked so much as talking about the war, especially when he was replete. On these occasions, everyone was expected to listen to him, and the children had to keep silent; for the upholsterer always had his crutch handy. And he also liked to talk about how he should have been given the artificial leg that was his due and how they always tricked him out of it.

Then he related where he had earned the money to buy that evening's meal.

"I've done all his arm-chairs and sofas for him. That job was worth a hundred and twenty pengöös all right, and he gave me four. But let him go to any big firm, and what do they do? They tear the cretonne off and make him buy a new cloth, claiming that the old one is useless. They rip it off before his very eyes. 'You can see for yourself,' they say to him, 'how it all goes to pieces. Why, nothing but an old rag, that's what it is.'

And the new stuff, it costs thirty to forty pengő's a yard. He'd have had to pay, not a hundred and twenty, but three hundred pengő's, he would. But then I come and say to him, 'Look here, sir,' (he's a lawyer, by the way) 'I'm going to fix this up for you, so's it'll be a real antique.' It mustn't show any wear and tear. I peeled it off and took it apart and sewed it up; and his wife, she cut one pengő off the five pengő's we'd agreed upon in advance, because I had got it done too quick, she said."

The upholsterer laughed.

"And even that wasn't bad. I bought four pounds of meat, and the missus went and cooked a fine goulash, and that wasn't bad either."

The young man, now that he had eaten his fill, laughed with him. But he said:

"Still, it's wrong to spoil the market the way you do. You ought to have charged that bastard at least thirty pengő's."

"That's easier said than done," the upholsterer retorted. "You should remember that nobody's got money nowadays. If I'd charged thirty pengő's he wouldn't have had it done, for his wife made a fuss even about those five pengő's and lamented that her husband was earning nothing these days and was even losing money on his clients. Well, I thought to myself, I earn even less than he does, so why not let him live as well as me. It was a fishy business anyway, for that cloth is such worn-out junk, it won't last a year if they sit down on it—and they *will* sit on it now—so next year another upholsterer will make some more money on it. That's the way you got to look at things nowadays, young man! You see, we Little Grove folks can't make much of a hue and cry, for, when it comes to that, we're not supposed to undertake any job at all, because they say it's botchwork. Botchwork... How should I be a botcher when I've been doing nothing but this kind of artistic work all my life? Only I haven't got any licence. Let's help one another—I help the lawyer, and maybe he helps others. For he said, that lawyer, that he had lots of poor folks among his clients and took no money from them. Why, while I was working at his place, one poor chap after the other came and begged him to prevent their being evicted from their homes. The only way to live in this world of today is to help the other chap whenever you can, and not to make an enemy of him."

The young man couldn't think of anything offhand to oppose to this argument. Kindness, he thought to himself, was the worst disease a man could have, but, at least, it was a disease for which you needed no doctor.

"I had even worse luck," said the upholsterer's wife. "The teacher sent for me—the one, you know, that's been given a council flat just recently.

And I also fetched Walter, the house-painter, for him. He told me to go and find him some cheap house-painter in Little Grove, so I went and got him Walter. Well, he painted his two rooms and kitchen, and he did a beautiful job—something amazing. For sixteen pengős. Worked for him three days, for that flat was like a stable and now it's a real paradise. And I scrubbed the floors all over the place, and he gave me eighty fillérs. So I said to him, 'How do you expect me to accept eighty fillérs, sir, for all that work? Why, you saw, didn't you, what a lot of work I had to do? All the dirt I had to carry out of this house, and how I worked my fingers to the bone with scrubbing.' Look, my hands are still sore from the lye. For he kept saying, 'Don't be stingy with the lye, please.'"

The look in the young man's face turned still gloomier.

"And he gave you eighty fillérs? . . . He ought to be hung, that bastard!"

"You don't want to hang anyone," the upholsterer said. "What's the use of hanging a fellow? If you hang him, he won't even give you eighty fillérs."

They chatted on and on. Gitka listened and never broke in on the conversation. She was sitting demurely on the edge of the bed, holding the young man's hand, so he should stop speaking and keep quiet like herself, for one must not exasperate the old folks.

But he couldn't stand listening to these things, and, perceiving that everyone there was anxious to go to bed as soon as possible, now they had had dinner, and so as not to keep the lamp burning too long, he turned to the girl:

"Won't you come outside into the moonlight a bit, Gitka? It's a nice, mild night."

So they got up and went out of the house, where mama instantly began making the beds.

7

It was a lovely evening; there were plenty of stars up in the sky, but no moon.

"How about a walk?" he said, and went on ahead, for he felt ill at ease in between those little houses. He thought one couldn't even talk here—those hovels stood huddled so close together that the faintest whisper would be overheard.

"All right," she said. "I'll go a little way, so we don't keep people from sleeping."

They walked as far as the tall board fence of Saint Stephen's Hospital, on the embankment.

From this point, in the dim light of the night, one could survey the whole of Little Grove. On the left stood the trees which had given this settlement the name of Little Grove, while at their feet stretched the sprawling area cluttered with tiny hovels, the quiet abode of so many poor people. The whole world was now asleep. Here and there, a light shone in some home whose tenants had probably returned from work at a late hour and were now eating supper—if they had any at all. Silence reigned; not a sound of squabbling anywhere.

The young man, Jani, put his arm round the girl and asked her:

"Gitka, tell me, could you care for a fellow?"

She burst out laughing.

"You've already asked me that one today. Why do you ask? Found a job, perhaps?"

For a while, he remained silent.

"No," he said. "That's why I'm asking you. I want to know if you can care for a fellow even if he hasn't got a job."

"How come you can't find a job?"

"That's what I'd like know myself," he muttered. "But it'll be winter soon, and I don't think one can find any job till next spring. I'm a mechanic and I've got a driver's licence. In our trade, you have nothing but lay-offs. They have natty keepers sitting in glass cubicles at the factory gates, and you can't get through to see an engineer, for the gatekeeper won't let you in. Yet those factories are such a wonderful sight, inside. There are fine, smooth roads and green patches of grass in between the workshops, and if you get a job, they give you quarters. But for those who can't get through the gate—nothing!"

For a long time, they didn't speak.

"Gosh, if I could only get a flat like that! I wouldn't ask you if you could care for me. I'd simply tell you, 'Gitka, come with me. I have my flat in there, inside some factory, so you come along and share my life!'"

He relapsed into a silence so bitter that she raised her arm and placed it on his shoulder.

At that, he was overcome with bitter happiness and said:

"But as things are, what am I to tell you, Gitka? Shall I tell you to love me when I'm no better than a stray dog? I can't even feed you with hopes of America, for even in America, tens of thousands of jobless workers are marching in the streets. And, anyway, how can a chap like me get to America? If I had as much money as the price of a ticket—why, I could set up a little repair shop in some basement-flat rightaway, and wouldn't be afraid of life. For your father is right—a poor man works

cheap, but in one way or another he earns enough to buy his dinner. But I'm not just poor, I'm a loafing beggar. Though I haven't even learned how to beg yet. Often when I walk in the street and see how everyone here in Pest has his fur-lined coat and smart shoes, I feel like tripping up one of those toffs and giving him a good hiding!"

The girl shuddered.

"I hope you won't do anything foolish, Jani darling," she said.

"That's just the trouble with me—I'm no more good at doing anything foolish than anything clever. I'm just one of the crowd. I'm like mould on the wall. I'm rubbing along somehow and can't either die or take care of myself, and yet I'm alive."

The weather was so mild they got tired of standing, so they sat down each on a separate stone, which the Little Grove folks had not yet carried off for building hovels.

They were facing some empty hovel sites.

"There are less huts here than last week," Jani said.

"Yes, they've removed some families. Going to pull down all of Little Grove by next spring. They've already given notice to those who draw wages, and only let stay until next spring those who are complete paupers and have no steady pay. They've been threatening to pull down our shed too, because I've got a steady job in peas."

Gnashing his teeth, the boy drew the girl to himself, as though he were afraid that they might be separated from each other by the powers that be.

She yielded to his embrace, for she too was afraid and felt sorry—too sorry for words—for this decent, handsome boy, who was so embittered.

"What shall I do, Gitka? You're a clever girl, tell me, what shall I do? I don't want to become bad. I don't want to be a crook; I don't want to steal or to cheat. I want to work and work hard, so I can keep you and my children. But what can I do when there isn't any work to be had; or if I can't get it when there's work to be had?"

Tears welled up from his embittered heart and fell upon the girl's cheeks.

She got very much scared for him, for she realized that all he said was true and could not be helped. Nor could she tell him that he should come and live with them, for there was scarcely room for themselves in that little hut, which would be theirs only till next spring, anyway. She did the only thing she could do—she hugged him passionately, and covered his face with kisses.

He misunderstood, and hugged the girl with growing vehemence in the dry autumn grass.

When they came round, they felt terribly ashamed.

She pulled herself together and drew away from him. He sensed this, and flew into a towering rage.

"What are you up to?" he said soberly. "Running away, is that it?"

"Don't talk rubbish."

"What do you expect me to say?... You never can tell what a girl's up to the next moment... Now you're going to give me the slip and tomorrow, when we meet in the street, you'll cut me dead."

"What's the use of all this talk?"

He grabbed her by the shoulder and shook her.

"You're just as much of a slut as all the rest."

"How many others have you said that to?"

He gave a start. Could she possibly know something?

"Gitka... Listen... Let's die..."

She wanted to jump to her feet, but he wouldn't let her.

"Let me go or I'll call for help."

He said, with a rattle in his throat:

"Ah, I see... I see, you're just fooling around with me, but you don't love me."

"So it's now you tell me that? That's a good one."

"Tell me, what's the use of this life?... True, yours isn't so cursed—you've got your father and mother, and your father is a clever man. He can do something in his trade, but I can't do even that—I can't do any upholstering for lawyers... The factories are closed to me... Well, if you aren't coming, I'll go alone."

"Where to?"

"I'll find out where. Maybe I can find a spot somewhere along the bank where there isn't any policeman standing round. And no life-boats either."

"You're crazy."

"Maybe I am. Yet it's not my fault if I am. I too have parents, they had me taught my trade, bound me as an apprentice, for they believed I'd be able to stand on my feet... Now I'd be happy if I were back in the old village, chewing corn bread..."

"You shouldn't say such terrible things. God will provide for you, too."

"Yes. I only trust God will give me enough sense to be able to end this life of mine."

"That's not what God has given you sense for, but for finding a piece

of bread even in your greatest need. The birds also know how to get their food, and man should do so, too."

"God has provided for birds better than for man. And if a bird drops from the tree because it's frozen dead, at least it hasn't got a pain gnawing at its heart like I have, for I've got to leave you, and that's what's killing me."

They relapsed into silence.

He began hugging her again, with growing vehemence. He clung to her as desperately as a drowning man to a straw: this girl was the one link that bound him to life.

"Can you care for a chap?" he asked anew, doggedly. He couldn't explain himself why he was harping on this question. As if it might save him, as if it might shed light on the meaning of life.

"How do you mean?"

"I mean love."

"Love!" said the girl. "What use is that to poor folks?"

"What use, eh?... You're just a slut... If you feel no love, why did you give yourself to me?"

"I didn't!" she panted, struggling to free herself from his grip.

"You didn't, eh?" he snarled. "What did you do, then?"

"I took you myself!" she cried through her clenched teeth.

He was so utterly taken aback that he loosened his grip on the girl.

"You did!" he panted. "Take me for yourself, did you?... So that's why you fed me! To put me in the right mood? Damn you!"

He seized her by the throat and started to throttle her.

She choked and grew limp, at which he became terrified and let go of her.

Once more, they were lying side by side, prostrate and desperate.

He was staring in front of him mutely, then into the horrible woods of misery.

"You're right... Take the good things for yourself... The rest—you can leave to others..."

He let go of her completely and moved apart as if he were afraid of her.

She remained silent for a long time, then pulled herself together and said:

"I felt sorry for you."

A shudder passed through him. He felt as though the earth beneath him had turned over.

A girl had felt sorry for him! Who was he that he should have sunk so low that a girl could feel sorry for him and give him out of pity what she ought to have given for joy and happiness?

If he but had a cigarette just now, he could have a smoke, and then he might feel relieved. Instead, he must sit, parched inside and with burning lips, on top of a dung-hill, in the night, where a short while ago life's greatest desire and happiness had been fulfilled and had gone up in smoke.

All his energy had gone out of him. As far as he was concerned, she could go away now, wherever she wished, for he knew that he didn't care for her anymore, would never be thinking of her again. It was all over between them.

The girl was making unfamiliar, strange movements. Rustling, grating sounds came from under her hands. He looked her way and saw that she was plucking dry grass. He didn't understand what she was doing.

She applied herself with growing diligence. Rising on her knees and crawling on and on after the grass, she tore and pulled up the two-feet high, rank weeds.

At last, he burst out:

"What's that for?"

Her reply was soft and gentle:

"For fuel," she said.

Now he understood. Even at this dreadful moment, this girl was thinking about work. She was working. Earning. Those dry weeds she was pulling out were worth some money. But what money! The mere fraction of even a fillér. And yet it did have *some* value. It could be used.

He flew into a new rage. Right now, when he saw nothing he could do but put an end to his own life as speedily and as thoroughly as possible, she was thinking of preparing breakfast. She was stealing grass from someone else's lot, from the common lot, and was providing herself with fuel.

Once more, the blind urge to kill her flared up in him. She was the one he must kill, for she wasn't doing that for love; it was not he that would eat the food in the morning; not for his sake was she plucking the grass with which she would cook the grub. And yet he checked himself, for he sensed the woman in her—womanhood, working and looking after other people to the very last.

His words were meant to offend and irritate as he lashed out:

"I'll tell the policeman! I'll get you locked up!"

"You know, Jani, there's a poor woman in this settlement, with a lot of kids and not a bit of fuel. Better get busy yourself and gather some brushwood for her. We'll put the lot at her door."

He was shocked. Aghast.

He would never have thought such a thing possible. He didn't even know the person for whom she intended that fuel.

He remained silent for a while. Then he got busy himself plucking the weeds along the river bank. They were slender and prickly and full of thorns, those weeds. Good enough for fuel, though. They would burn all right.

"Just as we are going to burn in hell," he muttered.

"In hell!" she said. "I don't want to go there!" And she laughed.

Her laughter was short and ringing. And she added:

"But if I should go there after all—it won't be me that has to go picking brushwood there. It'll be waiting for me, picked and ready."

The lad jumped to his feet and made a dash for the hospital fence.

He grabbed a board and wrenched it free.

He kicked it with his feet and tore and split it with his hands.

Alarmed, the girl watched him do it, and wondered if all that crashing and crackling might not be heard in the hospital. No, everything went all right.

Jani split up the plank and flung the pieces on top of her bundle of faggots.

Gitka laughed.

"Come on now. Let's take this to her hut!"

So, gathering it up in their arms, they took it away and, on tiptoes, laid it at Mrs. Kátai's door. The girl carefully put the brushwood on top and the wood underneath, so as to conceal the board from view, should anyone happen to be looking that way in the morning.

Translated by István Farkas

1933

EXCAVATIONS IN BUDA CASTLE

by

LÁSZLÓ GEREVICH

In the ten years between 1948 and 1959, the exploration of Buda Castle, the royal residence of medieval Hungary was carried out at considerable cost and with the cooperation of numerous scientists. This work has assumed particular importance, owing not only to the outstanding historical significance of the place itself and the circumstance that no excavations had ever been undertaken here before, but also on account of the unprecedented scale of dilapidation which had affected Hungary's historic and artistic monuments.

From the 14th century onward, the Hungarian Royal Court resided mostly at Buda Castle, which was linked by numerous ties with the ramifying complex of the Anjou kingdoms and possessions as well as with Bohemia and Poland. At the time of Emperor Sigismund, it was the seat of power of the Holy Roman Empire; under King Matthias it became the political centre of Central Europe and continued as such during the reign of the next sovereign, Ulászló of the House of Jagello. The decline of Buda began amid the chaotic conditions into which the country was thrown following the disastrous Battle of Mohács and became complete with the Turkish occupation in 1541. The extensive work of exploration, involving an area of approximately forty acres, has thrown light on the architecture, art, and cultural life of that period of development and flourishing, which had lasted for some three hundred years. The excavations were followed with eager interest by the Hungarian public, to whom Buda Castle is what the Tower of London is to the English, the Louvre to the French, and the Burg to the Austrians.

The excavations have yielded much useful information, which is all the more welcome since royal archives as well as municipal public records had been destroyed. Thus, in addition to furnishing information on medieval architecture, art and industry, the finds enable us to draw inferences

concerning a number of historical events, or at least help us identify the scenes where they took place. There was a continuous correlation between the evolution of the Castle and that of the town; its nature changed from time to time as a consequence of class antagonisms and successive shifts in power.

The site of present-day Buda, the part of the Hungarian capital situated on the right bank of the Danube, as well as that of Pest on the left bank, acquired importance right after the conquest of Hungary by the Magyars, as a centre of the leading tribe. In the urban nuclei of several parts of the capital, such as Pest, Kelenföld, Kispest, and Óbuda, the first settlements of the Hungarian era can be traced back to the 10th century. Here Ishmaelites (Bulgarians from the Volga region) started trade and primitive local industries. They established themselves on the Pest side, in a fortress which the Romans had built as a bridge-head on the hostile bank, in order to control an important ancient east-west trade route. In the 11th century, these settlements assumed a more urban character, as evidenced by fragments of elaborately carved stone monuments stemming from churches.

The first royal castle was built in Óbuda at the beginning of the 13th century—its quadrangle stood in the vicinity of an important ecclesiastical institution of the town, the deanery of Óbuda. By that time, Pest had grown into a rich commercial township. Its rapid advance was checked for over half a century by the ravages of the Tartar invasion in 1241–42. At that time, Castle Hill itself became almost entirely depopulated. A small Romanesque royal chapel may have stood on the site of the present Matthias Church.

Buda Castle owed its existence to the need to resist a renewed invasion, which remained a permanent threat for many years after the Tartars had withdrawn from Hungary—as was plainly set forth by Béla IV, rebuilder of the country, in various written records, including letters addressed to the Pope. The entire Danube line, which provided efficient defence in the fight against the Tartars, was fortified, especially at the most vulnerable points, such as the Northern Danube Loop and the crossing-place below the southern tip of Castle Hill, where a fort was built on the mile-long ridge which runs parallel with the river at a height of 130 to 160 feet. An authentic record testifies to the completion of the Castle in 1255 and to the resettlement of the Castle Hill district. This long-established fact was supplemented by some vivid and revealing details when the earliest battlements of the castle were unearthed at the beginning of the 1950's. The solemn words of the record had led us to presuppose the strongest and finest type of 13th century battlements. However, the discov-

ered ruins show us that it conformed to the realities of the years after the Tartar invasion, when there was a scarcity of building material and transport as well as of masons. The wall was constructed of locally quarried stone and hardened clay and was surmounted, in the conventional style of the 13th century, by horseshoe towers placed 40—50 yards apart. The construction was extensive but shows evidence of improvisation.

Although excavation work was concentrated on the Royal Palace, the archaeological opening up and architectural analysis of other demolished or war-damaged buildings of the Castle district were also undertaken either previously or simultaneously. Several stone fragments of the 13th century town, architectural elements dating from the middle of the 13th century, have come to light, furnishing evidence that the Church of Our Lady (1255—69)—now Matthias Church—, the town residences, and the royal palace were the work of one and the same stone-cutters' workshop. Adaptation of the architectural and ornamental forms that prevailed in the lodges of Cistercian and other orders led to the development of an early Gothic style, which spread all over Central Europe about the middle and in the second half of the 13th century. One of its characteristic features is the flat, relief-like application of simple, floral ornamental elements.

However, the royal palace on the southern tip of the hill and the population inhabiting the elongated, boat-shaped ridge were connected not only by ties of architecture and art, but also of organization. The defensive pattern of 13th century administration is evident from the fact that the highest authority was the *rector*, appointed by the King; this office was converted and divided only much later into that of elected magistrate and of royal castellan. It devolved upon the latter to confirm the elected magistrate in his office.

Data obtained from the excavations have led to a new approach to various historical questions. According to sundry records, the first settlers of the Buda Castle district were Germans; by contrast, archaeological evidence seems to suggest that the majority of the inhabitants were not new settlers, but remnants of the former population of Pest, which had been completely destroyed by the Tartars.

Finds of simple white sgraffito earthenware, decorated with spiral designs and generally used at the time in Hungary, were recovered from the earliest layer, confirming the existence of a population on Castle Hill and suggesting the presence of local craftsmen. Gray sgraffito and slow-glazed Austrian ceramics have also been found. The finds display the conventional features of craftsmanship in 13th century Hungary, while material characteristic of German regions is missing. The 13th and 14th century layers

of the Palace have also yielded fragments of costly objects, such as Syrian glass goblets and ornamental vessels, pointing to the occasional presence of royalty and their entourage.

Unfortunately, the only remaining evidence of the existence of the Royal Palace in 13th century Buda is supplied, apart from a few fragments of carved rocks and foundation walls, by untouched layers and stone fragments. The first major work may have been undertaken under the Anjou, who caused both Buda Castle and Visegrád Castle to be enlarged into palaces suitable for accommodating the King and his court. The centre of this palace was situated around the small southern court. The banked-up surface layer that covers the rocks and the reservoirs hewn into the rocks dates from the early 14th century. As neither the foundation wall nor the ashlar wall of the eastern façade contains any architectural elements that might help to date them, we are compelled to resort to inferences based on indirect archaeological evidence and old descriptions. Under the Anjou kings (1308—1395), the royal residence was composed of two parts—a U-shaped wing, and a simple rectangular building. The István Tower, well-known from contemporary records, rose at the southern end of the west wing of the Anjou building. On its ground floor, a windowed room adjoining a simple, cross-vaulted hall can be reconstructed reasonably well. The simple artistic forms can be traced with greater certainty to the building activity that went on in the middle of the 14th century. On this evidence, it is reasonable to trace the names "István (Stephen) Tower" and "István Castle," which crop up in contemporary records, to Prince Stephen, younger brother of Lajos the Great (1326—1382).

SIGISMUND OF LUXEMBOURG'S "FRESH PALACE"

While little remains at the original place, *in situ*, a good many of the carved stones and architectural elements, which have been recovered from the débris that was used as filling, can be ascribed to the second half of the 14th century. These finds, however, are insignificant compared with the multitude and richness of form of the typical stone fragments from the Sigismund era. This fact tallies with the frequently recurring passages in historic records which suggest that it was Sigismund (and, after him, of course, King Matthias), who actually built the Royal Palace of Buda, and that there were no noteworthy buildings on the site before. An analysis of the ground-plan also seems to warrant this conclusion. The monumental harmony and logic of the latest ground-plan opened up by us must have been conceived by a highly gifted architect of Emperor and King Sigis-

mund's, who converted the rather confined building of the Anjou era into a spacious residence suitable for the greatest ruler of the time. Like the era and Sigismund's court, the Emperor himself was actuated by conflicting emotions—the sovereign who had John Huss burnt at the stake, and the great builder who evinced an insatiable thirst for the pleasures of life were one and the same person. In place of the central block and disconnected wing of the earlier building, a huge castle was now erected which took advantage of and followed the tapering, trapezoidal shape of the end of the plateau and was given rhythmic proportions by cross wings and by courts enclosed by them.

The 150-yard north-south axis of the buildings, narrowing southwards, became the principal line of the western wing, the foundation of the plan elaborated under Sigismund. The eastern wing was adapted to the site of the earlier building block. The original area was now found to be too narrow for the vast palace designed for Sigismund, hence additional substructures had to be built. On the northern side, facing the river, a court enclosed by buildings, and some fortifications were added. This was the famous "Fresh Palace." As evidenced by the carved stone relics, the grand-scale building project, which was in progress during almost the whole of Sigismund's reign, began with this palace that surrounded the court. This part of the castle has disappeared without a trace, except for buried portions of the "Rump Tower," which stood in the south-western corner of the quadrangular court. The original purpose of this tower is unknown, but presumably it had no connection with the residential tower, unless it was used as a dungeon. The tower is of a type such as to suggest that Sigismund may have had in mind the purpose of his father, Charles IV, in building Karlstein, which was to raise a safe and sumptuous stronghold in a virtually sacred environment for the protection of the imperial insignia. That unique castle consists of huge towers showing a strong resemblance to the "Rump Tower."

The likelihood of such a connection is all the more plausible in that the most extensive group of 14th century carved fragments from Buda Castle buildings display a direct relationship with the period of Czech Gothic architecture preceding the Parler style. The former greatly contributed towards the development of late Gothic style in Central Europe. The earliest Czech architecture in this style appeared in the Hradsin of Prague and at Karlstein Castle itself. The next wave in architectural style, which spread a few decades later and was associated with the new leaders in the construction of the Prague Cathedral, the Parler family, exerted a decisive influence on the development of late Gothic architecture in Hungary too.

After work had stopped at the lodge of Prague in 1386, some of the architects and stone-masons who left the town were re-employed in the building of Buda Castle, of the royal residence of Visegrád, or of Matthias Church, apparently already in the last years of the century. Numerous forms of the stone fragments from the palace confirm this assumption. By contrast, the last phase in the construction of Buda Castle, under Sigismund, the characteristic relics of which are the complementary southern building encompassing István Tower and the towers on the elaborately carved gate of the fortifications, was independent of the trends followed by Czech, and even by Central European, Gothic architecture.

In addition to the local workshop, contemporary records tell us, a large number of French and German craftsmen were employed on this vast project. These manifold influences produced a new style of ornamentation founded on the aesthetic adaptation of Gothic forms, spherical patterns and bodies, several elements of which go back to the 14th century and as far west as France. This trend, nevertheless, gave rise to a new combination, fresh variations, in fact a new style, which formed the basis of the further development of Gothic architecture in Hungary.

In the late 1420's, work on the royal palace was gradually stopped before it was completed, and the craftsmen of the royal workshop were transferred to other projects at Pozsony (Bratislava) and elsewhere. To sum up: on the site of the plain royal residence of the Árpád and Anjou eras, Sigismund erected an imposing palace which, in accordance with its political importance, was one of the finest buildings in contemporary Europe—that much emerges clearly from an examination of the pattern of the ground-plan and from an analysis of the style of the architectural fragments which the excavations have revealed; and this is supported by the evidence of contemporary records and of the letters of much-travelled, erudite foreign diplomats. In a letter to Sigismund, Ambrogio Traversari, an Italian monk, wrote: "It was with utmost amazement and surprise that we beheld the palace Your Majesty has built, a palace so stupendous that at first we could but marvel, finding no words to express our admiration."

MATTHIAS CORVINUS AND THE RENAISSANCE

From the viewpoint of the history of art, the palace continued to increase in significance, reaching its heyday under King Matthias (1458—1490). Work was resumed on the abandoned project of fortifications and buildings at the time of Matthias' union with the Neapolitan princess Beatrice of Aragon in 1476. Afterwards, a new renaissance palace was erected, though

mostly the old buildings were rebuilt. At least one third of the vast material of stone relics disclosed by excavation consists of renaissance elements, fragments of masonry, windows, reliefs, and statues. This was the first renaissance palace of truly impressive proportions this side of the Alps, though records exist which speak of earlier Hungarian buildings in pure renaissance style. Italian masters and architects flocked into the court of King Matthias, who was reputed to be a munificent patron of arts and crafts, and the quality of the carving justifies ranking the Hungarian King's palace with Italian ducal palaces then under construction, at Urbino and elsewhere. The only difference appears to have been that the royal palace of Buda was of much larger proportions; yet it did not show less architectural originality in its execution. The masters who worked on it came from the second generation of the Italian Renaissance and thus belonged to the great school of pioneers. Their renown lay in the masterly application of achieved results. Letters and other records, also Vasari's book, supply the names of many masters who worked in Hungary; however, only a few of their works have been identified. Architectural direction is attributed to Chimenti Chamicia. The list of sculptors includes such names as Benedetto de Majano and Giovanni Dalmata. The latter is now known to have produced not only the marble altar of Diósgyőr and the fountain at Visegrád; a number of relics furnish convincing evidence to the effect that he also worked at Buda.

A number of terracotta statues from the workshop of the Robbias, of which there remain, unfortunately, only some tiny fragments—mere splinters in fact—must have belonged to the ornaments of the palace. Fragments of a few antique pieces (including those of a marble Bacchus, medals, *etc.*) are valuable from the point of view of cultural history; they have been discovered in the layer formed by the first demolition of the palace and must have been part of the collection of Sigismund and, after him, of Matthias. The collection of antiques in Italianate style afforded a theoretical basis for the classical trend of art; indeed, a revival of the Roman artistic heritage of Pannonia imparted to the Hungarian Renaissance a special flavour.

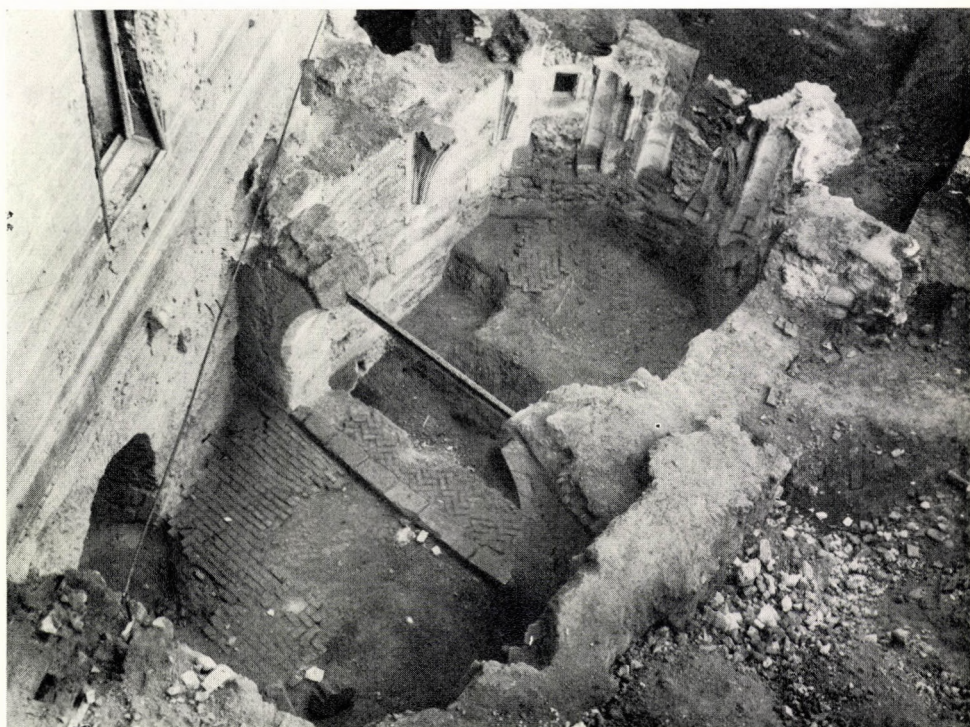
Besides the buildings, the most precious treasures of art were early Renaissance bronze casts, of which there was such a great number as to have formed a veritable collection; some of these, e. g. the statues of Emperor Sigismund and of the three Hunyadis, were undoubtedly made in Hungary; the rest, at least some of the minor bronzes, were produced in Italy.

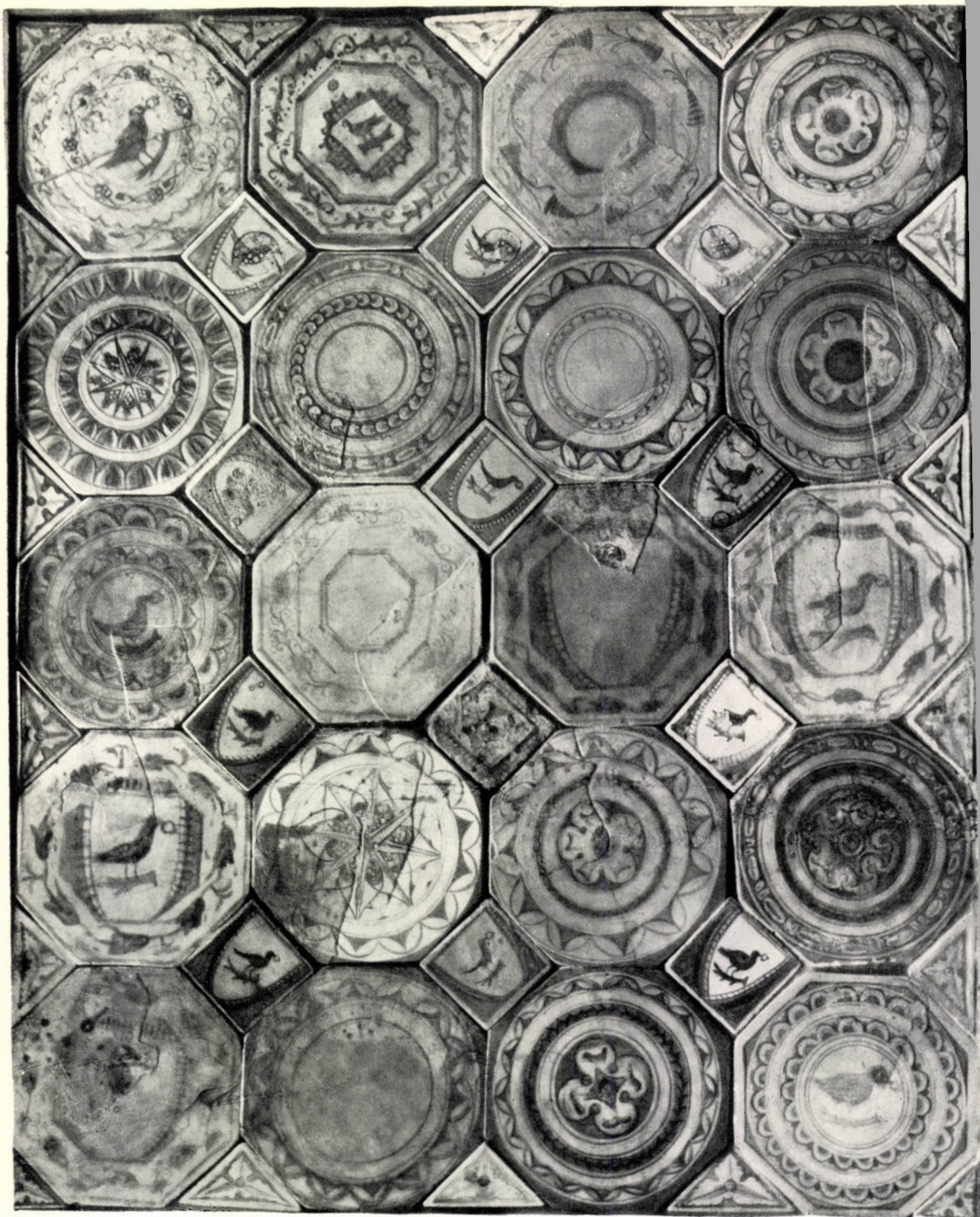
Statues by Verrocchio are known to have been sent to Hungary, where the art of bronze casting had been flourishing for over a hundred years,



RUINS OF THE SOUTH WING OF THE ROYAL PALACE IN BUDA

REMAINS OF THE CHAPEL (*built around 1400*) OF THE ROYAL PALACE





MAJOLICA FLOOR TILE IN ONE OF KING MATTHIAS'S ROOMS



THE ALLEGORY OF THE DANUBE — *ornamental frieze in King Matthias's palace*



RENAISSANCE MARBLE CEILING
WITH SERAPHIM,
FROM KING MATTHIAS'S PALACE



CORBEL WITH WOMAN'S HEAD FROM KING SIGISMUND'S PALACE (*around 1400*)



ITALIAN MAJOLICA PLATE



GLAZED TILE FROM THE ROYAL PALACE (*middle of the fifteenth century*)

producing some of the finest masterpieces of European art, like the statue of St. George in Prague (1373), a work of the renowned Hungarian sculptors, the Kolozsvári Brothers. At the centre of the vast lists, the "hypodrome," which stretched in front of the castle, stood the figure of Hercules, symbolizing King Matthias; the unclad armed figures guarding the gate of entrance to the inner castle were completely novel both in architectural conception and iconographic execution. The deeds of Hercules were represented also on the bronze gates reminiscent of the Porta del Paradiso. All these have perished, only a few pedestals of red marble, the bronze-ornamented base of the celebrated Pallas Athene Fountain, have been recovered from the layer of rubble that filled up the site of the palace.

Of the frescos representing the deeds of kings and historical scenes, the first of which were the work, presumably, of no less a master than Masolino himself, no more has been preserved than a few pieces as large as the palm of a hand or even smaller, which, though hardly of value as treasures of art, yet serve to confirm the written accounts that used to be regarded as exaggerated, vague, and incredible.

Results similar to those obtained in the spheres of architecture and stone-cutting have been derived from an analysis and evaluation of finds belonging to the field of industrial art, particularly as applied in architecture. An important part was played, for instance, in the decoration of buildings by a majolica workshop which had been transferred from Italy to the Royal Palace in Buda. This workshop, in the first place, prepared the floors of the halls, with tiles carrying the emblems of King Matthias and the House of Aragon or figures of literary association. That this workshop did in fact operate at Buda, so that ceramics did not have to be imported, is evidenced by some half-finished products that have been found on the spot. Similarly, a find of glass slag supplies evidence of the presence within the walls of the palace of a glass-works, which strove to imitate the graceful forms of Venetian goblets. Naturally, the refined tastes, which demanded large quantities of the best products of European industry and even aspired to guide their manufacture, did not evolve suddenly, without adequate social and commercial preparation, but arose through an extensive use of imported goods representing a multitude of artistic influences. Hard Persian pottery is common in the 14th century layer, and the 14th and 15th century layers have yielded pieces of Chinese porcelain, and, later on, Spanish *glazed* pottery and its Italian variant occur, not to mention hard earthenware from the region of the Rhine, Lostiče drinking-cups, and lead-glazed ornamental jars from Vienna. All these must have exercised a stimulating influence on the potters of Buda, who at the time

were provided with clay renowned for its excellence and produced famous figured stoves, known in the past only from contemporary descriptions of Buda Castle, but now available in reality. The excavations have given body to the evidence of one record which speaks of roofs glittering with gold, for among the finds there are gold-plated roof tiles as well as figured gold-plated floor tiles.

To create new glazed pottery at Buda, it was necessary first to master the novel processes employed in foreign workshops. The influence of foreign techniques on the traditions of the local workshop of Buda brought into fashion a new procedure for making coloured enamel, combining lead glaze and white majolica, used in utensils, ornamental vessels and stove-tiles. After coats of arms, portraits of kings, biblical scenes and fairy-tale illustrations, the gorgeous scenes of court life also appeared on stove tiles.

Among the frescos, sculptures, coloured window panes, and floors abounding in representations of scenes, it is perhaps the stove tiles displaying a multitude of human and animal figures that recall most vividly the resplendent, fabulous world which had all too brief an existence in the red marble halls of Buda Castle before all these treasures were destroyed by Turkish warriors thoroughly insensible to their beauty and value.

In the words of a contemporary Turkish chronicle: "The wretched king's immeasurable treasures, domestic utensils, cannons and cannonballs were seized; houses and temples that served to harbour infidelity, false creeds and idolatry were set on fire and razed to the ground."

METAMORPHOSES OF LISZT'S FAUST SYMPHONY

by

LÁSZLÓ SOMFAI

It is becoming a striking symptom of present-day musical life that prominent works of great composers subsequently transcribed, are again presented in their original form. The directors of great international festivals may be induced to select such programs as a result of their search for the sensational, or the incentive may be ascribed to the undoubtedly intensified historical interest on the part of audiences; be that as it may, numerous "new" compositions emerge from the analytical pages of ponderous music histories into the light of public appreciation. Indubitably, the majority of such earlier conceptions appear imperfect, sketchy, as compared to the final form. It was by no means accidental that Bach or Beethoven felt impelled to rewrite compositions which at one time were believed to be finished; nor can one wonder that audiences of today, nurtured on their masterpieces, prefer the transcribed, final form.

The history of art can, nevertheless, point to a number of exceptions—among composers perhaps Liszt in particular. In their case, two or more transcriptions do not always imply the achievement of *greater perfection* and concentration, finer proportions and improved form, but rather a restless, ceaseless transmutation, a *metamorphosis of the composition*.

The most decisive component of Liszt's mode of creation was *improvisation*—in the widest sense of the word, both in time and significance. There is no need, here, of stressing the confirmed fact that many of Liszt's compositions were more or less accurate records of previous improvisations on the piano. Despite successive recordings and transcriptions, the metamorphosis remains a peculiar form of improvisation. What are the principal features of improvisation before a real (or imagined) audience? Manifold interrelations are established between the artist and the audience. The audience itself has an indirect share in the improvisation. Passively, by compelling the artist to continuity, without brooking any interruption

or pause for thinking, and to carrying to its conclusion a train of ideas which, written down, might be felt to be superfluous, diffuse, imperfect. Actively, by perhaps influencing the improvising artist's original intentions through its very presence, its mood and response. From the audience's mood, from the waning or intensification of attention, the improvising artist can surmise the effect of his performance. He thus becomes the victim of a characteristic law: provided an improvised work possesses suggestive power, it may be imperfect, rugged, unpolished as to form.

In the peculiar metamorphosis of Liszt's frequently rewritten compositions, the above-mentioned elements of improvisation may all be recognized in one form or other. Various themes of the work, some of the forms in which the themes are presented, may themselves have been the fruit of improvisation on the piano; though a theme may also have resulted from conscious composition on „paper” (as the dodecaphone initial theme of the Faust Symphony). But from the moment when Liszt first sketched the *whole* of a movement, or of a composition in several movements, the transformations of the work were influenced by conditions similar to those associated with improvisation.—To illustrate our thesis, we have selected the Faust Symphony, partly because it is one of Liszt's greatest and most characteristic masterpieces, and partly because comparison of recently discovered scores from Hungarian sources with the Faust scores preserved at the Liszt Museum in Weimar offers an unparalleled wealth of material. This symphony will consequently serve as our guide in following the extraordinary metamorphoses that mark Liszt's activity as a composer.

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Though the first thematic sketches go back to the mid 1840's, the Faust Symphony was composed, for the greater part, in the middle of the Weimar era, the 'fifties and early 'sixties, in the period of the grand compositions. From the creation of the first comprehensive outlines, the formation of the work was persistently influenced by a narrow circle of “audiences,” friends and pupils. These included geniuses of Liszt's calibre (such as Wagner and Berlioz), skilful craftsmen (e. g. Raff, the hired orchestrator, and Tausig, the transcriber), as well as enthusiastic theoreticians of Liszt's art (R. Pohl and others) and, last but not least, non-musical patrons and close friends (headed by the master's life-partner, the Duchess of Wittgenstein, who pronounced her opinion on all subjects).

In November 1852, the first Faust composition treading a revolutionary path—Berlioz's dramatic legend, “The Damnation of Faust”—was pre-

sented at Weimar. It definitely departed from Goethe's conception and for this very reason was perhaps the more brilliant. In Liszt—with the experience of his first symphonic poems behind him—it reawakened the desire to create a major work on Faust. From August to October 19, 1854, he produced the first finished form of the symphony. At that time it consisted only of instrumental movements, the plan of a closing chorus with tenor soloist singing Goethe's words was conceived much later. When Berlioz arrived at Weimar in January 1855, to conduct his own Faust, he was already able to study Liszt's symphony as copied out by Raff.

Besides Berlioz's verbal criticism, it was the eminent craftsman of orchestration, Raff, who was the first to respond to Liszt's composition by uttering an "opinion" as audience, suggesting additions, erasures, and changes.*

Already in September 1855, the symphony was performed before a circle of Liszt's friends—his "audience"—at two rehearsals. Their first response led to a minute re-examination of the work, and the alteration of some parts. It is just this somewhat overhasty, nervous period in the metamorphosis of the work which shows an astonishing resemblance to the psychological conditions of true improvisation: omissions or additions, the hurried fashioning of ligaments instead of elaborately planned connecting passages. In the next year, by May 30, 1856, Liszt finished the transcription of his Faust Symphony for two pianos and the manuscript of the transformed work. His other famulus, Conradi, and his pupil, the infant-prodigy Tausig, prepared the copies. This time Liszt presented to his guests the new form of his symphony played on two pianos. The same year witnessed the birth of the new choral conclusion, so that only the last touches remained to be added in the spring of 1857. On July 10, Liszt informed his friend Wagner about the enlarged version of the closing chorus.

On the occasion of the Goethe—Schiller—Wieland festival held at Weimar in September 1857, the long awaited public world première took place, in a form now unknown and forgotten. For the metamorphosis was still far from ended. Next year, Liszt's promising and gifted pupil, Tausig, prepared the piano transcription for two hands, copied the score of the second ("Gretchen") movement—and the composition again acquired a

* Notwithstanding the loss of the score copied out by Raff (the one-time existence of which is confirmed by extant correspondence), subsequent scores give proof of his important suggestions concerning orchestration and even points beyond that sphere. (The character of Raff's interventions was discussed by Raabe in conjunction with the analysis of a series of other Liszt manuscripts, in "Liszt's Schaffen," 1931, pp. 68-78.)

wealth of new colours. The still unprinted work became known from copies; the same year Liszt corrected Zellner, a Vienna musician's, rather free-handed transcription. At last, in 1859, he published the symphony transcribed for the piano, but a year later he again changed the text so much that in 1861, when Liszt finally made up his mind to publish the score, the whole composition had to be copied again by C. Götze, his copyist. At Bülow's suggestion he effected some changes when the proofs were corrected, adjusting the prosody of the tenor voice; then the symphony was again performed at Weimar in September 1861. Even this was not yet the end of the process of metamorphosis. The year after he gave his consent to some abbreviations of Bülow's and Bronsart's in the first ("Faust") movement; in the second edition of the score in 1874, he corrected a few notes; in a letter to Stade in 1880, twenty-six years after the first variation, he added ten new bars to the coda of the Gretchen movement.

Eighteen pounds of music*, a series of private and public performances, at least four finished forms—these are the numerical results. The musical transformation they represent amounts to much more, providing an important key to Liszt's art and personality.

What was the Faust Symphony like in its original form, how far and why did it alter, change colour during the years of ceaseless metamorphosis?

The gradual approximation to Goethe's Faust is the most conspicuous change, striking even for those who are not musicians. The score of the first version (1854) bears no comprehensive title; only the headings of the various movements—"Faust," "Gretchen," "Mephistopheles"—point to Goethe's paraphrase of the Faust legend. (In the music too, only the "Er liebt mich" episode points unmistakably to Goethe's Faust.) The more or less final title, *Eine Faust Symphonie (in drei Character Bildern)*, appeared two years later on the manuscript of the transcription for two pianos. The decisive step came with the idea of a closing chorus. Liszt's choice fell on the last lines of the second part of Goethe's Faust, the "Chorus mysticus"—hence the small type remark "(nach Goethe)," which figured on the title-page of the score, was not only justified but obligatory. This seemingly insignificant addition gave rise to the almost traditional, yet erroneous, criticism of this splendid composition in German literature on the history of music.

* The most important sources are the autographed score of 1854 in National Széchényi Library, Budapest (the pasted-on parts having been lately disclosed by expert restorers' hands); Tausig's and Zellner's transcriptions at the Liszt Museum of the Academy of Music, Budapest; the 1856 autograph transcription for two pianos. Götze's copy and proofs of the score at the Liszt-Museum in Weimar.

To avoid misunderstanding, it should be stated at this stage that the recently discovered score sources all denote Goethe's Faust as the first and most significant exogenous inspirer of the symphony, rather than Marlowe's Faustus, the chronicle of John Spies, or some other elaboration of the same subject. However, as a result of the allusion to Goethe on the title-page of the symphony, contemporary aesthetes (headed by Richard Pohl, the eminent popularizer of Liszt's music) and particularly 20th century German historians of music, demanded more—or to put it more accurately—something other than the composer intended. They censured Liszt's Faust Symphony by citing the views Goethe expressed on the composition of music to his works, when he said to Eckerman: "Mozart should have composed Faust."*

Yet the Faust compositions of the other two masters of the revolutionary romantic trio of composers (Berlioz's dramatic legend, "The Damnation of Faust" and Wagner's "Faust Overture") both demonstratively broke away from a servile putting to music of Goethe's masterpiece, and searched for revolutionary, novel possibilities in giving musical expression to the idea.

In fact, the closing chorus, which provoked the liveliest censure on account of questionable conformity to the spirit of Goethe's conception, was the outcome of that peculiar, as it were, improvised mode of composition "influenced by the response of audiences." According to Liszt's first project, the symphony was to close with an instrumental epilogue embodying the "Ewig Weibliche" apotheosis, which was incomparably more appropriate, organic, and suitable in style to the symphony as a whole than the present greatly enlarged closing part with tenor soloist and chorus. This slightly theatrical epilogue was in all probability suggested by Liszt's principal—rather incompetent but all the more inexorable—critic, the Duchess of Wittgenstein. This assumption is supported by Wagner's memoirs. In connection with the two conclusions of the Dante Symphony (one more reserved, the other more bombastic), Liszt himself—as recorded by Wagner—said: "You are right, I have felt so myself; the Duchess has induced me to change my mind; but now it shall be as you think best." "That was all right," Wagner adds, and continues, "the greater was my sorrow to hear later that not only was the end of 'Dante' retained, but that the delicate conclusion of 'Faust,' for which I had such high appre-

* H. J. Moser's book contains the following typical lines (Goethe und die Musik, 1949) . . . "however grand the exterior building of Liszt's Faust may be, the interior is imbued with something that smacks of Gounod rather than Goethe. This Gretchen is more of a sentimental, patchouli-scented *ingénue* than a lower-middle-class girl of a country town, Mephistopheles is more like a *diable boiteux* and *fanfaron infernal* than Goethe's mythical cynic who dares to rival God.

ciation, was also changed in the direction pomposity by the inclusion of choruses." *

In the apotheosis of Liszt's Faust Symphony the words "Ewig Weibliche" are imbued with shades of meaning that differ essentially from those of Goethe's work. It might be more apposite, however shallow in appearance, to call them more personal. However, the recasting of Faust's personality as compared to Goethe's conception constitutes an all the bolder, all the more significant advance, as does the utterly novel, purely musical contrast of the two characters, Faust and Mephistopheles.

Liszt did not belong to the unconditional and humble admirers of Goethe's poetry—despite the long series of compositions to Goethe's words at the time when he took up his residence at Weimar. At all events, for him Goethe's Faust was no "secular bible" as it was to the average bourgeois and artist of the age (particularly in Germany). Discussing Byron's "Manfred" in a letter to Th. von Hellendorf in 1869 (see Raabe, p. 82) Liszt wrote "In my youth I was a passionate admirer of his and felt much more strongly attracted by him than by Faust, who, let me tell you in confidence, made on me the impression of a thoroughly bourgeois character, for all his marvellous poetical prestige. . . Faust's personality is diffuse and crumbles; he fails to act, allows himself to be led, hesitates, experiments, blunders, meditates, bargains, and is concerned only with his own little happiness. Manfred is quite different, much prouder and more consistent. By an absolute act of his will, he rejects the whole of nature and life with immense disdain—except for one being. It would certainly never enter Manfred's head to accept the evil company of Mephistopheles, and if he had loved Margaret he might have killed her, but would never have deserted her treacherously as did Faust. . . " ** It can hardly be an error to surmise the features of Byron's Manfred behind the "Grandioso" theme of Liszt's Faust Symphony. Another literary model—or let us rather call it a universal character, a type of humanity—also exerted a decisive influence on Liszt's Faust, namely, the figure of Prometheus.

* "Du hast recht, ich habe es auch gesagt; die Fürstin hat mich anders bestimmt: aber es soll nun so werden, wie Du meinst. . . Das war nun schön. Desto grösser jedoch war mein Leid, später erfahren zu müssen, dass nicht nur dieser Schluss am 'Dante' beibehalten, sondern sogar der von mir so besonders dankbar empfundene zarte Schluss des 'Faust', in einer mehr auf das Prunkende hinauslaufenden Weise, durch den Eintritt von Chören umgeändert wurde."

** "Dans ma jeunesse je l'admirais passionnément et le hantais beaucoup plus que Faust, lequel, soit dit tout bas, malgré son merveilleux prestige de poésie, me semblait un caractère foncièrement bourgeois. . . La personnalité de Faust s'éparpille et s'émiette; il n'agit point, se laisse faire, hésite, expérimente, se dérouté, réfléchit, marchandé et ne s'intéresse qu'à son petit bonheur. Tout autre Manfred, incomparablement plus fier et consistant. Par un acte absolu de sa volonté, il repousse d'un immense dédain le tout de la nature et de la vie—un seul être excepté. Certes, Manfred n'imaginerait point de s'accomoder de la mauvaise compagnie de Méphistophélès, et s'il eut aimé Marguerite il aurait pu la tuer, mais jamais comme Faust l'abandonner lâchement. . ."

(Musically too, the "Appassionato" theme displays a close affinity to a characteristic theme-element of the symphonic poem "Prometheus.")

By blending the characters of Faust, Manfred and Prometheus, Liszt evolved his own heroic ideal and painted a portrait of himself. Therefore the ostentatiously Goethean elements superimposed on the composition in the course of its metamorphoses denote a departure from Liszt's original conception, they appear to be concessions to his environment, the local atmosphere of Weimar. It must be admitted that the German music historian was right: Liszt's Mephistopheles greatly differed from Goethe's mythical cynic. Yet, may Liszt not be said to have expressed the kernel of the idea underlying Faust through the brilliant technical solution of building his "Faust" and "Mephistopheles" movements on the same themes, adjusting both ideas to the world of Faust and Mephistopheles? Summing up the philosophical essence of the Faust problem, do Faustian and Mephistophelean forces not fight their daily battles *in ourselves*? In this respect, Liszt remained consistent, from the beginning, from the first finished form; moreover, later alterations, particularly the incommensurate accentuation of the closing chorus, contorted the purity and consistency of his train of ideas.

*

The comparative analysis of the metamorphoses of the Faust Symphony, in the light of the Hungarian sources and the generally known Faust manuscripts preserved at Weimar, is of extraordinary significance from the viewpoint of music and style. It shows not only how one of Liszt's most outstanding and important compositions came into existence, but also, in general, how Liszt the composer worked and created, and presents a picture of the Weimar period in particular. These studies confirm and amplify the results of P. Raabe, H. Searle, and J. I. Milstejn's researches.

In the course of a detailed analysis and imaginary parallel performance of the first version of the Faust Symphony and of its intermediary and final forms, the metamorphoses of the composition inevitably elicit opinions based on subjective evaluation. The majority of the changes effected in the process of work were not of unmixed benefit to the composition. A few examples will speak for themselves without the necessity of hearing the music itself.

Though it would seem to be an external circumstance, *orchestration*, the setting up of the orchestra, was a cardinal point in the history of the Faust Symphony's development. Raabe's research work has thrown the first light on the details of Liszt's symphonism, which actually came into be-

ing only in the Weimar years, elucidating the roles of the two famili charged with orchestration—Conradi and the much more talented Raff—in the orchestration of the symphonic poems. The *Faust Symphony* shows that (after the first nine symphonic poems) Liszt, in the mid 1850's still handled the great orchestral apparatus with utmost caution. Astonishing though it may seem, the first finished form of the symphony (1854) was for a truly small orchestra, an ensemble smaller than that usually employed by Beethoven. Bassoons, trombones, tubas are completely absent, as are percussion instruments (timpani [!], triangle, cymbals).

The reader recalling the *Faust* movement may well ask whether there was no sign of the noble "Grandioso" theme drawing on Manfred's character (which was virtually inseparable from the tones of the bassoon), no rumbling of powerful timpani soli? Indeed, all these were absent. Apart from a few extremely effective and important moments, do the blaring brasses and thickening heavy parallels (mostly ascribed to Raff) in every instance constitute indubitable gain? Knowing the first version, one may unhesitatingly answer with an emphatic no. All that is inimitably brilliant and perfect in the orchestration of the symphony (the first pages in the score of the "Gretchen" movement, the scintillating colours of the "Mephistopheles" movement) are perhaps even more effective in the first version.

Most of the formal changes were due chiefly to the unusual length of the symphony. As work progressed, the symphony became more than ten minutes shorter, which in itself was certainly an advantage. But many of the connecting ligaments inserted to take the place of the deleted passages were rather arbitrary. A few crude chords, sudden modulations; forceful halts; yet the "rules" of improvisation appear to prevail, and minor formal flaws in form can be forgiven or overlooked under the spell of the captivating, suggestive music.

A specific group of subsequent insertions, however, represent an indubitable enrichment. These imply changes resting on *psychological, dramatic principles*. The majority are contrary to tradition, alien, for instance, to the classical sonata form; but it is precisely this that reveals the creative genius of Liszt in moulding new forms. (The muffled, pattering, hesitant episode preceding the free splendour of the "Grandioso" in the "Faust" movement is one of them; some Faust theme citations in the "Gretchen" movement, two astoundingly forceful halts in the "Mephistopheles" movement are others.)

In the metamorphoses of the *Faust Symphony* the saddest compromise is the obliteration or "taming" of some passages incapable of rendition

at the time. At the trial performance in 1855 they were still played, but by the public first night of 1857, Liszt had resigned himself to their deletion—with some exasperation. A brief outline of Liszt's original conception of the "Faust" movement will help to make the formal role of these modern passages more comprehensible. In the first manuscript score of 1854 (now preserved at Budapest) the themes of the movement either hover in atonality without any feeling of key (while their metre, their "respiration," is regular), or are written in nervous, asymmetrical time (while their tonal contours are regular, traditional). This revolutionary modern effort—leaving Berlioz's and Wagner's contemporary works far behind—resulted in the formulation of the first consciously "dodecaphonic," "12-note" theme in music history, the opening theme of the symphony.*

The theme of the "Allegro agitato ed appassionato assai" was the fruit of the same endeavour, anticipating the 20th century, Bartók and Stravinsky, in $7/4$ time (!) and flaming with an extasy verging on schizophrenia. The score furthermore contains a whole series of metric mixtures so modern that no orchestra would have proved equal to them at the middle of the last century. If for no other reason, these modern features justify the performance of the first version of Liszt's Faust Symphony. In the light of such a performance, present-day audiences and musicians could realize how different, how much greater the first "not final" conception was in the creative style of Liszt, than is general with the greatest in the history of music.

If further study results in disclosing and also rendering such "unknown Liszt works" as the original conception of the Faust Symphony, musicology will be enriched by important material and audiences by the lasting experiences of their performance.

* On this point we have to contradict the book written by the eminent British Liszt scholar, H. Searle, "The Music of Liszt" (1954). The book entitled *Der übermässige Dreiklang* ("The Augmented Common Chord") published in 1853 by K. Fr. Weitzmann (Liszt's friend, a Berlin theoretician) is assumed by Searle to have inspired Liszt to the composition of this dodecaphonic theme. However, as evidenced by the sketches, Liszt conceived the brilliant theme entirely on his own already in the mid 1840's.

THOMAS MANN AND HUNGARY

His Correspondence with Hungarian Friends

Thomas Mann first visited Hungary in 1913. He had come to Budapest at the invitation of the radical masonic paper *Világ* ("The World"), to deliver a lecture. He was, by then, well known in Hungary; though only a relatively slender stratum of the public had read his writings, they, at least, recognized enthusiastically that Thomas Mann was promising to become the representative genius, the great author of the European spirit. One of his short stories had appeared in Hungarian as early as 1905, followed in 1910 by a volume of short stories entitled *A boldogság akarása* ("The Desire for Happiness"). His visit in 1913 served to establish closer ties with the Hungarian public, and particularly with a number of authors and artists who were to remain, throughout their lives, his devotees and propagators of his works. It was on this occasion that he first met the noted poet, prose author and essay-writer Dezső Kosztolányi, who had translated Shakespeare, Shelley, Byron and Wilde. Ten years later, Kosztolányi recalled their encounter in the following terms:

"A few years ago, before the war, he visited us, and I then had the undeserved privilege of meeting him and spending a few days in his company. This meeting, though the companionship was neither close nor confidential, exercised a formative influence on me through its very formality, for this master of the written word radiates the same magnetism in his person, as in his works."

He paid a visit to József Rippl-Rónai, the great Hungarian painter, in his studio. The latest canvases of the artist—after his return from Paris, where he belonged to the school of the *Nabis*, he had soon become one of the best known Hungarian artists—met with Thomas Mann's approval. It was this Budapest journey that laid the foundations of his sympathy for Hungary, and in his later references to Hungary, it was always a returning theme.

In 1922 Thomas Mann visited Hungary a second time and read parts of his *Zauberberg* ("Magic Mountain"). He established a sincere friendship with Zsigmond Móricz, the great novelist, and with Árpád Tóth of the periodical "Nyugat" (West), famous for his delicate lyrics. He refused, however, to call on the representatives of official Hungary, and this mute demonstration indicated that he felt more esteem for the literature of the opposition than for that which then enjoyed government recognition but has since proved to be of slender worth.

The great success of his lectures prompted him to repeat his visit in 1923, when he read a lesser known short story, "Willy the Medium," which was a part of his study of experiences gathered at occult sessions. This work appeared in Hungarian before it did in German. He again met Kosztolányi, and when he heard that the latter's novel *Nero, a véres költő* was soon to appear in Germany, he gladly undertook to write a preface to it. The novel later also appeared in Italian, Croatian and English (*The Bloody Poet. A novel about Nero. With a prefatory letter by Thomas Mann. New York, 1927*), and of course these editions also carried Thomas Mann's introduction. This hardly known text, which has so far not been included in the volumes of the great German writer's studies, fully deserves to be presented here:

"Dear Mr. Kosztolányi,

I am moved as I take leave of your manuscript—this novel of an emperor and an artist with which you have fulfilled and even surpassed the hopes that have attached to your fine and vigorous gifts since the short stories of the *Magische Laterne* ("Magic Lantern"). Your development can hardly occasion surprise to those who took delight in your first steps. I nevertheless feel inclined to call your "Nero" *surprising*, and would add that in respect to a work of art I consider this word to be very high praise indeed. It implies that this work is more than a product of culture, and of a national or even European standard; that it carries the brand of personal boldness upon its brow, that it springs from a courageous solitude and effects our senses with a humanity that is so true, it hurts. This is the essence of poesy. All the rest is of the Academy, even when it behaves in a *sansculotte* manner.

You have presented, in a calmly traditional form, a free and wild-born, a somehow unsuspected book. You have portrayed, in a contemporary garb that you have undoubtedly thoroughly studied but which does not for a moment appear theatrical, costume-like, does not for a moment seem archaeological, for it is worn with such ease and so unostentatiously—you have, I say, portrayed, behind historical names, human features whose intimacy springs from the innermost recesses of conscience. You have permitted your wicked and shamefacedly proud knowledge of art and

artistry to flow into this novel of bloodily painful dilettantism, thus lending it all the profundity and melancholy, all the horror and humour of life. Irony and conscience are one, and they constitute the essence of poetry. Nero, in his desperate impotence, is occasionally wild and great, but as a character, I prize Seneca higher—this masterly smooth poet-courtier and sophist, who is nevertheless truly wise, a really great man of literature, whose last hour shook me as few things in life and art have done. The scene, moreover, where he and the Emperor read their poems one to the other and mutually lie to each other, is priceless. In penetrating sadness, however, it cannot of course be compared to that other scene, which is dearest to me in the whole work, where Nero, in rising fury and suffering, truly humanly offended, strives vainly to obtain the confidence of Britannicus as a colleague—of the Britannicus who possesses Grace, the Secret, who is a poet, and who in the silent and alien egoism of his artistry indifferently thrusts the helpless-powerful emperor from him, to his ruin. Yes, this is good, this is excellent, this is masterly. And there is more of the like in the novel, whose peculiar intimacy, moreover, is retained not only in the psychic and inner, human aspects but also in the social sphere, and which, with a very light, effortless touch, conjures up pictures and scenes from the life of the ancient metropolis that constitute the most amusing social criticism.

I am very glad, dear Mr. Kosztolányi, to be able to congratulate you, ahead of others, on this lovely work. It will bring new honour to the name of Hungary, that has had so many to praise it, from Petőfi and Arany to Ady and Zsigmond Móricz, and it will enable your own young name to emerge more clearly among those who today signify the intellectual and cultural life of Europe.

Yours truly,
Thomas Mann"

In these years the correspondence of Thomas Mann and Kosztolányi became ever more frequent. It was, however, for the greater part of a private character and may be of interest only to research workers on Thomas Mann's life work or to his biographers. (Published in the Budapest scientific periodical *Világirodalmi Figyelő* [Review of World Literature], 1959, No. 3—4). The material nevertheless contains one letter that is of general interest. It bears no date, but it seems probable that it was written at the end of 1923 or the beginning of 1924 (this is also evidenced by the mention of the preface to "Nero"). Answering a question posed by Kosztolányi as correspondent of the newspaper *Pesti Hírlap*, Thomas Mann summed up his opinion and his memories of Hungary and Hungarian literature. The text was not then published, and only saw the light of day in 1959:

"Dear Sir,

The letter in which you sent me the circular inquiry of *Pesti Hirlap* concerning Magyardom, has been to hand for several weeks—forgive me for delaying the answer and believe me that this procrastination was not of my willing, also that it is not in obedience to my wishes, if, even today, I must be brief.

Nevertheless, I may perhaps be permitted to say that something has already been done in this respect. On more than one occasion, when I was a guest in Budapest, I gratefully seized the opportunity offered me, publicly to voice the respectful sympathy that I feel for your national culture. Permit me therefore, when presented with your question, to refer to these statements.

Turgenev says in his 'Rudin': 'Cosmopolitanism is nonsense, the cosmopolitan is a zero or even worse; outside nationality there is neither art, nor truth, nor life—nothing. Without a particular physiognomy, you cannot even have an ideal face; only a common face has no physiognomy.' The fact that these words were uttered by the 'Westerner' and good European, Turgenev, is evidence that the conviction or discovery expressed in them by no means implies the nationalistic narrowness and exclusiveness that always lead to roughness, but is thoroughly compatible with the most joyous devotion to, and readiness for admiration of, things foreign. Cosmopolitanism in the right sense is not a lack of physiognomy, not pan-human vulgarity, but an expansive sympathy. What is more, we may regard this solution of the contradiction between 'national' and 'cosmopolitan' as a peculiar art of German minds. Our romanticism was fully possessed of this art. We of the present must, if we have lost it, once more regain it. And in this sense, permit me to say that for me the Hungarian people, of which I have been able to gather some knowledge partly from the literary and artistic viewpoint, partly by personal contact, represents one of the most characteristic and attractive varieties of mankind.

The mixture of your race, like that of your language, with its slight Mongolian and Turkish components, flatters the sense of the exotic felt by German friends of mankind, and has developed a human type—particularly in the dark-brown varieties—possessed of peculiar beauty. Your capital, in whose light, fantastic atmosphere the European of the West senses the glitter of the Crown of the Orient, offers one of the most magnificent city panoramas on our continent. I venture to say that I am no longer a stranger there. I have repeatedly been able to make contact with your alert and industrious public. I have visited your galleries, enjoyed samples of your theatrical culture, and been present in your Parlia-

ment during the delivery of a speech of opposition by Count Apponyi, of which I did not understand a word, but which nevertheless did not bore me. I encountered an unforgettable reception in the houses of your highly accomplished bourgeoisie and was a guest of your elegant and chivalrous nobles in the palace of Buda. I am bound by heart-felt ties to some of the best of your artists and authors. I am as unlikely to forget the hour when Ferenczy's son showed me the brilliant life work of his father, as that when Béla Bartók played me his compositions. Of the modern essay writers, I consider the first place to be the due of a son of Budapest, György Lukács, whose acquaintance I made in Vienna. In my thoughts, I shake the hand of your engaging Zsigmond Móricz, the powerful story-teller, and I am glad to recall that I was recently able, through a preface, to accompany a Hungarian work that has since made a name for itself, the Nero novel of your Dezső Kosztolányi, on its way to the public.

Your country, which Nature intended to be fortunate, is today unfortunate and politically fettered—a *vis major*. This is one more reason for sympathy. I shall not cease to bestow diligence and attention on all the products of your culture that are accessible to me—as, indeed, is indispensable to all who strive for a European culture.

With respectful greetings,

Yours truly,
Thomas Mann"

This beautiful letter is an important and memorable writing of Thomas Mann's. The references are plain. Count Albert Apponyi (1846—1933) was a conservative politician and a minister on several occasions. In the twenties he represented the Hungarian Government at the League of Nations. The pictures of the great painter, Károly Ferenczy (1862—1916), must have been shown to Thomas Mann by one of his sons—Béni (the sculptor), or Valér (who was also a painter). He met Béla Bartók in Budapest in the home first of the father of György Lukács, then of Lajos Hatvany, the excellent literary critic and patron of the arts. Later they had several conversations at the sessions of the cultural committee of the League of Nations as well as in Budapest.

Thomas Mann also maintained contact with those Hungarian artists and scholars who had, during the course of these years, been forced to emigrate to Austria or Germany, after the fall of the Hungarian revolutions of 1918 and 1919. He entertained great respect for György Lukács, the Marxist aesthete and critic of his works, and mentioned him several times in his writings. When Lajos Hatvany returned to Hungary, he was arrested and sentenced to prison; Thomas Mann then wrote an article about their friendship and the unjust course the Hungarian authorities had taken. He gladly answered the circular inquiry of

his first Hungarian translator, Jenő Gömöri, who was then also living in Vienna and in 1931 addressed an appeal to the most important Western and Northern writers, asking them to define what they would call the essence of their lives. Naturally he also asked Thomas Mann, and received the following answer:

"There is nothing more dangerous, destructive and stupid than pale ambition. A man should not forge vast plans, but have modest aims in view and to the very best of his abilities carry out what he has undertaken without exaggerated requirements—confident that qualities and forces may emerge from spheres of existence of which we are not masters, from our subconscious being, which can give it significance and power. All is blessing. 'You either have it, or you don't.' However, he who has it, or at least is aware of it, is modest—a quality that by no means excludes discontent, but is on the contrary its brother."

(This statement, written by Thomas Mann on May 28, 1931, was only published in 1961.)

It was also in 1931 that Dezső Kosztolányi went to Munich and visited Thomas Mann. After his return he gave this account of the visit in his "Európai képeskönyv" (Picture-book of Europe):

"I visited Thomas Mann in his villa, which is at the end of the city, on the bank of the Isar. Sleet fell as I arrived in the afternoon after dark. The golden lights in the windows, the silence, the rooms soft with carpets, exercised the ancient magic of domestic intimacy on me, who had been journeying for several days then. . .

His tread is lively, nearly boyish. His spontaneity is the sophisticated spontaneity of an artist who lets his words filter through thousands and thousands of layers, to well forth pure and fresh, like the waters of a spring. He is frank in every moment of his life. He is simple, critical and indulgent. You can feel the responsibility of a life's work resting upon him."

Incidentally, 1931 was a year of travelling in the life of Thomas Mann. He should also have visited Budapest to attend the PEN Congress, but due to his other preoccupations, he excused himself in a letter to Kosztolányi, the president of the Hungarian PEN. In July he attended the Geneva session of the Art and Science Commission of the League of Nations. Of interest from the Hungarian point of view was the attendance at this session of Béla Bartók, who in a lengthy letter, couched in rather sceptical terms, wrote to his mother about the unending meetings of the "*commissions*" and "*sous-commissions*." He also met Thomas Mann. His letter carries a reference to their encounter.

"Thomas Mann too, spoke a few times, always in German; he talked cleverly and in an interesting way..." Bartók wrote. And later on: "There was only one official lunch and one dinner—the lunch given by the secretary of the *Commission*, the dinner by the chairman. The lunch—in a hotel—was excellent, the dinner—in the chairman's lovely home—not so good. I found neither of them unpleasant, for I was able to talk to people who were to my liking. At the dinner I sat next to Mrs. Thomas Mann. I also talked a lot with Thomas Mann... I was made to play the obligatory 'Evening with the Székelys' and 'The Bear Dance.'"

Thomas Mann later again met Bartók in Budapest, at Hatvany's home. János Demény, the excellent historian of music and curator of Bartók's heirloom, sent a letter to Thomas Mann in 1953, asking him to write down his reminiscences concerning the great composer. Thomas Mann answered him on November 21, 1953, from Erlenbach near Zürich:

"Dear Doctor Demény,

Your letter of October 26 has reached me with considerable delay after diverse roundabouts, via the Frankfurt publisher S. Fischer.

It is with great interest that I have noted your plan to write a book about Béla Bartók, whom I also sincerely respect and whose letters you have already published, and I only regret that I am hardly able to place any important facts at your disposal with respect to my encounters with the great musician.

The rumour that I met Bartók at Mondsee is mistaken. We first met in Budapest at the home of the banker Lukács—father of the critic György Lukács—in the middle 'twenties, as far as I can remember. I believe Bartók then lived at the Lukács's and we too were guests of the house. I especially remember an evening when Bartók's colleague Dohnányi was also present and where—thanks especially to the latter's humour in conversation and at the piano—the time passed very gaily. I was repeatedly together with Bartók at the sessions of the Permanent Science and Art Commission of the League of Nations; we were both members of this commission and the sessions were held in various cities, including Budapest. On this occasion my wife and I visited Bartók at his home, where he played us some of his recordings of African folklore music, which he had made on the spot.

Whenever I saw Béla Bartók, talked to him, or listened to him, I was always deeply impressed not only by his charm, but also by his superior and pure artistic personality, which was expressed even in the beautiful look of his eyes. I have never written about him, but then what musician

have I ever written about, apart from the one I invented, the hero of 'Doctor Faustus'?

All I can say is that I am glad of your book, and that it will shortly be possible to read it in German too.

You write that you heard of my encounters with Bartók from Lajos Hatvany. Then the rumours which have been spread about our old friend Hatvany were false, and I am sincerely glad that your letter has enabled us to draw this conclusion. Please forward heartfelt greetings both from me and my wife to Lajos Hatvany.

With the best of wishes,

Your

Thomas Mann

(The encounter at Mondsee did, in fact, take place—a letter of Bartók's bears witness to the fact. Thomas Mann must have forgotten about this session of the commission.)

While Thomas Mann contracted an increasingly profound friendship with Kosztolányi, Bartók and Lajos Hatvany (who had in the meantime been released from prison), his works successively appeared in Hungarian and his popularity increased constantly. (Much was done to achieve this by his Hungarian friend, the eminent Germanic scholar József Turóczy-Trostler, and, indeed, one of the popularizers of Thomas Mann in Czechoslovakia, Pál Neubauer, was also a Hungarian.) All his works of fiction were published in Hungarian, and a large portion of his essays and articles also appeared. In 1933, after the accession of Hitlerism to power, when Thomas Mann also chose emigration, his name and work became even more of a symbol of European humanism to all those—in Hungary too—who recognized that fascism was an inhuman dictatorship, preparing for war. His visit to Budapest in 1935 was a veritable triumphal procession. In vain were the pro-German official circles cool in their reception, the Hungarian intelligentsia and the youth felt, as they demonstrated their support for him, that they were at the same time raising their voices in support of the freedom of culture and of art and against Nazism.

This is what Kosztolányi wrote in recollection of his first meeting with Thomas Mann in 1913:

"Now, after the passage of so much time, he is visiting us again. Much has happened since then—a world war, world revolutions; he has, the while, been presented the wreath of the Nobel Prize, triumphantly travelled in France, Spain and America, and in his palazzo in Munich, on the bank of the Isar, where I spent an afternoon a few years ago, the police are now quartered. Nevertheless, he has not changed. He alights from his train in the twilight of a wintry station. Photographers besiege him with their dark cameras and flashing sulphurous powders, like so many assassins, and reporters interrogate him right and left: 'Master,

about the decline of the novel. . . Master, something about the future of mankind. . . ' And he answers everybody, gravely, without superciliousness and condescension, saying what can be said amid such circumstances, frankly, but nevertheless maintaining the necessary distance, aware of his duty and his responsibility, just as he answers the letters addressed to him at length, with full devotion, respecting Man in every man."

This was their last meeting. Cancer overpowered Kosztolányi. He died on November 3, 1936. Thomas Mann took leave of him in a letter addressed to Mrs. Dezső Kosztolányi:

"Dear Madame,

I received your note with deep emotion. Our Kosztolányi, then, is no more, I cannot again see him whom I so greatly respected and loved. My heart aches very much for him and I am filled with profound sympathy when I think of the disconsolate pain that you must feel.

Death, however, for all that our innermost ego protests against it, may finally nevertheless be our saviour, and ultimately, after what we have suffered, we do not perceive it as our enemy. I know that our friend hated death and protested against it with the passionate desire of life and creation. But he suffered so much, and I hope that finally he nevertheless came to terms with this dark friend, or, if not, then perhaps Nature, of which he, the artist, was a good child, gently diverted him, and he passed, unconscious, into the eternal quiet.

Peace be with him! And glory to him and to his name. With him, a pure poet of high purpose has left us. Let his native land preserve his memory. In our fraternal hearts his memory will never fade.

Please, dear Mrs. Kosztolányi, accept my heartfelt handshake and my warmest greetings.

Your respectful
Thomas Mann"

When in January 1937 he came to Hungary for the last time, Kosztolányi could no longer receive him at the station. But there were his old friends, particularly Hatvany, and beside them a new one too, who could hitherto only have known him from his works—the most important artist of Hungarian poetry between the two wars, Attila József.

Attila József then edited the periodical *Szép Szó* ("Beautiful Word"), and it was this anti-fascist review that organized the Thomas Mann evening. On January 13, 1937, Thomas Mann read a chapter from *Lotte in Weimar*, at the Magyar Theatre, and again scored a resounding success. The police—and the government itself—were not very happy over the visit to Hungary of the émigré German writer. Even in 1935 they had only given Thomas Mann a visa on the condition that he should stay only for three days and not speak over the

radio. They feared lest official German circles disapprove of his being permitted to stay. However, even in 1937 they did not see fit to prohibit the lecture, mainly because of the pressure of Hungarian public opinion and the press.

Attila József greeted Thomas Mann in verse. The names of Kosztolányi and Thomas Mann once more sounded together in his poem.

... Kosztolányi newly buried lies,
 mankind is sick, as he, with cancer's awe.
 The dread of many monster-states does gnaw
 and we in horror ask what more's to come,
 to what new wolf's ideas we shall succumb
 or poisons brewed to infiltrate us all—
 how long will you be left a lecture hall?
 To us your message reads: we must not wane,
 we men must ever men remain
 and women women—free and charming
 and each an ever rarer human being. . .
 Take your seat. Begin your story.
 We'll listen, though some will surely
 but look with joy, so rare now are such sights:
 a European, among all the whites.

The poet could not recite his poem, for the police forbade the reading of *Thomas Mann üdvözlése* ("Greeting to Thomas Mann"). And six months later, when in Hungary too the dread of monster-states, of fascism, had increasingly gained ground, Attila József threw himself before a train. . .

Thomas Mann was deeply stirred at the news. In his letter to Lajos Hatvany he wrote:

"Dear Mr. Hatvany,

My heartfelt thanks for your letter of the 6th instant, bringing me the sad and deeply moving news of the death of Attila József. This news has really touched me very closely, and I would like to ask you to forward to the circle of the deceased, the young writers of "*Szép Szó*," the expression of my profound sympathy in the loss which the death of Attila József has meant for them and for young Hungarian literature. This sad event is all the more painful to me, as I at that time made the personal acquaintance of the young poet and learned of his plan to read his poem of greetings to me in the theatre, in which he was—in a rather incomprehensible way—prevented by the police. I was, nevertheless, able to read his poem, and in a good German translation at that, and found great pleasure in it—both artistic and personal—for the friendly sentiments expressed in

it, in which I saw an expression of the feelings of young Hungarian literature. I too, therefore, have lost a friend, and, what is more, a valuable friend, and I sincerely grieve after him. Please communicate this to the gentlemen working at the "Szép Szó" and assure them once more of my sincere devotion.

With friendly greetings,
Your devoted
Thomas Mann"

This was the last encounter between Hungarian literature and Thomas Mann till the end of the war. When the Germans marched into Hungary in March 1944, his works here too were condemned to the bonfire and the shredding mill, as they had been in Berlin and in Munich. We listened in secret to his talks over the wireless, to the broadcasts of the BBC, and the typewritten texts of these talks were illegally circulated among anti-Hitlerite Hungarians.

After the war the Hungarian cult of Thomas Mann was once more resumed. The first articles and essays, as early as spring and summer 1945, greeted in him the German artist and German man who had remained true to the tradition of Goethean humanism. His older and his new novels, short stories and essays were published in large editions (the "Royal Highness" recently in 40,000 copies, the "Magic Mountain" in a total of 33,000 copies), and a special little booklet shows—complete with bibliographic data—how the works of Thomas Mann have spread in Hungary. Essays and books have appeared about him.

When the *Új Magyar Könyvkiadó* (New Hungarian Publishers) in 1955 published his short stories in two volumes, they asked the author to write a foreword to the collection. Thomas Mann's letter to the Hungarian readers runs as follows:

"I was very pleasantly surprised by the news that the "Új Magyar Könyvkiadó" is preparing not only to republish the *Buddenbrooks* in Hungarian, but is also planning to publish a collection of my short stories and novelettes of varying length. I am glad of this news and of the fact that the publishers believe their undertaking may count on the interest of the Hungarian public; I am glad, because it is a source of pride for me that my books are also living their own lives in the language of Petőfi, Madách and Endre Ady, and I am gratified at the thought that my works enjoy the respect of my Hungarian fellow-intellectuals and the sympathy of the Hungarian readers.

Political events have caused many regrettable tensions, cleavages and estrangements, but I am now more firmly convinced than ever that there is need for the universality which our Friedrich Schiller championed, in a period which similarly lacked refuge, either in the spoken or in the

written word, from the pursuing demon of politics, when he wrote, in the public announcement of his periodical 'Die Horen': 'The more tension, confinement and subjugation the limited interests of our age cause in people's souls, the more urgent the requirement that the confined spirits should again be liberated and the politically divided world once more united, under the banner of truth and beauty, by one universal interest that attaches to what is *purely human* and is above all the influences of the period.'

These words are far too august to permit them to be applied to my life and work, but the requirement which Schiller considered so urgent—that of liberating the confined spirits and reuniting the politically divided world in the sign of a higher ideal, of "truth and beauty," that is, of art—it is this that really gives content to this life and guides this work; and so it is agreeable to know that I have friends not only in the West-European countries and the "politically divided" world of my native tongue, but also behind the unfortunate "iron curtain"—not as though it were my desire to wish that that which I have should please everybody, but because I see in this an encouraging sign that understanding and a discovery of ourselves is possible in humanity, in a word, that *peace* is possible.

I now look forward with joy to the appearance of the first volume of the collection in question, which is to contain the early products of my literary career—sketches and short stories which I wrote fifty years ago or even more. Two particularly occur to me, which have grown close to my heart for special reasons. It was with "Mr. Friedemann, the Dwarf", as first published in the *Neue Rundschau* of the Berlin publishing house of S. Fischer, that I entered the literary arena at the age of twenty-two, and it was this short story that opened the path to the appearance of my first novel, the *Buddenbrooks*, which I completed at the age of twenty-five. This was followed by "Tonio Kröger," whose youthful lyrical sheen has strangely managed to preserve its freshness through half a century and has over and over again captured the sympathy of young hearts, through several generations. I am happy now to imagine young Hungarian readers bending over these pages whose message is dated from "times past," but seems to have retained some lasting validity.

Kilchberg-Zürich, March 14th, 1955.

Thomas Mann"

It is these lines that have remained in our memories as an eternally valid last message not only to his Hungarian readers, but to the whole world.

PÁL RÉZ

APPENDIX

German originals of some of Thomas Mann's letters quoted in the preceding article

Lieber Herr Kosztolányi!

Bewegt scheide ich von Ihrem Manuskript, diesem Kaiser- und Künstlerroman, mit dem Sie die Hoffnungen erfüllen, ja übertreffen, die sich seit den Novellen der „Magischen Laterne“ an Ihr feines und starkes Talent knüpfen. Ihr Wachstum kann kaum etwas Überraschendes haben für den, der sich an Ihren Anfängen erfreute. Und doch möchte ich Ihren „Nero“ überraschend nennen, mit dem Hinzufügen, das ich dies Wort, angewandt auf ein Kunstwerk, als eine sehr starke Lobeserhebung empfinde. Es will sagen, daß das Werk mehr ist als ein Produkt der Kultur und eines nationalen oder selbst europäischen Niveaus; daß es das Zeichen persönlicher Gewagtheit an der Stirn trägt, aus kühner Einsamkeit stammt und unseren Sinn mit einer Menschlichkeit, die wehe tut, so wahr ist sie, berührt. Das ist das Wesen des Dichterischen. Das andere ist Akademie, selbst wenn es sich sansculottisch gebärden sollte.

Sie gaben in geruhig-herkömmlicher Form ein freies und wildbürtiges, ein irgendwie ungeahntes Buch. Sie gestalteten in einem zweifellos wohl studierten Zeitgewande, das nicht einen Augenblick kostümlich-theatralisch, nicht einen Augenblick archäologisch wirkt, so leicht und selbstverständlich wird es getragen, Sie gestalteten, sage ich, unter historischen Namen Menschlichkeiten, deren Intimität aus letzten Gewissenstiefen stammt. Ihr schlimmes und schamhaft stolzes Wissen um Kunst und Künstlertum, Sie liessen es eingehen in diesen Roman des blutig-qualvollen Dilettantismus und verliehen ihm damit alle Tiefe und Melancholie, alles Grauen, und alle Komik des Lebens. Ironie und Gewissen, sie sind eins, und sie bilden das Element der Dichtung. Nero ist wild und groß zuweilen in seiner verzweifelten Ohnmacht; aber als Figur stelle ich Seneca über ihn, diesen Dichtershöfing und Sophisten von Meisterglätte, der dennoch ein wirklicher Weiser ist, ein wahrhaft großer Literat, und dessen letzte Stunden mich erschüttert haben, wie wenig es in Leben und Kunst. Die Szene gleich, wo er und der Kaiser einander ihre Gedichte vorlesen und sich gegenseitig belügen, ist köstlich. Doch läßt sie sich an durchdringender Traurigkeit freilich nicht vergleichen mit jener anderen, der mir liebsten wohl in dem ganzen Werk, wo Nero in steigender Wut und Pein, ein wahrhaft menschlich Beleidigter, vergebens um das kollegiale Vertrauen des Britannicus wirbt, des Britannicus, der die Gnade, das Geheimnis besitzt, der ein Dichter ist, und der in dem stillen und fremden Egoismus seines Künstlertums den Hilflos-Gewaltigen gleichgültig von sich stößt, zu seinem Verderben. Ja das ist gut, ist vortrefflich, ist meisterhaft. Und es gibt mehr dergleichen in dem Roman, dessen eigentümliche Intimität sich übrigens nicht nur im Seelisch-Innermenschlichen, sondern auch im Sozialen bewährt, und der mit ganz leichter, anstrengungsloser Gebärde Bilder und Szenen aus dem Leben der antiken Weltstadt emporruft, die amüsanteste Gesellschaftskritik sind.

Ich freue mich, lieber Herr Kosztolányi, Sie vor anderen beglückwünschen zu können zu diesem schönen Werk. Es wird dem ungarischen Namen, dem von Petöfi und Arany bis auf Ady und Móricz Zsigmond so viele Verkünder erstanden sind, zu neuer Ehre gereichen, und es wird Ihren eigenen jungen Namen deutlicher hervortreten lassen unter denen, die heute das geistigkulturelle Leben Europas bezeichnen.

Ihr sehr ergebener

Thomas Mann

Sehr geehrter Herr!

Das Schreiben, worin Sie auch mir die Rundfrage des *Pesti Hírlap* über das Magyarentum vorlegten, ist seit Wochen in meinen Händen — verzeihen Sie die Verzögerung meiner Antwort und glauben Sie, daß dieser Aufschub nicht nach meinen Wünschen war, auch daß es nicht meinen Wünschen entspricht, wenn ich selbst heute mich kurz fassen muß.

Immerhin darf ich mir sagen, daß im Voraus Einiges getan ist. Mehr, als einmal, wenn ich in Budapest zu Gaste war, habe ich dankbar die mir gebotene Gelegenheit ergriffen, die ehrerbietige Sympathie, die ich Ihrer nationalen Kultur entgegenbringe, öffentlich zu bekunden, und so darf ich mich, vor Ihre Frage gestellt, auf diese Äußerungen beziehen.

Turgenjew sagt in „Rudin“: „Kosmopolitismus ist Unsinn, der Kosmopolit ist eine Null und noch Schlimmeres; außerhalb der Nationalität gibt es weder Kunst, noch Wahrheit, noch Leben, nichts. Ohne eine bestimmte Physiognomie gibt es nicht einmal ein Idealgesicht; nur das vulgäre Gesicht hat keine Physiognomie.“ Der Umstand, daß der „Westler“ und gute Europäer Turgenjew es ist, der diese Worte spricht, beweist, daß die darin ausgedrückte Überzeugung oder Einsicht keineswegs die nationalistische Enge und Ausschließlichkeit bedeutet, die stets auf Roheit hinausläuft, sondern mit freudigster und zur Bewunderung bereiter Hingabe an das Fremde wohl verträglich ist. Recht verstandener Kosmopolitismus ist nicht Physiognomielosigkeit und allmenschliche Vulgarität, sondern es ist expansive Sympathie. Sogar kann man diese Aufhebung des Gegensatzes von „national“ und „kosmopolitisch“ als eine besondere Kunst der deutschen Geister in Anspruch nehmen. Unsere Romantik besaß zur Vollkommenheit diese Kunst. Wir heutigen, sollten wir sie verloren haben, müssen Sie wieder erwerben. Und in diesem Sinne lassen Sie mich sagen, daß mir das ungarische Volkstum, von dem ich teils durch literarisch-künstlerische Anschauung, teils in persönlicher Berührung einige Kenntnisse gewinnen konnte, als eine der Charaktervollsten und anziehendsten Spielarten des Menschlichen erscheint.

Die Mischung Ihrer Rasse, wie diejenige Ihrer Sprache, mit leis mongolischen und türkischen Einschlägen, schmeichelt dem Exotismus des deutschen Weltfreundes und erzeugt einen Menschentyp, der namentlich in seinen tiefbrünetten Fällen von origineller Schönheit ist. Ihre Hauptstadt, in deren leicht phantastischer Atmosphäre dem westlicheren Europäer das Haupt vom Orient zu schimmern scheint, bietet eines der herrlichsten Stadtbilder unseres Erdteils. Ich darf sagen, daß ich dort nachgerade kein Fremder mehr bin. Wiederholt gewann ich Kontakt mit Ihrem geweckten und arbeitsfreudigen Publikum. Ich besuchte Ihre Gallerien, genoß Proben Ihrer Theaterkultur und wohnte in Ihrem Parlamente einer Oppositionsrede des Grafen Apponyi bei, von der ich kein Wort verstand und bei der ich mich dennoch nicht langweilte. Ich fand unvergessliche Aufnahme in den Häusern Ihres hochgesitteten Bürgertums und war Gast Ihres eleganten und ritterlichen Adels in dem Palais von Ofen. Herzliche Beziehungen verbinden mich mit einigen der besten unter Ihren Künstlern und Schriftstellern. Ich vergesse so wenig die Stunde, wo der Sohn Ferenczy's mir das leuchtende Lebenswerk seines Vaters zeigte, wie diejenige, wo Béla Bartók mir seine Compositionen spielte. Unter modernen Essayisten steht ein Sohn Budapest's, dessen Bekanntschaft ich in Wien machte, Georg von Lukács, mir an erster Stelle. Ich drücke im Geiste Ihrem liebenswerten Sigmund Móricz, dem starken Erzähler die Hand, und freue mich an dem Gedanken, daß ich jüngst ein ungarisches Werk, das seitdem seinen Weg gemacht hat, dem Nero-Roman Ihres Desider Kosztolányi, mit einem Vorwort in die Öffentlichkeit begleiten durfte.

Ihr Land, von der Natur zum Glück bestimmt, ist heute unglücklich und politisch geknechtet — ein vis major. Das ist ein Grund mehr zur Sympathie. Ich werde nicht

aufhören allem, was von dem Erzeugnissen Ihrer Kultur mir irgend zugänglich ist, meinen Fleiß und meine Aufmerksamkeit zuzuwenden, — wie es unerläßlich ist für jeden, der sich europäischer Bildung bestrebt.

Mit hochachtungsvoller Begrüßung

Ihr sehr ergebener

Thomas Mann

Das Gefährlichste, Zerstörerischste und Dümme ist bleicher Ehrgeiz. Man soll nicht Riesenpläne wälzen, sondern es bescheiden vorhaben und das ohne viel Anspruch Unterommene nach besten Kräften betreuen, in dem Vertrauen, daß ihm aus Wesenssphären, über die wir nicht Herr sind, unserem unbewußten Sein, Eigenschaften und Kräfte zuwachsen mögen, die ihm Bedeutung und Gültigkeit verleihen. Alles ist Segen. „Man hat es oder hat es nicht.“ Wer es aber hat oder nur davon weiß, ist bescheiden — eine Eigenschaft, die Ungenügsamkeit keineswegs ausschließt, sondern mit ihr verschwistert ist.

München, den 28. V. 1931.

Thomas Mann

Lieber Herr Hatvany!

Recht herzlichen Dank für Ihren Brief vom 6. dieses Monats, der mir die traurige und mich sehr bewegende Nachricht vom Tode des Josef Attila bringt. Diese Nachricht geht mir wirklich sehr nahe und ich möchte Sie bitten, dem Kreis des Verstorbenen, den jungen Autoren vom „Szép Szó“ meine herzliche Anteilnahme zu übermitteln an dem Verlust, den Sie und die junge ungarische Literatur durch den Tod Attilas erlitten haben. Mir geht dieser Todesfall so nahe, weil ich ja damals in Budapest die persönliche Bekanntschaft des jungen Dichters machte, und von seinem Vorhaben hörte, ein an mich gerichtetes Begrüßungsgedicht im Theater zur Vorlesung zu bringen, was nicht recht verständlicher Weise von der Polizei verhindert wurde. Ich habe aber dies Gedicht und zwar in einer sehr guten deutschen Übersetzung lesen dürfen, und große Freude daran gehabt, künstlerische Freude und persönliche, über die herzliche Gesinnung gegen mich, die sich darin ausdrückte, und die ich als repräsentativ für die Gesinnung der jungen ungarischen Literatur betrachten durfte. Auch ich habe also einen Freund und zwar einen wertvollen verloren, und betraure ihn aufrichtig. Bitte, lassen Sie das die Herren vom „Szép Szó“ wissen und versichern Sie sie aus Neue meiner herzlichen Verbundenheit.

Mit freundschaftlichen Grüßen Ihr ergebener

Thomas Mann

Kilchberg-Zürich

14 März 1955

Sehr geehrte Herren,

Es war mir eine sehr freundliche Überraschung, zu erfahren, daß der „Új Magyar Könyvkiadó“ nicht nur beabsichtigt, eine Neuauflage der „Buddenbrooks“ in ungarischer Sprache zu veranstalten, sondern auch eine mehrbändige Ausgabe meiner kürzeren und längeren Novellen und Erzählungen in Angriff genommen hat. Diese Nachricht nebst der Tatsache, daß der Verlag bei seinem Unternehmen auf das Interesse des ungarischen Publikums rechnen zu dürfen glaubt, macht mir Freude, denn es ist mir eine stolze Vorstellung, daß meine Bücher auch in der Sprache Petöfi's, Madách' und Endre Ady's ihr Leben führen, und ein erwärmender Gedanke, daß mein Lebenswerk die kollegiale Achtung der ungarischen Intellektuellen und die Sympathie der ungarischen Leser genießt.

Die Ereignisse der Politik haben so manche beklagenswerte Spannungen, Spaltungen und Entfremdungen mit sich gebracht, aber mehr denn je bin ich überzeugt von der Notwendigkeit jenes Universalismus, dem unser Friedrich Schiller das Wort redete, als er, zu einer Zeit, als ebenfalls weder in den Gesprächen noch in den Schriften des Tages vor dem allverfolgenden Dämon der Politik Rettung war, in der öffentlichen Ankündigung seiner Zeitschrift „Die Horen“ die Worte schrieb: „Je mehr das beschränkte Interesse der Gegenwart die Gemüter in Spannung setzt, einengt und unterjocht, desto dringender wird das Bedürfnis, durch ein allgemeines Interesse an dem, was *rein menschlich* und über allen Einfluß der Zeiten erhaben ist, sie wieder in Freiheit zu setzen und die politisch geteilte Welt unter der Fahne der Wahrheit und Schönheit wieder zu vereinigen.“

Das sind zu hohe Worte, um auf meine Existenz und Tätigkeit anwendbar zu sein; aber von dem Bedürfnis, das Schiller für so dringend erachtet, nämlich die eingeengten Gemüter in Freiheit zu setzen und die politisch geteilte Welt in einem höheren Zeichen, dem Zeichen der „Wahrheit und Schönheit“, das heißt der Kunst, zu vereinigen, — davon ist diese Existenz tatsächlich erfüllt, diese Tätigkeit geleitet; und so tut es mir wohl, nicht nur in den westeuropäischen Ländern und in der „politisch geteilten“ Welt meiner eigenen Sprache, sondern auch hinter dem unseligen „Eisernen Vorhang“ Freunde zu besitzen: nicht, weil ich mit dem Meinen durchaus aller Welt gefallen möchte, sondern weil ich darin die Möglichkeit der Verständigung und des Sichfindens im Menschlichen, mit einem Wort des *Friedens* sich andeuten sehe.

Nun erwarte ich mit Vergnügen das Erscheinen des ersten Bandes dieser Sammlung, der lauter Produkte meiner Frühzeit enthalten soll: Skizzen und Novellen, die vor fünfzig und mehr Jahren geschrieben wurden. Ich denke dabei in erster Linie an zwei Stücke, an denen zu hängen ich besonderen Grund habe. Mit dem „*Kleinen Herrn Friedemann*“, zuerst veröffentlicht in der „Neuen Deutschen Rundschau“ des S. Fischer Verlages in Berlin, trat ich, ein Zweiundzwanzigjähriger, in die Literatur ein, und diese Erzählung machte die Bahn frei für das Erscheinen von „*Buddenbrooks*“ meinem ersten Roman, den ich mit fünfundzwanzig Jahren vollendete. Ihm folgte „*Tonio Kröger*“, eine Novelle, deren jugendlich lyrischer Schmelz sich merkwürdigerweise durch ein halbes Jahrhundert frisch erhalten und im Wechsel der Generationen immer aufs neue die Sympathie junger Herzen gewonnen hat. Gern stelle ich mir vor, wie nun die Gesichter junger ungarischer Leser sich über diese Seiten neigen werden, deren Bekenntnisse „von anno dazumal“ sind, denen aber eine gewisse beständige Gültigkeit verliehen zu sein scheint.

Thomas Mann

FIRE AT DAWN

*A drama in three acts and four settings**

By

JÓZSEF DARVAS

CAST

JÓZSEF BÓNIS
LAJOS BÓNIS
MRS. LAJOS BÓNIS
GÉZA
AUNT ILONKA
MARIKA
ANTAL BENCSIK
GYÖRGY TÖRÖK

MIHÁLY VARGA
MRS. MIHÁLY VARGA
FERENC ZANA
SÁNDOR VIDRÁK
LITTLE KÁLMÁN
MRS. VANCZÁK
THE MAN FROM
THE DISTRICT COUNCIL

ACT I

The scene is laid in the home of "Aunt Ilonka," the widow of old Balog. We are shown the "front parlour" of a simple peasant house at the edge of the village. The "front parlour" too is simple, partly still furnished with the old trappings, but with traces of the "incursions of the modern world" also apparent. The old tiled earthenware stove is still there in the corner, but it is hardly ever used any more. It has been left more as a decoration, or rather as a symbol of caution. Beside it, there is an attractive iron stove. Electricity has also been installed, but the petrol

lamp still stands on top of the old stove. There is also a wireless set. In fact, the home shows a touching mixture of the old form of life and the new. But all this, taken together, is by no means drab. It is the end of March, with dusk setting in. The room is in twilight, but not yet dark. The noise of children playing in the street can be heard.

SCENE I

Aunt Ilonka, First Messenger, Géza

FIRST MESSENGER (*comes in and hands a paper to Aunt Ilonka*) For Comrade Bónis. (*Off*)

* Only the first act is reproduced here. For a summary of the whole play, see in addition to the author's contribution on pp. 121—124—our Theatre Review, pp. 181—182.

AUNT ILONKA: I'll give it him.

(Walks back and forth in the room, setting this and that to rights. An old woman of about 65, she has done a great deal of work in her time, but she is still sprightly, "doing fine." She keeps looking out of the window facing the street, and, at the sound of a child yelling outside, quickly opens it and shouts out) Pista, you young devil! Why are you bullying that little girl? Aren't you ashamed of yourself, a hulking great lout like you? I'll fetch you one in a moment, mark my words! (There is a knock at the door leading into the room. She calls over her shoulder): Come in! (But she still sends a few words of disapproval after the "culprit", Pista) You'll get it from your mother, I'll see to that. I'll tell her about you!

GÉZA (comes in. He is a good-looking young man of 24 or 25. His clothes and behaviour are characteristically those of the young people who have only recently left the university and the town. He has a bundle of papers under his arm. He is grave, put out. He bows slightly): Good evening, my dear aunt.

AUNT ILONKA: That you Géza? What's made you so polite? What's up? Did he call on you?

GÉZA: Yes.

AUNT ILONKA: And what happened? Why don't you tell me? What did they say to each other?

GÉZA: Nothing.

AUNT ILONKA: Nothing?

GÉZA: My father didn't even enter into conversation with Uncle Józsi. Told him to get out. (Then adds) Drove him out.

AUNT ILONKA (shocked): And did you let him?

GÉZA (angrily): What could I have done? (After a short pause, cynically) And anyway, Cain killed Abel, didn't he? Though he had not even tried to recruit him to the coop. All my father did was drive his brother out.

AUNT ILONKA: Why, you, you... Aren't you ashamed to be talking like that?

GÉZA: All I wanted to say was that the world will go ahead for all that. There's no need to despair. (In a different tone) What about Marika?

AUNT ILONKA: She's at the school.

GÉZA: She's not there any more. I looked for her there.

AUNT ILONKA: Then she's off to do some canvassing. Didn't you go?

GÉZA (avoiding a straight answer): Haven't you any idea, Aunt Ilonka, where Marika was sent? I'd like to talk to her urgently.

AUNT ILONKA: Your uncle Józsi's the big chief, not I. (She reverts again to the previous subject) So he drove him out. For all that he'd been preparing so much for today's visit. He didn't say a word, but I saw it on him. He's been preparing for days. (A short silence) Why didn't you talk to your dad?

GÉZA: That's easy to say. (In a different tone) Since my uncle Józsi's come back, I haven't so much as been able to talk to him. He doesn't sleep of a night, just roams about. We're afraid for him, poor mother and me. Why, last night when I peeped out after him, there he was, standing stock still in the yard, for hours on end. He didn't move a muscle, just kept staring at a star. (Suddenly, as though he were ashamed of his softness, he switches to a cynical note) Maybe, of course, he was watching for the Sputnik.

AUNT ILONKA: Is that a way to talk about your father? Fine ways they taught you at that university, I must say. It was worth spending four years there!

GÉZA (bitterly): The world isn't as fine as they taught us it was. The world, Aunt Ilonka!

AUNT ILONKA: There's no call for you to be at odds with the world. Where's the world that would have given me a pension, eh? I'll admit they're still fussing about with it at the District Council, but that's beside the point.

SCENE 2

As before, with Marika

MARIKA (*bursts in at the door. She is 22 or 23 years old, a charming, pretty young thing, full of life. She has copybooks and papers under her arm*): How do you do Auntie? Hello Géza. Did you finish so soon? Heavens, how hungry I am! We went to see the Süles. They didn't offer us so much as a glass of water. But they did sign! True, I praised their little girl to the skies, as though she were the best pupil on earth. I really don't know what I'll do when I have to send them her report at the end of term. Let's hope the coop will be strong by then. Don't you think so? (*She says all this with exuberant zest, hardly pausing for breath. Now she calls a brief halt*) Hasn't comrade Bónis come home yet?

AUNT ILONKA: No. And imagine, Marika. His brother chased him away.

MARIKA (*shocked and sobered*): Poor man! After having prepared for it so.

AUNT ILONKA: You noticed that, too, did you?

MARIKA (*to Géza*): Were you there?

AUNT ILONKA (*answers for Géza, with a note of reproach*): Of course he was. And he let him.

GÉZA (*erupting*): Why are you only sorry for him? Can't anyone pity my father?

AUNT ILONKA: After the way they loved each other when they were children. I never did see such a pair of brothers as them. And now they're deadly enemies. My poor sister... (*To Géza*) Your poor grannie. Perhaps it's best she hasn't lived to see it all come to this. (*Sobs*)

MARIKA (*putting her arm round her shoulder to console her*): Don't cry, Aunt Ilonka. You'll see it'll all come right.

AUNT ILONKA: Go ahead then, and put it right. You're both young... it's your business now. (*Off*)

SCENE 3

Géza, Marika

MARIKA (*gaily goes over to Géza*): How good that you've come. I'm so happy today.

GÉZA: I went to look for you at the school.

MARIKA: I said I'd be looking up the families of my pupils. (*A little sulkily*) Is that how you remember what I say to you?

GÉZA: I looked for you. I missed you, badly.

MARIKA (*playfully*): Dear sir and comrade! You may herewith "liquidate" your feeling of privation, for "here I am, spick and span." (*In a somewhat different tone*) Tell me, how did you manage with the Zanas? So I can learn... after all I can't go around telling everybody that their children are unique geniuses. I'll end up by having all the village parents at loggerheads with one another. Then that's what'll break up the coop. (*Laughs*)

GÉZA (*gravely, quietly*): I didn't go to the Zanas.

MARIKA: Isn't that where you were sent?

GÉZA: I didn't go. (*A short pause*) Nor shall I go. Either there, or anywhere else. I can't go on with this any longer.

MARIKA (*astounded*): What's happened to you?

GÉZA (*blurting out*): Let's go away from here, Marika!

MARIKA (*uncomprehendingly*): Go away?! Where? And why? You're so strange.

GÉZA: I feel as though I were being torn asunder. This world here is tearing me apart. And both my halves are falling in the mud... Both this half and that half are being trampled upon. Do you know what's going on in the village?

MARIKA: I know, I've been out today too... Canvassing from house to house.

GÉZA: Let's go away from here, Marika!

MARIKA: You asked me to come.

GÉZA (*passionately*): But now I ask you to leave. I've learned to hate this village. The mud! The dust! The sunshine! The trees! The plants! The people! Yet how I loved them once. They told me a beautiful lie when I was small—and now they deny it.

MARIKA: I've come to like it here. I'm at home at last.

GÉZA: So you are going to desert me?

MARIKA (*reproachfully reprimanding him*): You gave me faith... and a purpose... when I thought life had no purpose and when I was so lonely. It was good... I thank you for it. But why do you now want to take it all back?

GÉZA: Come with me.

MARIKA: The Süles have a tiny baby. This size. (*She shows him*) There too, I said it was the loveliest child on earth. That no parents had ever given birth to such a baby. To tell you the truth, that's what made them sign. (*She is a trifle ashamed of her strange method of "canvassing," yet adds, with shy lyricism*) But I honestly meant it. It was so good to kiss the little pink sole of its foot... And I'd so much like to see it toddle to school in six or seven years' time. Do you know how lovely it'll be? I'll lead it into the classroom and show it to its place.

GÉZA: Let's go away from here, Marika.

MARIKA: Was it really you who persuaded me to come here? (*Her voice has become bitter and sarcastic*) A walk in The Great Forest... hand in hand... The moon was shining, and you were giving me a lecture: "Let's not continue school, Marika... I'm going back to my village, and as soon as you graduate, you'll come after me... Because we have a responsibility towards our kind! ..."

GÉZA: Stop that!

MARIKA: Can you only accuse others? Even the trees are at fault. Only you're not. Because of your father? (*A short pause*)

A person can always talk cleverly to his father, if he wishes to.

GÉZA: I could also reproach you. You've got very little time for me nowadays. You don't even listen to what I have to say, but quickly pass judgment. Far too easily.

MARIKA: It's only that I don't like having problems made of everything.

GÉZA (*hurt*): But only since my uncle's here.

MARIKA: Don't be silly.

GÉZA: You're always with him...

MARIKA: He lives here, and so do I.

GÉZA: Do you imagine I believe that all you do of an evening is talk about the advantages of sowing maize in a lattice pattern? And about the advantages of large-scale farming in general?

MARIKA: You're being very vulgar.

GÉZA: Have I touched on sacred sentiments then? The greying saint, with the halo of suffering over his grisly temples?

MARIKA: Aren't you ashamed of yourself? (*A short pause*) It was you who told me pretty lies. And how I believed you!

GÉZA: Maybe I did encourage you to see the bright side. But if you love someone, that means you're prepared to go even through hell with him...

MARIKA: If there is a hell. But there isn't. And if there isn't, then don't let's try and make one! (*She suddenly stops, for the door is opening*)

SCENE 4

As before, with József Bónis, Antal Bencsik, Aunt Ilonka.

JÓZSEF BÓNIS (*about 45 years old, greying at the temples, strong, manly, typical of the intellectuals who have left the village of their origin, comes in from the street*): Good evening, Marika. Hello Géza. Why didn't you go to the Zanas?

GÉZA: I'll tell you. That's just what I came for. (*Off*)

AUNT ILONKA (*enters from the kitchen*): Oh dear, I've been waiting for you so!

J. BÓNIS: Haven't they brought the reports yet?

AUNT ILONKA: There's a heap of 'em there... Did you talk to those people at the District?

J. BÓNIS: (*glancing through the reports*): Oh yes. The pension's all right. Everything's all right.

MARIKA (*joyfully*): Come along then, Aunt Ilonka. We'll prepare a celebration supper.

AUNT ILONKA: I'd have liked to have seen them say it wasn't all right! (*She steps to the sideboard, pulls the drawer open, and unwinds her "archives" from the cloth in which they were wrapped. She takes out a document*) Here it is! What does it say?

J. BÓNIS (*without looking at it, knows it by heart*): February 15th, 1949.

AUNT ILONKA: Was that when I joined the Red Star? It was. And what is the date now?

J. BÓNIS: 1959.

AUNT ILONKA: What month?

J. BÓNIS: March.

AUNT ILONKA: Well then. Have I got my ten years? I have. Over and above. But for all that bureaucracy... (*In the meanwhile she is wrapping up her "archives"*)

ANTAL BENCsik (*a weather-beaten proletarian of the land, about 60 years old, wearing a fur cap on his head and gumboots on his feet, his left arm hangs paralysed by his side, asks a trifle sardonically*): Have you any idea, my good sister-in-law, what the word bureaucracy means?

AUNT ILONKA: Of course I have. It's when I don't give my hens fodder at feeding time, but go and convene a conference about it first. (*To Bónis*) Scrambled eggs?

J. BÓNIS (*laughing*): Right you are.

AUNT ILONKA: With lots of onions?

J. BÓNIS: Right again!

A. BENCsik: And with lots of eggs... for a change...

AUNT ILONKA: Marika dear, come and give me a hand, will you? (*Off. The atmosphere suddenly becomes oppressive*)

SCENE 5

József Bónis, Antal Bencsik

J. BÓNIS (*after a long silence, with repressed passion*): What's going on here, Antal? Everything was all right at the start... and now, all of a sudden, it's become a welter of confusion...

A. BENCsik (*evasively*): Is there something wrong?

J. BÓNIS: You know very well there is... We can't make any headway, for the life of us.

A. BENCsik: There's nothing wrong in our parts, at Szíkalja.

J. BÓNIS: Nearly everyone was already a member there. But elsewhere. What are we to do now?

A. BENCsik (*this time turning to the crux of the matter*): So even Lajos threw you out...

J. BÓNIS (*surprised*): How do you know?

A. BENCsik: Just because you didn't tell me? Do you think the whole village wasn't waiting to see what would happen? I warned you, before you went, that your brother had become a worse reactionary than any of the kulaks.

J. BÓNIS: He isn't as bad as that.

A. BENCsik: If I had my way, I'd far prefer to leave him out. What the devil do we want a man like that for?... But now the propaganda's afoot that Jóska Bónis has come home, that he's wheedling the village into the coop, but that he'll be sure to leave his brother out of it. We must stop their mouths, and be quick about it.

SECOND MESSENGER *enters with a bundle of papers and hands them to József Bónis*

J. BÓNIS: From Körtés-zúg? (*Glances at the papers*) Not one? No one?

SECOND MESSENGER: No one. (*Silence*) Where shall we start tomorrow morning, comrade Bónis?

J. BÓNIS: I'll tell you at tomorrow's briefing... (*2nd Messenger off. To Antal Bencsik*) You must go to Körtés-zúg tomorrow. We must get that ward started somehow.

A. BENCSIK: I've still got Malom-köz to attend to...

J. BÓNIS: This is the most important now. Let the Koleszárs go down there.

A. BENCSIK: Do they know how to handle dogs?

J. BÓNIS (*laughs*): It's not the dogs they'll have to canvass.

A. BENCSIK: Back in '55 the Cakós and the Kabódís, the ones with the grey horses, managed to stay out of Socialism by letting those huge beasts off their chains. There wasn't a canvasser dared set foot there.

J. BÓNIS: Maybe the dogs have calmed down a bit since then.

A. BENCSIK: The dogs, maybe... (*After a short pause*) And who am I to go with?

J. BÓNIS: With Gyuri Török.

A. BENCSIK (*grows rigid, and resolutely declares*): I'm not going with him, whatever you say!

J. BÓNIS: The people there listen to him.

A. BENCSIK: I don't care... (*And he adds, stressing each word*) And I shan't be vice-chairman with him either.

J. BÓNIS (*in utter consternation*): What's this? It's no more than half an hour since we talked about it. Then you agreed.

A. BENCSIK: Did I say "yes"? Did you hear me say it?

J. BÓNIS: But why did you stay silent? If you didn't agree?

A. BENCSIK: I was chairman of the Red Star for ten years. I was glad you were coming to take my place. Now that you were taking over, I felt like an old king who was handing his throne over to his son. The part about the king isn't quite right now, but that's how the fairy-tales had it...

J. BÓNIS: Have you come to regret it? For days now, I've felt as though you were somehow at loggerheads with me. (*Bencsik is silent*) Why are you silent again?

A. BENCSIK: The Party sent you here. They probably told you how to go about your business. For me, the Party is everything. (*He seizes his drooping left arm*) I gave this for it. And half my life. I don't want to do the Party any harm. I'd rather be silent.

J. BÓNIS: Let's not beat about the bush, Antal. That's not what we agreed to do.

A. BENCSIK (*looks him in the eye, then slowly taps the region of his heart*): Isn't there something wrong with you here?

J. BÓNIS: Wrong? What should be wrong?

A. BENCSIK: ... That throne that I've handed over to you. During the ten years it was often an iron throne, you know. Not quite like that of György Dózsa, but not much better. (*Erupts*) And now you too want me to work shoulder to shoulder with those who kindled the fire under the iron throne? As though nothing had happened? With these people, like Gyuri Török and the rest. Petty kulaks, the lot of them. They've climbed up high and sh... in our eye, like the eagles that fly... D'you really believe they're not trying to pull a fast one on us this time? What they're after is to be masters again, in the coop. And have us become their labourers.

J. BÓNIS: Gyuri Török's a decent chap, isn't he?

A. BENCSIK: Well... he hasn't murdered his father.

J. BÓNIS: And a good farmer.

A. BENCSIK: Yes. But for whom?

J. BÓNIS: The new members certainly listen to him. That's what's most important now.

A. BENCSIK: For you, it's they who are the most important! Then why do you ask me? Everything's all right as it is. All I want you to understand is that I shan't be vice-chairman. I'll be a simple member, and that's all there is to it. I'll dance to the tune that Gyuri Török calls. We've had things like that before—we'll have it again. I don't want anyone—not even you—to say

that I'm after the flesh-pot. What I'm after, is to keep our cause unsullied.

J. BÓNIS: Who's sullying it? Tell me! Here at Tiszahalász. Am I?

A. BENCSIK: We say, don't we, that we're materialists. We're against religion. How is it then that for all that, we do as the Bible says. "But whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also" . . . And that we too are gladder of one lost lamb that has come to the fold than of 99 true ones. Though it may easily turn out that the lamb is not a lamb at all, but a wolf. We've seen things of that sort, and not so very long ago, either. (*A short pause*) We've suffered for this coop . . . They're coming to sit in the nest we've built. And you want us to thank them for it. Next they'll be helping to put it up for auction, like they did in fiftysix.

J. BÓNIS: But not Gyuri Török. He wasn't even a member then. You wouldn't have any truck with him.

A. BENCSIK: I can't say he pushed his way in.

J. BÓNIS (*persuasively*): We must set our individual grievances aside, Antal. We're not just Communists for ourselves.

A. BENCSIK: I've often been spat upon here. In fiftysix I was promised a rope. All right, I'll forget it. But do you know what it is I'll never forget? In fiftytwo there were few of us, and we were in a pretty poor pass. That was the year of the great drought, you'll recall. Our animals died, one after another, for starvation dried out the very marrow in their bones . . . And these fine farmers were not willing to give us so much as a pound of barley. Not even on loan . . . "Give'em labour units," they taunted us . . . And I cried as though I were a small kid. (*Even now, he is on the verge of tears*)

J. BÓNIS (*after a perturbed silence*): There's many things we must forget . . . There's no other way we can live . . . And to some extent that applies to them too . . . They too could reproach us with a thing or two . . .

A. BENCSIK: I suppose so, if we look hard enough . . .

J. BÓNIS: Why do we have to look so hard? Was it not their granaries that we swept clean in '52 and '53?

A. BENCSIK: I didn't sweep them.

J. BÓNIS: No, but you agreed to it. Or kept silent.

A. BENCSIK: Their hearts never hurt them for our sakes.

J. BÓNIS: I was at Antal Zsebők's this afternoon. He spread out his tax-ticket for 1952 for me to see. "Then," he said, "they wanted to fleece us, so we should feel cold and creep in under the common brood-hen . . . I preferred to shiver, but I didn't creep in! . . . Now I'm not cold, and I shall join." And as far as I'm concerned, that's the one thing that now interests me . . . I'd like to see a village . . . my own at least . . . then the rest . . . where the people of Körtés-zúg and of Szikálja do not hate each other and do not despise each other because of their rank or fortune . . . where there are only people, with wise and lovely aims. That is what it is worth living for. And forgetting . . .

A. BENCSIK: It's not so easy to forget.

J. BÓNIS: Is everything all right then?

A. BENCSIK (*with silent stubbornness*): Yes, provided I don't go with Gyuri Török. And I shan't be vice-chairman, either.

A. BÓNIS (*bursting out*): For Christ's sake! Don't you want to understand, Antal, what it's all about? What are we to do with these people? Leave them where they are?

A. BENCSIK (*with livid passion*): Shove 'em into the coop, damn their eyes, but don't let's go pandering to them!

J. BÓNIS: And who's to do the work? Do you want to set an overseer with a big stick behind their backs?

A. BENCSIK: All right. I don't want to do any harm. That's why I don't say anything. I'm holding my tongue.

J. BÓNIS: But you are doing harm like this, even if you don't want to.

A. BENCSIK (*offended*): I've had that said to me before... By a comrade from the County. And when the coop needed defending, I didn't see him around, anywhere... Goodnight then... (*Starts off, outward*)

J. BÓNIS: Antal, do go and see Gyuri Török.

A. BENCSIK (*turning back from the door*): I've lived to see the overthrow of proletarian rule twice. When in fiftysix the wireless said the end had come, I felt here... as though a knife had been plunged into me. I went off with nothing but an axe and stood in the gateway to the Red Star. For all that I can only hold it with one hand... Ever since, I've kept the axe beside my bed each night... Is that anti-Party behaviour too? (*He waits a little, then goes off*)

SCENE 6

József Bónis, then Marika

(J. BÓNIS *paces up and down the room in an agitated manner*)

MARIKA (*coming in, with a tablecloth, plates and cutlery in hand*): May I lay the table?

J. BÓNIS (*stops, watches Marika at work*): Can I help?

MARIKA: You seem very tired.

J. BÓNIS: Maybe I'll manage to lift a plate for all that.

MARIKA: Did you quarrel with the old chap?

J. BÓNIS (*looks at her, a little confused*)... How can one be so young?

MARIKA: You didn't answer my question, though.

J. BÓNIS: Oh, but I did.

MARIKA: When will you come along and visit us at the school? You promised you would.

J. BÓNIS: Only if I can teach them for an hour. But I think I'd probably earn bad marks from you for my teaching... It

was so long ago, it may not even have been true...

MARIKA: There's still the same black-board in the school. It's a bit battered and old... (*A little scared*) But you can write on it!

J. BÓNIS (*continuing his own line of thought*): You know I was born here, spent my childhood here and then taught here for five years. And however odd it may seem, I feel as though I had only now really come home. Now that I'm only "on a mission." For that's what they put on my paper at the Ministry: "Reason for absence: Departure on a mission." (*Brief pause*) "A mission!" That means you're sent to do something, you do it, then you draw up a written report, stating precisely that you've done what you were sent to do. But what can I report? That my brother wasn't willing so much as to speak me? That he drove me out of the house of our parents, as though I were a stray dog? You can't go "reporting" things like that, can you?

MARIKA: ... Tell me what happened. I went from house to house all afternoon, talking and talking away... smiling... I even drank wine. But all the while I was thinking about the reception your brother would give you?

J. BÓNIS: You see, Marika, you can't come "on a mission" to a place like this. The people here are bubbling with the tense excitement of universal salvation. Not since the days of St. István... since the adoption of Christianity... have the people of these parts undergone so cruel an inner tussle... You either understand this, or you go to the devil. You can't come and "do a job" here... You have to go the whole hog with these people... all the way along the paths of their torment. Those who don't understand this... who can only write reports... had far better not set foot here. (*He has so far been talking, as though to himself. He suddenly notices this*) I'm lecturing you.

MARIKA (*in the tones of a confession*): I do so love to hear you talk. (*Becomes confused, tries to explain*) Because I feel exactly the same way, only I can't put it into words. When you say something, I always have the feeling I've thought about this myself, and in just the same way... I also love what I'm doing. You know I was an orphan, and I became a school mistress so I could try and give the children a little of what I was never given...

J. BÓNIS: Do go on talking...

MARIKA (*laughs in confusion*): I don't know what about...

J. BÓNIS: About yourself.

MARIKA: That's not interesting.

J. BÓNIS: It interests me.

MARIKA (*with a shy little laugh*): I've got a little story. You won't laugh at me?

J. BÓNIS: No.

MARIKA: I was a foundling. My foster parents weren't bad people. They weren't good either, though. Only very poor. That was their main characteristic... I might say it was their nature. (*She stops for a moment*) We had a well-to-do farmer for a neighbour. They had a daughter, the same age as I. In spring she always wore white cotton socks... with a thin blue stripe at the top. For years I wished for a pair of white cotton socks like hers, so hard, it nearly broke my heart. Long after, when I went to College, I wanted to buy a pair of socks like those, with my first scholarship. But I didn't find any in any of the shops. They had white socks of all sorts, but not with blue stripes... They said they weren't being made any more... And then I cried about it so hard... (*Short pause*) You know I had prayed so much for those socks. When I was small I was very religious, though no one had taught me to be. In fact, I had to run away to go to church. Later? It was not I who let go of God's hand. It was he who let go of mine, and human beings took hold of it instead. (*Brief pause*) What other way is there of

saying, "I owe everything to this system?" Because that sounds so much like a leading article...

J. BÓNIS: But it's true, isn't it? (*After a short silence*) Haven't you got anyone?

MARIKA: Only the children.... And Aunt Ilonka... It is as though she had become my mother by now.

J. BÓNIS (*suddenly pops the question*): And Géza?

MARIKA: It was he who asked me to come here... We became acquainted at the university. Our ideas about life were so similar. But nowadays we seem no longer to understand one another. I don't know, but it's as though it were I who's at home in this village, and he who was the stranger.

J. BÓNIS: Aren't you being a bit too severe?

MARIKA: I can't live without believing in something. I want to believe in life. In what I'm doing.

J. BÓNIS: It doesn't hurt, sometimes, to have a bit of understanding to go along with your belief. His situation here isn't easy either. There's his father.

MARIKA (*violently*): Why, is yours any easier? (*In a different tone*) You like very much... don't you... to live, and to work? To create things that are new and lovely... and good for people?

J. BÓNIS: Like it? It's my existence. (*Ponders*) Only, you know, you always die a little when you realize that someone who was once closest to you no longer understands you. The question-mark of a great load of sorrow weighs down on you—is this all that life is about? It has asked me that question several times now. (*Realizes what he is saying and, in a different tone*) But I don't want to distress you. You're still a young girl. And anyway, I'm not right. The only reason I told you this was that you should see—I too can make up philosophies, if I want to... (*The intimate atmosphere gives place to a measure of confusion as the door opens*)

SCENE 7

As before, with Aunt Ilonka and Géza

AUNT ILONKA (*comes in, with a large dish in her hand; Géza is behind her*): Here's supper. Haven't you laid the table yet? (*Notices the plate in Bónis' hand*) Oh, I see, you're helping too.

J. BÓNIS (*with a confused chuckle*): You have a fine opinion of me, my dear great aunt.

AUNT ILONKA: I've known you for close on forty-five years now. (*In the meanwhile they sit down. Géza does not take a seat at the table but sits separately and gravely smokes a cigarette*) Why don't you come and sit here?

GÉZA: I'm not hungry.

AUNT ILONKA: That isn't why we usually eat.

J. BÓNIS (*to Géza*): So you didn't go to the Zanas.

GÉZA (*repelling him*): Perhaps it would be better not to chat about that while you're eating.

J. BÓNIS (*surprised and becoming ill-disposed, in a bit of a temper*): I have no desire to chat.

AUNT ILONKA (*interposes, trying to save the situation*): I nearly forgot, there's that Vidrák waiting outside. It's about the fourth time he's been wanting to see you today.

J. BÓNIS: Why didn't you let him in? (*Stands up and steps towards the door*)

AUNT ILONKA: Have your meal in peace first. That double-crosser will envy the very food in your mouth.

J. BÓNIS (*through the door*): Come in, Sándor.

SCENE 8

As before, with Sándor Vidrák

S. VIDRÁK (*about 60 years old, a sly peasant, the eternal hired hand; enters cap in hand, humbly, but immediately starts to back out again*): You just finish first. I'll wait.

J. BÓNIS (*pulling him in*): Come right in. And sit down.

S. VIDRÁK: Good eating!

AUNT ILONKA (*gives the customary rejoinder to the traditional wish*): Thank you, may you have your share of it. Of course, it was only habit that made me say that.

S. VIDRÁK (*chuckling*): Aunt Ilonka's always a-joking with me.

AUNT ILONKA: The devil's a-joking. But one thing I can tell you—if you've come to join, you've come in vain. We won't have you. You joined in nineteen-fifty, quitted in fiftythree, joined again in fiftyfive and left in fiftysix. It's a wonder you know whether you're in or out now.

J. BÓNIS: All right, all right, that'll do. Have a glass of wine Sándor? (*Starts pouring some, without waiting for an answer*)

AUNT ILONKA: Of course he will. Especially if it's free. (*Out in the street there is the sudden sound of a stammering singsong voice*)

LITTLE KÁLMÁN (*singing*): "Come bury the body... That death has overcome... But at the day of judgment... It will rise to life eternal..."

S. VIDRÁK: It's Little Kálmán... He's on his way home.

MARIKA: Yet there was no funeral today.

AUNT ILONKA: He lives out there nowadays—he's always at the cemetery. Why don't you keep him at home? He frightens people when he's about.

S. VIDRÁK: He's never done anyone any harm yet. He's a peaceful dolt.

J. BÓNIS: Does the Count send him something at least?

S. VIDRÁK: From time to time. But that's not why we keep the poor fellow. We pity him.

AUNT ILONKA (*to József Bónis*): This man can't read or write to this very day, but he's a slyer double-crosser than six lawyers put together. He only keeps Little Kálmán so that if the Count returns after all, he won't take the land back from him.

S. VIDRÁK: Don't say such things, Aunt Ilonka.

J. BÓNIS: Why haven't you learned to read all this time, Sándor? Here's the school mistress; she'll teach you.

MARIKA: I've asked him to come, several times.

S. VIDRÁK: Before the war I'd more or less decided to learn. But in '39 you and neighbour Bencsik were arrested and the gendarmes searched for books and things. So I reconsidered the business. Why should I be able to read if even that can bring a body trouble? And since then, time has gone by.

J. BÓNIS (*laughs*): So it was because of us that you didn't learn?

AUNT ILONKA: Now you'll admit he's as sly a double-crosser as they make'em. *FIRST MESSENGER comes in, hands over the report, and immediately leaves*

S. VIDRÁK (*to József Bónis, with a sly overtone*): They say all the canvassing comrades will be leaving the village tomorrow. Tell me, what do they do in the daytime: Because they always come of an evening.

AUNT ILONKA: Because you hide in the daytime.

J. BÓNIS (*teasing him a little*): Would you be glad if they went away?

S. VIDRÁK: No, I was only saying... because it's the talk around here, you know.

J. BÓNIS: And why should they be going?

S. VIDRÁK: Because of this 'ere Berlin question... So they say...

J. BÓNIS (*encouraging him*): And?

S. VIDRÁK (*cautiously*): And that that Ruschov and that Eisenhoffer will discuss...

J. BÓNIS: What?

S. VIDRÁK: All sorts of things. Including this kolkhoz business. (*Notices that he has said something he ought not to have*) But why are you asking me? You know far better how things are. You've only just come from Budapest.

AUNT ILONKA: Was that the urgent business you had to discuss?

J. BÓNIS: Just don't listen to silly talk like that, Sándor.

S. VIDRÁK (*beating about the bush*): If we must have this cooperative... And must we?... (*Waits a little*) Well, if we must, couldn't a decree be issued on it?

J. BÓNIS: A decree?

S. VIDRÁK: Of course... If it's as necessary as all that... I'd issue a decree in their place. So the people shouldn't have to badger each other that much. Make it compulsory, and that's all there is to it. There wouldn't be anything to worry about... Couldn't it be done that way? (*Looks hopefully at József Bónis who laughingly waves "No" to him*) Or let's say I sign now... and then I wait and see about this 'ere Berlin question... and my signature would only become valid then...

GÉZA (*has been sullenly silent throughout, but now snaps at Sándor Vidrák*): What's the good of all this yammering? And why do you slink around the house, like a whipped cur? (*The others look at him, flabbergasted*)

MARIKA: Géza!

GÉZA (*wilder still*): There's your liberated, purposeful peasant for you! Waiting for a kick to send him flying into the file... and even that only as a result of a blessed decree. Because then he won't have to do any thinking. (*Jumps up and seizes Vidrák's lapels*)... You're waiting for the Count to come home, aren't you?

J. BÓNIS (*also jumping up and pulling Géza back*): Don't go off your chump, man!

S. VIDRÁK (*in the short, dumbfounded silence that ensues, in a voice that verges on tears*): I still wake up of a morning at two o'clock, as though I heard the overseer's clanging... But it's only my heart that clangs. Why do you have to talk to me like that? (*To Géza*) And you, of all people.

LITTLE KÁLMÁN (*comes in without knocking, he is a strapping lad of about 24, with an idiotic grin and the stammer of a lunatic; to Vidrák*): Mmamma... sssays... to... ccome home... Supper's reready.

GÉZA: Here's the Count himself! (To Little Kálmán) Did your Excellency bring a whip? That's what they're waiting for here.

J. BÓNIS (to Géza): That'll do!

LITTLE KÁLMÁN (grinning): Nno whip... Sssupper... Nno funeral!

S. VIDRÁK: Why do you have to mock at me? What have I done to deserve it?

J. BÓNIS: You just go home in peace. No one will hurt you. (*Sándor Vidrák takes Little Kálmán by the hand and goes out. A long silence lingers after them*)

SCENE 9

József Bónis, Aunt Ilonka, Géza, Marika

MARIKA (to Géza): You shouldn't have done that. Why did you do it?

AUNT ILONKA (gathering the dishes the while): Not that it did any harm to that double-crosser.

GÉZA: I hate servile people.

J. BÓNIS: You haven't the right yet to hate anybody. This afternoon... at your father's... why weren't you as passionate there? Why were you mum? And why did you not go to the Zanas? You can tell us now. We're not chatting. (*Aunt Ilonka has gone out, meanwhile, with the dishes*)

GÉZA: I've brought the forms back. I'm not going on with it.

J. BÓNIS: So you're not going to help?

GÉZA: No!

J. BÓNIS: All right. No one's going to force you. Not if your conscience doesn't. Because if I'm not mistaken, you are a Communist.

GÉZA: But not against my father!

J. BÓNIS (his temper mounting): Perhaps I'm one against him?

MARIKA (to Géza): You're wrong there too. And why is it just now that you want to step aside?... When we could work together for all the things you got me to come for... In the Great Forest at Debrecen

you once said to me that there would be times when it was not the wind among the boughs or the song of the birds that we would hear, but the curses of the very people we were trying to help... And that, then too, we would not let go of each other's hands, for we would be in the right...

GÉZA: I didn't come here to be lectured at, but to hand this back. (*Puts the bundle down on the table*) And to ask you not to hurt my father.

J. BÓNIS (sharply): Who hurt him? If it comes to that, it was rather he that hurt me, by far!

GÉZA (beseechingly): Leave him in peace!

J. BÓNIS: Only him, eh? But not Vidrák. And not the rest. You stand aside and wash your hands. Because in "general terms" you approve of Socialism. Is that it?

GÉZA: I still say that Socialism is an inevitable historical necessity. Only I've discovered that in the last resort it too fails to solve anything.

J. BÓNIS: You've discovered that... Here, at Tiszahalász?

GÉZA: Here... Yes, here! Man has been seeking and searching ever since he has been man. But he can never be happy. Unhappiness is the eternal lot of mankind.

MARIKA (interrupts): Don't say that! Then it wouldn't be worth living.

GÉZA: This Vidrák wants a decree on the cooperative. He's lying! What he wants is Fate. These people are so cowardly, so spineless, that they prefer to shoulder Fate rather than the "freedom" to decide their own future.

MARIKA: That isn't true!

J. BÓNIS: And you're a schoolmaster here? A Communist schoolmaster? And talk like that of your own kind?

GÉZA: I became a Communist because I hate people who are like a flock of sheep. But I don't want to be a sheep-dog, either. For me, the greatest achievement of the twentieth century is that man

has, at last, for the first time in history, let go of God's hand.

J. BÓNIS: Let go of God's hand, to be able to seize each other's.

MARIKA (*interposing*): And thus to be happy. It was you who said so!

GÉZA (*with an embittered gesture*): Happiness! Socialism only creates new forms of unhappiness. That's the only new thing about it.

J. BÓNIS: The only new thing?

GÉZA: Yes, it is. Man is always afraid of something. Of fire, of starvation, of the atom bomb, of the kolkhoz... In the last resort it all comes to the same thing.

J. BÓNIS (*unexpectedly puts the question*): You write, don't you? (*Géza stops short in surprise, and his eyes dart to Marika*) No one has betrayed you. But nowadays you inevitably suspect a young giant of literature behind these absolutely ready-made philosophies.

GÉZA: Don't insult me. I'm not a snivelling child, I'll have you know.

J. BÓNIS (*to Marika*): Would you leave us to ourselves a bit? If you'd be so good as to go along and fetch Gyuri Török...

MARIKA: I'd like to stay here.

GÉZA (*sharply, to Marika*): Which of us are you afraid of? (*The sharp words strike Marika as though she had been hit in the face. She turns and leaves the room*)

SCENE 10

József Bónis, Géza

J. BÓNIS (*after a tense silence*): What did that question mean? (*Géza is silent*) Well, would you care to explain?

GÉZA: There's nothing to explain.

J. BÓNIS (*in a calmer tone*): What's the matter with you, Géza?

GÉZA: Nothing.

J. BÓNIS (*after a short silence*): Are you very sorry for your father?

GÉZA: Very. (*The admission wells softly from Géza*)

J. BÓNIS: You see—why didn't you say so to begin with? That's plain talk that I can understand.

GÉZA: It's so hard to see him suffer and eat his heart out. You'll leave him in peace, won't you?

J. BÓNIS (*quietly, with sympathy*): ...I know it isn't easy for you. Hadn't we better talk about how we can help each other? And then, together, help your father?

GÉZA: Won't you answer the question I asked you?

J. BÓNIS: I have answered.

GÉZA (*stiffening again*): Then I'll answer, too. I won't be anyone's ally against my father.

J. BÓNIS: I don't want you as an ally against your father, but for your father. Even though he may not understand it, today. I'd like to drag him out of his purposeless, blind-alley life—all the more so as he's worthy of a better life, both for his gifts and as a man.

GÉZA: But if he doesn't want it!

J. BÓNIS: We Calvinists have a tradition of fine funeral speeches. They praise the dead by enumerating all the things they could have been. Do you want to hear that said of your father?

GÉZA (*repeats emphatically*): I've told you. I won't be anyone's ally against my father.

J. BÓNIS: That's not what I asked you to be. But if that's how you look at it, what am I to do? (*He says this in a way that indicates an end to their conversation. Then he adds*) But don't you go maligning Vidrák anymore. You're no better than he is. Your decrepit philosophy is the same for you as the "Berlin question" is for him. Only you're too much of a coward to admit it.

GÉZA: I protest!

J. BÓNIS (*snaps back*): You protest! You ought to be given a good spanking! It's easy enough for you today to go disparaging Vidrák and ranting away with your philosophy. But do you know how this Vidrák lived? And how he became the man

he is? You preach to us about eternal fear. Did you hear what he said about the overseer clanging at dawn? You took that juicy dungheap of a philosophy ready made. And now you're crowing a-top of it. But did you do anything to see to it that this man should not, after fourteen years, start up at two o'clock in the morning as though the overseer was ringing?

GÉZA: And what are you doing?

J. BÓNIS: I want to cure him.

GÉZA: So you bring him new suffering.

J. BÓNIS (*goes up to him and taps his chest*): You've got a poor shirt of armour, young man. It's made of tin. It clangs.

GÉZA (*with passionate reproach*): And yours? Of pulped paper! Ready-made answers from this week's pamphlet. But can they be applied to everything? You were locked up by your own comrades. Were they right? Then I believed that you were guilty. Was I right? Now you're standing here, ranged against your own brother. Are you right? I am told to go against my father. Would I be right? Shall I deny him, though I torment myself to death, or that which I believe?

J. BÓNIS: What belief is it you're talking about?

GÉZA (*with increasing vehemence*): Can I not have a faith? Have I no right to it? Do you too guard it like the peers guarded their estates?

J. BÓNIS: If I didn't know what makes you say it, I'd box your ears!

GÉZA (*quite wild by now*): Nowadays a belief has the same sort of male sex-appeal that an estate or a factory had in the old world. You even get a car for it, if you wiggle it well.

J. BÓNIS (*has calmed down*): Just go on, keep talking. But don't take others as a shield for your own unhappiness. That's the one thing an honest man can't do.

GÉZA: Isn't that what you're doing? That's what you came here for! (*At this moment, György Török enters with Marika*)

SCENE 11

As before, with Marika and György Török

MARIKA: György Török is here.

G. TÖRÖK (*a good-looking tall peasant, the same age as József Bónis, of the "modern peasant" type, takes in the situation and stops short*): Have I come at the wrong time? You sent for me.

J. BÓNIS (*calmed*): On the contrary. At the very best. That's right, isn't it, Géza?

GÉZA: I said I would not be anyone's ally against my father. (*Off. Marika looks in frightened interrogation at József Bónis, then goes out after Géza*)

SCENE 12

József Bónis, György Török

G. TÖRÖK (*looking after Géza*): Are you having to battle with the intellectuals too? Haven't you got enough on your hands with us peasants? (*In a different tone*) Because of his father, wasn't it? (*J. Bónis nods*) Lajos sent me a message to say that he doesn't know me; from now on, I'm a "traitor." (*A short pause*) I don't know whether you know, but we were the best of friends.

J. BÓNIS: I know.

G. TÖRÖK: How did you manage with him?

J. BÓNIS (*with bitter evasion*): Can it be, that you're the only one who doesn't know?

G. TÖRÖK: But you must convince him somehow, for all that. It's very important, believe me. There are about ten people who follow my lead, but fifty, or even a hundred, who follow his. That's the way it is.

(*A YOUNG WOMAN comes in, acting as a "messenger." Hands a packet to József Bónis*)

J. BÓNIS (*glancing into it*): Not even János Szőke?

YOUNG WOMAN: I was there myself. He said, as long as Lajos Bónis didn't join, he wouldn't either.

J. BÓNIS (*in a tired tone of voice*): All right. We'll meet tomorrow morning. (*Young woman goes out*)

G. TÖRÖK: What did I tell you?

J. BÓNIS (*changing the subject*): Didn't old Antal Bencsik call on you?

G. TÖRÖK: No, why?

J. BÓNIS: I was only asking.

G. TÖRÖK (*catching on, a little bitterly*): Only asking... (*A short pause*) You sent for me. But I'd have come myself, if you hadn't. Let's leave this vice-chairmanship business.

J. BÓNIS: Have you gone crazy too? (*J. Bónis looks at Török, taken aback*)

G. TÖRÖK: Who else? (*J. Bónis does not answer. In a different tone*) I won't deny it, yesterday, when you told me about it, I was quite glad. Last night I took a pencil and paper and began drawing... How we could take water from the Ér, for irrigation... But then I put down my pencil and crumpled up the paper. (*Takes a crumpled piece of paper from his pocket*)

J. BÓNIS: That wasn't a clever thing to do. Let me see that sketch.

G. TÖRÖK (*without handing it to him*): Tell me now—but not officially, truthfully, between you and me—do you trust me?

J. BÓNIS (*resolutely*): Yes, I do.

G. TÖRÖK: You're not saying this just because—because it's useful? For there are times when people say things like that. And that's not a good idea.

J. BÓNIS: Is that the way I've talked to you so far?

G. TÖRÖK (*after a brief pause*): Do you know everything about me?

J. BÓNIS: Everything? That's a big word.

G. TÖRÖK: I was the Smallholders' Party Chairman.

J. BÓNIS: I know.

G. TÖRÖK: I was very much against the Communists. And against the coop.

J. BÓNIS: I know that too.

G. TÖRÖK: I even said that if there was to be Socialism in Hungary, I'd put a hundred kilometres between myself and it. And things like that...

J. BÓNIS: Anything else?

G. TÖRÖK (*after some silence*): You're here now, and then you'll go away one day. Someone else will come who doesn't think the way you do. And he'll call me to account for all these things. Though for my part, I'd far prefer to forget them. (*After a little silence, he changes the tone of his argument*) I wouldn't like you to be disappointed in me. It'll be enough for me to stand up for myself. That won't be easy either.

J. BÓNIS: Perhaps you've come to regret that you've listened to me so far?

G. TÖRÖK: At one time, long ago, we were close childhood friends... Then... we drifted very far apart in every respect. Now we've met again, and I have an odd sort of feeling with you. I've chosen the new life... because you spoke so cleverly and beautifully to me. I saw that what you wanted was good... that you were right.

J. BÓNIS: Yet now you are angry with me for it.

G. TÖRÖK: On the contrary, I'm very grateful. Only... there's so many worries a man has to deal with, they're like the woodworm, trying to make you waste away... I've always liked to work. Anyone can bear witness to that. There won't be any complaints against me in future either. But will it be like that with everyone in the collective?

J. BÓNIS: I'd be lying to you if I were to promise that everyone'll be like that... Especially at the beginning. But then, it depends on you, and on me, and on all of us, to make things like we want them to be.

G. TÖRÖK (*speaking as though he were confessing*): You know I used to love the land so intensely that, when spring came, I'd take my fur coat, and from then to the

first hoar-frosts I'd sleep out in the loft. For there's nothing better than to feel the scent of the earth. And there's no more beautiful music than to listen to the grass growing. (*Listens for a while, then continues in a different tone*) And now that the land has gone, whatever my brain tells me, I'm like a stove in which the fire's gone out, and only the cold ashes have remained. (*A short silence...*) Can I be vice-chairman, then?

J. BÓNIS: Aren't you deceiving yourself, Gyuri? It's a different sort of warmth that's missing from your house. You're an old chap, you know. At your age a man starts feeling cold all alone.

G. TÖRÖK: I'm as old as you are. We were born in the same year. But let's talk about something else.

SCENE 13

As before, with Mrs. Varga and Aunt Ilonka

MRS. VARGA (*comes in—a beautiful woman between 35 and 40; on seeing Gyuri Török, she tries to escape*): I only dropped in to see you... I'll come along later.

J. BÓNIS: Don't run away, Mrs. Varga.

G. TÖRÖK: I was about to go anyway... (*starts to leave*)

J. BÓNIS: You're not going anywhere either.

(AUNT ILONKA *comes in, sits down at a distance, and silently watches the conversation*)

J. BÓNIS (*to Mrs. Varga*): Beautiful Éva Szabó!... I knew you... Don't you remember me any more?

MRS. VARGA: Yes, I remember... (*In a different tone*) May I join without my husband?

J. BÓNIS: Of course you may.

MRS. VARGA: And if he won't let me?

J. BÓNIS: Even then. You're an independent person. Or are you a slave?

MRS. VARGA: And if he won't let me have my land?

J. BÓNIS: A member is a member, with land or without. But he'll have to let you have it anyhow... (*In a different tone*) So you've become Mrs. Varga. Yet you two (*and his eyes link György Török and Mrs. Varga*) once loved one another very much. At that time I believed you'd never belong to anyone, except each other...

MRS. VARGA (*not wishing to hear what J. Bónis says*): Can I really join without my husband?

J. BÓNIS: Yes, really.

MRS. VARGA: And can no one come and stand in my way to say I can't go where I like?

J. BÓNIS: No one. (*To Török*) What is your opinion?

G. TÖRÖK (*looks at Mrs. Varga, then averts his gaze*): They took her away, and she went... I forgot about her... They stood in her way and ordered her to go elsewhere, and she went in another direction... Now it's she who knows...

MRS. VARGA (*to József Bónis, but actually addressing her words to György Török*): You can order people... and you can call them. You never can tell which will be the stronger. But where there's no call, the order is sure to be the stronger. For it's the only voice to be heard then.

G. TÖRÖK (*to József Bónis as well*): I've never called anyone aloud yet. Especially where money and position spoke with such a loud voice.

MRS. VARGA (*once more to József Bónis*): You wait... and then you wait in vain. You accept the orders of your father and your mother. And then you go along the street and look neither this way nor that. You just go and go, to the shop, to the well, to the dairy—and the years go by. (*Brief silence.*) I don't want anything any more, just once to live a life where no one can stand in my way. Can I join without my husband?

AUNT ILONKA (*going up to Mrs. Varga*): What's the use of tormenting yourself so much over this. You'll join and

come along to me, into the poultry brigade. You'll see how many lovely hens and chicks we have. Only there are few cocks. These darned villagers have kept all their cocks in their homestead farms. And I won't let private cocks in among my hens!... (Stops) Well, you just do what you think to be right... (Off)

SCENE 14

As before, without Aunt Ilonka

J. BÓNIS (to Mrs. Varga): I'm not going to persuade you to do anything. It's up to you to be courageous—if you can... (To György Török and Mrs. Varga together) A person has a right to a great many things. A right to be proud... a right to humility. But no one has a right to avoid happiness...

MRS. VARGA: No right?
(Outside a sudden noise and argument can be heard)

AUNT ILONKA's voice: This isn't an office. Why don't you go there?

MIHÁLY VARGA's voice: It's a democracy, or what the hell...

AUNT ILONKA: But not for you to rant in.

MRS. VARGA (apprehensively, to György Török; this is the first word that has passed between them for twenty years): Take care of yourself, Gyuri. They're very angry with you. (Török has no time to answer, for the door bursts open)

SCENE 15

As before, with Aunt Ilonka, Mihály Varga and Mrs. Vanczák

(M. VARGA stops in the open doorway. The others are behind him. He is a well-built peasant, of the same age as József Bónis. His countenance is agitated)

M. VARGA: May I come in?

J. BÓNIS (calmly): Do.

M. VARGA (calling back to Aunt Ilonka): You see? (Comes in. Notices his wife) So this is where you are!

MRS. VANCZÁK (a widow, also about 40, inclined to corpulence): Didn't I tell you she came here?

AUNT ILONKA (to Mrs. Vanczák): Are you still a-spying?

MRS. VANCZÁK: I do as I please. There's freedom now, isn't there?

M. VARGA (to Mrs. Varga): You're coming home!

J. BÓNIS (to M. Varga): Did you come to fetch her, or to see me?

M. VARGA: Listen here, Jóska Bónis! All I can say to you is that you'd better leave my wife alone. Get your brother to join, if you can. But my wife's not joining, and that's a fact.

J. BÓNIS: Perhaps she'll have a word to say about that. (Looks at Mrs. Varga)

M. VARGA (to his wife): Who allowed you to come here? (Mrs. Varga is silent) Did I allow you to come here?

MRS. VARGA (softly, after a prolonged tussle): No... (She bows her head)

M. VARGA: Tell them too. Loud, so they can hear.

AUNT ILONKA: Can't she so much as leave the house without your permission?

M. VARGA (to Aunt Ilonka): What are you interfering for? Are you the chairman here perhaps?

AUNT ILONKA: You wouldn't have shoved yourself in here if I were!

M. VARGA (to his wife): Come on! Get moving!

J. BÓNIS: Look here, Miska Varga! We're not going to interfere in anybody's life. But we will defend everybody's freedom. Even your wife's. If we have to.

M. VARGA: Your business is your business. But my wife—is my wife. That's all there is to it.

MRS. VANCZÁK (rolling her eyes and sighing reproachfully): What's to become of the sanctity of the family?

AUNT ILONKA: You're frequently with the Chaplain, Mrs. Vanczák. Even at

night. Hasn't he explained things to you yet?

MRS. VANCZÁK: Well, of all the gossip! How dare you mock at my devout faith! Mayn't one even go and confess nowadays?

AUNT ILONKA: You must have a lot on your conscience. And I suppose you get your absolution then too, no doubt.

M. VARGA (*interrupting impatiently*): This is not what we came for. (*To J. Bónis*) So you see—my wife came here and now she's going to come home with me. And you people are going to let her be, from today onwards. Do we understand each other?

G. TÖRÖK (*stepping forward*): No threats here, Miska Varga!

M. VARGA (*as though he had only just noticed him*): Are you here too? You traitor to your village! What did you get for your treachery?

G. TÖRÖK (*coming close to him*): What did you say?

M. VARGA: That we'll settle accounts with you yet. (*To his wife*) Get moving!

G. TÖRÖK (*suddenly calls to Mrs. Varga*): Éva, don't go!

M. VARGA (*stepping right up to G. Török*): By what right do you speak like that to my wife, Gyuri Török? (*The two men are about to go for each other*)

MRS. VARGA (*quickly goes up to Mihály Varga and seizes his arm*): I'm going home. (*Silence ensues*)

M. VARGA (*going out with Mrs. Varga, calls back*): Well, well, here's your brother!

SCENE 16

As before, without Mihály Varga and Mrs. Varga, but with Lajos Bónis

(LAJOS BÓNIS *enters*. He is a handsome, tall man, with a straight back, a few years older than his brother. He looks the sort of man who can manage to hold his own in the world. His face is now somewhat harassed. His appearance occasions surprise to everyone.)

LAJOS BÓNIS (*greeting them calmly*): Good evening.

AUNT ILONKA (*pleasantly surprised*): Have you come then, Lajos?

J. BÓNIS: Have you had second thoughts after all?

G. TÖRÖK: Hello, Lajos.

L. BÓNIS (*to György Török, coldly repelling his advance*): I sent you a message. I do not know you any more. (*To József Bónis*) I'd like to talk to you.

G. TÖRÖK (*hurt*): If you don't know me, I won't know you. (*To József Bónis*) Let's leave this vice-chairmanship then. It wouldn't be good for you, or for me... or anybody. (*Off. Mrs. Vanczák, full of the joy of a new bit of gossip, in his wake*)

AUNT ILONKA: May I bring something to eat? Or to drink? We've got some good wine...

L. BÓNIS: I don't need it. For the time being there's enough left at home.

AUNT ILONKA: May you never be in need of what I have to offer you, dear nephew. (*Off*)

SCENE 17

József Bónis and Lajos Bónis

L. BÓNIS (*after a long pause*): This time I've come to you. I'd like to ask a favour of you.

J. BÓNIS: To ask a favour of me? I thought you wanted to drive me out of here.

L. BÓNIS: Go away from this village. Go away from here. If you can, go today, or else tomorrow. But as soon as you can. I don't want my own brother to put a rope round my neck. (*Pause*) I very much ask you to go away.

J. BÓNIS: What sort of rope am I putting round your neck?

L. BÓNIS: You know very well.

J. BÓNIS: The coop, eh? That's the rope...

L. BÓNIS: For me, it's perhaps even worse than that. (*A brief pause*) Go away from here, Jóska!

J. BÓNIS: I've no intention of going. That's not what I came for.

L. BÓNIS: So you won't? I've begged you in vain?

J. BÓNIS: No, I'm not.

(L. BÓNIS stands there awhile... then turns to go, without a word.)

J. BÓNIS: Lajos! (*Lajos stops*) Tell me! How am I to get you to understand at last that...

L. BÓNIS (*interrupting him*): Don't you try and get me to understand anything. Nothing. If you can't manage to understand me...

J. BÓNIS (*continuing the sentence*): ...the coop is not a rope or a gallows. It's not even a cemetery.

L. BÓNIS: You're taking away the meaning of my life. I know that can't be changed, but if at least it weren't you that does it!

J. BÓNIS: Can we really never understand each other again?

L. BÓNIS: It's not my fault.

J. BÓNIS: Are you implying it's mine?

L. BÓNIS (*shrugs his shoulder*): Isn't it all the same? The fact is there.

J. BÓNIS: Sit down a little. (*Lajos, though reluctantly, nevertheless sits down*) Shan't we have a glass of wine?

L. BÓNIS: I don't mind.

J. BÓNIS (*pours slowly, and they drink without a word being spoken, then he begins speaking, in a tone of common reminiscences*): Do you know what I happened to recall the other day? We were quite small at that time... Mother brought a mug of melted lard from somewhere... Perhaps it was from the Kocsondis... That was what she'd been given for her work... She set it down on the table, because she was preparing to cook... We were so glad of the mug of lard and that Mother was to cook, that we frolicked around, and the end of it all was that we upset the lard and it was all wasted. Do you remember?

L. BÓNIS (*softly*): I do.

J. BÓNIS: Poor Mother snatched up the carving knife and chased us out into the yard with it, saying she'd kill us. Finally, we ran out in the street, then on to the nearby maize-field, and there we huddled together, crying. We agreed that we'd go a long way off, and wouldn't come home till we'd earned a mug of lard for Mother...

L. BÓNIS: We promised never, as long as we lived, to leave one another. Then we set off, but we didn't even get as far as Földvár, for we dropped off to sleep by the ditch...

J. BÓNIS: We slept there, huddled together. That's how they found us. (*Silence*) Is there a single family in the village today, where a mug of lard is so rare a treasure as it was for us? (*Lajos is silent*) Is there a single mother who has to bring up her children in the poverty we were brought up in?

L. BÓNIS (*his temper rising*): Did you have me stay here, so you could tell me that?

J. BÓNIS: Do you think Mother would say you were right?

L. BÓNIS: You only caused her worry and grief. That was not enough for you. Now you want to continue with me.

J. BÓNIS: How can you speak so? It was Mother's life that made me a Communist. The endless suffering, the inexpressible destitution she endured, made me resolve to help put an end to the unhappiness of all people. Have you so completely forgotten the life we led?

L. BÓNIS: How glad she was, poor woman, when you became a teacher.

J. BÓNIS: But you weren't. You thought I'd become a gentleman, that I'd broken faith with you.

L. BÓNIS (*in a sudden fit of temper*): That's what I think of you to this day!

J. BÓNIS (*standing up*): In that case there really isn't anything more for us to talk about.

L. BÓNIS (*also getting up*): Even as she died, she was waiting for you, calling for

you. "Put the soup on to warm up. Józsi's sure to be here by noon." That's what she said. Those were her last words.

J. BÓNIS: You know I couldn't come. I was in jail.

L. BÓNIS: To put an end to unhappiness... as you say... Her unhappiness would only have ended if you had then been there, by her side. Then she would have died peacefully... Not rent by qualms. Can you make up for that? Never!... Great words, brother, are not worth a tin tack. Let us try to make those happy who are closest to us. If you fail in that, you can never make up for it... As for the rest... *(He waves his hand)*

J. BÓNIS: She never, not with a single word, said that I should not do what I was doing. Because she knew I was right. And she was not selfish.

L. BÓNIS: You mean to say that I am?

J. BÓNIS: Whom have you made happy? Your wife? She was always a slave by your side and has remained one, poor woman. She was only your companion in acquisition, not in love and not in life.

L. BÓNIS: That's not true.

J. BÓNIS: Or your son? He's suffering on your account.

L. BÓNIS: It's not true! I was a nobody, and I've made a gentleman of him. A schoolmaster. With a university degree. I went hungry, to make him what he is!

J. BÓNIS: When did you last talk to him?

L. BÓNIS: I talk to my son when I want to. He owes everything to me.

J. BÓNIS: He owes it to you then that he cannot find his place in this world. For all that you paid for him to obtain his degree... for you must also pay for his stature as a man, for his faith. But that payment is not exacted in money. He loves you, and that is why he is suffering. On account of your stubbornness.

L. BÓNIS: It's not true!

J. BÓNIS: And if it isn't them, perhaps it's yourself that you've made happy?

But no! You've deceived and cheated yourself too.

L. BÓNIS: It's not true!

J. BÓNIS: You obtained eleven acres of land. But what was the price?

L. BÓNIS: I didn't rant! I worked! Do you see these two hands? *(He shows them)* It was with them that I tamed four acres of alkaline soil, of the eleven I own. That's where I've got that lovely orchard that you now want to take away from me. By what right?

J. BÓNIS: No one wants to take it away from you. All I would like is to see you do on seven hundred acres, together with the whole village, and as a free man, that which you did yourself on those four acres, as your own slave. You know a lot about the soil, the trees, nature... a host of things...

L. BÓNIS *(interrupting, in a wild temper)*: I don't know about anything. I don't want other people's property, but I won't let them have my land. These two hands can do other than tame alkaline lands... if they must. I'll cut out my trees and stand on the border-line, and if anyone dares cross it, I'll...

J. BÓNIS: You're talking nonsense again... You know very well that I'm right and that you led an inhuman life, both yourself and your family. But you're still telling yourself lies.

L. BÓNIS: Were you the only one who had the right to clamber out of our destitution? Was I not entitled to do so? And you'd do better not to tell me stories about how things used to be... Were you a labourer, or was I? You sat in your pretty school, while I trudged in the mud. Was it you they kicked like a dog with scabies, or was it I, when I dared imagine I was a human being? You say my wife was a slave by my side. And what was I? For twenty years I lived so I never had a holiday, or a bit of joy. Nothing... ever! And now you say that my son's suffering be-

cause of me. You're lying! And if he is suffering, then it's because of you.

J. BÓNIS (*a bit shocked*): Don't you realize that what we are doing now is to render justice to you too?

L. BÓNIS: Where's the justice in this? I sold my youth, my wife's youth, for eleven acres of land, I toiled like a beast of burden, and the others were given the same land free, in 45. Take it away from them, they didn't suffer for it. And let me die as I am... (*He stops—gasping for breath*)

J. BÓNIS: You've tamed the four acres of alkaline, brother, but you've gone wild yourself in the doing. You've become selfish... and cruel.

L. BÓNIS: "And you've remained a stupid peasant"—why don't you add that?

J. BÓNIS: Listen, I'll admit to you, there have been times when I've been ashamed of my kind.

L. BÓNIS: You see!

J. BÓNIS: ... You remember old Pista Vetró, in Csizmadia Row? His children argued about who was to maintain the poor miserable man, till he died. They pushed him from one house to the other in a wheel-barrow, dumping him down on each other's thresholds. Finally he died on the threshold of one of his sons...

L. BÓNIS: There were cases like that. But not many.

J. BÓNIS: I defended even the selfishness and the cruelty of the peasant, when others mocked and maligned him. Because I was able to ask in return: "Was it not you who made him so?" ... But here, inside, it always hurt me... And it hurts doubly now, when at last things could be different. What I always wanted was that the peasant too should be a human, a complete and pure human being.

L. BÓNIS: You mean I'm not a complete human being?

J. BÓNIS: In our world, a human being implies one who not only watches the cracks in the fence, lest a hen come through from the neighbour's, but who sees beyond

the fence, way down the street, where the other people are walking. Sees the whole village. The whole country. You can't be truly human today without a feeling of responsibility towards the community.

L. BÓNIS: I'm only interested in my own business.

J. BÓNIS: You're defending your unhappiness, instead of helping to put an end to the world that made you what you are.

L. BÓNIS: Who helped me? I shan't help either! Never! No one!

J. BÓNIS: Well, then we'll do it without you. If need be, against you.

L. BÓNIS: You're not going away?

J. BÓNIS (*very decidedly*): No!

SCENE 18

József Bónis, Lajos Bónis, Géza

(*GÉZA enters*)

L. BÓNIS (*surprised*): Are you here? All the better... Come here. (*As Géza does not move, he repeats it, louder*) Come here! (*Géza, pale and reluctant, steps closer*) Are you suffering beside me?... (*Géza is silent*) Tell him to his face that it's not true. Tell him that he's lying. Tell him that not a word he says is true... (*Géza is fighting a battle within himself, but he is silent. Lajos Bónis looks and looks at his son... and the bulking great man suddenly seems smitten and crushed. Quietly he says*) So you too have betrayed me... (*He turns and starts going out of the room. He turns back at the threshold*) Let it be as you wish then. (*Off*)

(*GÉZA merely stares ahead of himself, then looks with reproachful despair at József Bónis, finally rushes out after his father*)

SCENE 19

József Bónis, Marika, later Antal Bencsik

MARIKA (*rushes in, terrified*): Someone wants to kill you!... (*A shocked silence*) There's a man standing hidden by the gateway... With an axe this big! (*She shows how big*)

J. BÓNIS (*suddenly steps to the window, opens it, and leans out*) Antal! (*Silence*) I know it's you—no use pretending.

A. BENCSIK (*his voice, with affected gruffness*): And here I shall stay!

J. BÓNIS: But there's no need for it. Why are you guarding me?

A. BENCSIK (*enters, the axe in his hand*): You're the chairman. I've made a chairman of you. I'll obey you in what I have to, but an axe is an axe... I went home to have a look at it... There's no Party resolution to say I can't do that...

Curtain

THE AUTHOR ON HIS PLAY

Some months ago a British lady journalist came to visit Hungary. She was a correspondent of *The Times*. She met a number of literary people and had a talk with me too. At that time the rehearsals of my play "Fire at Dawn" were already in full swing at the Budapest National Theatre. In the course of the conversation we came to speak about the play, and our visitor asked me about its subject. I made some excuses, saying how difficult it would be to give the plot of a play in a few words, but finally I gave in and began to tell her the story something like this:

The central characters in the play are two brothers. The conflict between them is the real theme of the drama. One of them, József Bónis, is a communist of long standing. Both were born into great poverty, into the joyless world of the village poor, but József succeeded in extricating himself from this tangle of misery by becoming a teacher. Already in his youth he joined the communist movement, mainly as an act of rebellion against his parents, his brother and his own fate, but also because of the social injustice he had seen and experienced in his childhood and adolescence. Arrested for professing himself a communist, he spent a long time in prison. When he was released, he did not return to his village, but lived, worked and suffered as a revolutionary, devoting his entire life to the challenge of an idea. After the liberation in 1945, when the time became ripe for realizing this idea, he held various posts in the Party and in the higher echelons of the state apparatus.

In the spring of 1959—this was the time when the socialist transformation of agriculture and the development of cooperative farms began to gather speed—he was assigned the task of organizing his native Tiszahalász into a cooperative village. Although for some years a cooperative farm called 'Red Star' had been in existence in the village, it remained weak and unimportant with only a minority of the peasants among its membership. József Bónis became the president of this cooperative and launched his battle to win over the whole village. This is where the plot begins.

It did not take a long time for József Bónis to realize that the task he had undertaken was not an easy one—that it would in fact be trying for any man. He soon found himself in a tangle of complex human relationships. Almost the whole village was against him, primarily those who, fearing everything that was new and unknown, and dreading to give up their holdings and small fortunes, had not joined the cooperative as yet. But he was also opposed by some of the older members, for these, in turn, harboured resentment and prejudice against the more prosperous peasants who were slower to enter.

For József Bónis this difficult and dramatic situation was made even more trying by the conflict with his own brother, Lajos Bónis.

Since their common childhood Lajos's life had taken an entirely different course from József's. Lajos had stayed behind amidst the poverty of the village, yet he had succeeded—though at the price of terrible exertions—in becoming “somebody” at least in the eyes of the village. He had acquired some twelve acres of land under the Horthy regime. . . . True, he had paid with his own youth and that of his wife; from daybreak till nightfall they only toiled and moiled, depriving themselves of everything that is worth living for—but they got their twelve acres together. . . . He, too, had become somebody—thus Lajos Bónis consoled himself for the youth he had sold, for the inhuman life he had led. . . .

This is how he was able to console himself until 1945—the liberation of the country—when every poor peasant was given some land under the Land Reform—and for nothing at that. . . . In this general rendering of social justice Lajos Bónis only saw an injustice to himself and to his years of hard toil. “*Where's the justice in this? I sold my youth, my wife's youth. . . and the others were given the same land free, in 45.*” Thus did he come into conflict with the people's democracy back in 1945. And thus did he go on living, nursing his injury.

And now, in 1959, they even wanted to rob him of his land. At least that was the way he felt. “You're taking away the meaning of my life!” he would say. And it was his own brother who wanted to do this to him!

Well, so they faced each other, two brothers, two opinions, two truths—irascibly and irreconcilably. József Bónis was fond of his brother. He even had an understanding for the latter's human tragedy, for his passionate protests and his suffering. Yet the conflict was unavoidable. As a communist who believed in his ideals, believed in the cooperatives, and knew his own to be the greater, the more universal truth, he could not evade the struggle. Though his brother asked him to leave the village, he could not run away, because the eyes of the whole village were fixed on the struggle of the two brothers. Lajos Bónis commanded respect in the village. He was followed and listened to by many. If he joined the cooperative, so would others. As long as he resisted, others too would resist. And, suspiciously, people would even put themselves the question: What about József Bónis, ‘that big communist,’ will he make an exception of his own brother? So the organization of the cooperative was making little progress, with people answering everywhere: ‘As long as Lajos Bónis doesn't, I won't either. . . .’

Thus József Bónis was left no other choice but to break down his brother's opposition. This is what actually happened; the passionate and dramatic clash of the brothers ended with Lajos Bónis signing the application for membership in the cooperative. . . . A few days later Tiszahalász became a cooperative village. . . .

When I reached this point in my narrative, our British guest, who had until then been listening attentively and taking occasional notes, put down her fountain-pen with ill-concealed disappointment.

“W-e-ell. . .” she said, and the sense of this drawn-out “well” was something like: “I really ought to have known. . . . The usual formula for ‘socialist realism’. . . .”

“This is the situation when the second act opens,” I explained.

“Oh, then that's not how the play ends?” she asked in surprise.

“Just the first act. In fact this is only the exposition. It is followed by two more acts, for it is a three-act play. . . .”

“What more can happen after this?”

“Before telling you, may I make a few frank comments?”

"Why, certainly!"

"I do not wish to enter into polemics now with the bourgeois critics and aestheticians in the West who have followed and discussed our endeavours to seek new ways in literature with little enough understanding and in many cases with outright malice. Controversies of this kind would lead too far and would only give rise to ideological and aesthetic questions which could hardly be settled between the two of us. On the other hand, I have no intention of denying that, at least to a degree, we have to blame ourselves for having given occasion in the past to erroneous and distorted judgements. The notions of 'cult of the individual' and 'dogmatism' are probably familiar to you. For us they have a grievous content, distorting as they did our real and worthwhile aims in every sphere over the past years. In the sphere of literature, too. They hindered the profound and honest expression of life's truths, the clear exposition of human conflicts, and the fearless representation of the contradictions existing in human souls. Yet to do this is exactly what socialist realism has always claimed and professed.

"Take, for instance, my play 'Fire at Dawn.' It would be a bit—or maybe more than a bit—academic to discuss the question what would have happened to it if I had written it seven or eight years ago. Would the whole play then have ended where now the first act does? It seems more likely that the play would not have been written at all, because the clear-cut and open exposition of the conflict I have briefly outlined would not have been possible. And to tell you honestly, not on account of official suppression in the first place, but because the general atmosphere was unpropitious.

"Since that time, however, a lot of things have changed in this country. In real life, in politics—and in literature as well. We have learned a great deal—true, at the price of bitter experience—and our views have altered on a good many subjects. We, communist writers, still firmly believe, as we always did, in the function of literature as a factor in the formation of man and society. But let me add: literature can perform this function properly only if it can and dare give a candid formulation to the questions, doubts and inner conflicts troubling human souls, if it can and dare show man floundering, groping, and losing his way. Literature must not be content with posing *questions* about life, man and his soul—it must seek *answers* too. And a true answer can only be provided if the questions themselves are sincere and complete, despite their complexity.

"Well," I went on, "you must excuse me for this interpolated 'statement,' which I would prefer to term a literary confession. Let me now continue the narrative of my plot.

"As we have seen, the first act closed with Lajos Bónis' joining the 'Red Star' cooperative farm, and the whole village following suit. The second act begins with a peasant festivity, the celebration of Tiszahalász having become a cooperative village. Below the surface, however, there are undercurrents of tension, evident in the stage business and the dialogue and especially in the fact that Lajos Bónis—though invited and expected—has not shown up at the feast. All of a sudden the tension culminates as the tolling of the church-bells interrupts the revelry, which has assumed the atmosphere of a death dance. Lajos Bónis has set his farm on fire.

"It becomes obvious that József Bónis has not convinced his brother, only defeated him, and the latter has now set fire to his own house as a protest against his defeat. And the 'fire at dawn' throws new light on the controversy between the brothers and the deep-seated conflicts troubling the entire village, which have but seemingly been resolved.

The threat of prison hangs over Lajos Bónis for his deed. József Bónis is faced with a cruel dilemma, which seems insoluble. He feels that he is responsible for what his brother has done. This feeling of responsibility, and the affection and compassion he has for his

brother, would compel him to stand by Lajos. But to do so would bring him into conflict with another loyalty, with that of the professed communist. . . . Should I take his side? I would be in the wrong! Should I turn against him? Again I'd be in the wrong! . . . This human dilemma seems to him irreconcilable, and he wants to flee from the village and leave everything behind.

Now, in a village already upset by the revolt of Lajos Bónis, his brother's announced intention only fans the passions into a blaze. A group of enraged men launches an attack against the cooperative, bent on its destruction. In the background of the personal drama of the two brothers, the massive forces facing each other in the village are about to clash. If József Bónis were to take flight, an even more serious conflict would break out. . . .

This perception, on the one hand, and the metamorphosis taking place in Lajos Bónis, on the other, induce József Bónis to formulate the inner command: "Thou shalt not flee!" The last chord of the drama shows the two brothers, reconciled on the higher level of understanding each other's problems.

This, of course, is a mere skeleton of the play. Beside the two brothers, a whole range of characters live, breathe and act—each with his or her own fate, with his or her individual conflicts, or with conflicts deriving from the central one. For instance, Géza, Lajos Bónis' son, a typical young communist grown up in the new system, who approves of socialism and cooperation with his brains, but becomes entangled in contradictory feelings on witnessing his father's tragedy. Or Marika, a young school-mistress who almost loses her bearings and emotional integrity in this turmoil of human passions. Or György Török and Mrs. Varga, whose old love is at last fulfilled. Or Antal Bencsik, the old 'sectarian' communist, who, with his half-truths and very real torment because of the deep wrongs he has suffered, almost endangers the cause for which he has sacrificed half his life and an arm. Yet the nucleus of the plot rests in the conflict between the two Bónis brothers.

Well, that is about all I told our British lady journalist about the contents of "Fire at Dawn." Now that the first act of the play is being published in English, I think a reproduction of this conversation may help the reader to gain a better understanding of the work, as well as of the social and literary problems facing this country.

It should be added, perhaps, that the play has been running at the Budapest National Theatre and has also been performed at a number of our provincial theatres, including the "Mrs. Déry Theatre"—an itinerant company that tours the entire country. The reviews have been both favourable and strongly critical. It is the denouement which has drawn the greatest amount of censure: the solution was found too easy, too much of a "happy ending." Whether or not I agree with these critics is beside the point here—one thing is certain: their aim was not to influence me to choose the "schematic," the simplified solution!

J. D.

HUNGARY AND THE CMEA

by

IMRE VAJDA

I

Nations which for historical reasons or owing to their natural endowments are comparatively late to enter the stage of industrialization, at the outset usually find themselves confronted with serious problems of economic policy. The time lost constitutes a handicap extremely difficult to overcome. Early capitalism, ignorant of the possibilities of state initiative in the economic field, on the one hand, and lacking the necessary prerequisites, on the other, favoured various measures of economic isolation as a means of mastering an apparently hopeless situation. When, in the early decades of the nineteenth century, the German bourgeoisie set out to destroy the barriers to prosperity formed by the disintegration of an ethnically homogeneous territory into a great number of small states, by the narrow-mindedness of Austrian and Prussian absolutism, and by the antiquated state of the handicrafts, they sought the free air of progress which in Western Europe had already been set in motion by the bourgeois revolutions. The air of freedom, however, also meant free competition against superior competitors, a competition which the German bourgeoisie did not feel at the time strong enough to face. Hating though they did the dungeon of absolutism, they were nevertheless ready to retain part of its walls in the form of tariff barriers to secure their profits. The leading German economist of the pre-1848 "Vormärz" period, Friedrich List, demanded, on behalf of his class, "educative tariffs" for the protection of the indigenous industry. But in the given historical situation and owing to its very nature, the emerging German protective tariff system did not primarily tend to promote established industries, of which, incidentally, there were as yet but few in existence. It became instead the breeding ground for new industries by shielding them from the outset against more advanced competitors. The protective tariff system thus already contained the

germs of an autarkist policy of self-sufficiency, though not yet in the hideous form in which—supplemented by claims for territorial aggrandizement—it was to become the economic creed of Hitler's Third Reich.

It was likewise the argumentation and the doctrines of List which, adopted by the rising Hungarian middle classes in the period prior to 1848—when the revival movement in Hungary finally erupted in the War of Independence—, prompted them to demand protective customs tariffs for the budding industries of the country. Lajos Kossuth, the genius of the Hungarian War of Independence, himself headed the society for the propagation of protectionist ideas, the *Védegylet*. Up to the First World War, progressive-minded middle-class people never ceased to advocate protectionism, strongly influenced, up to the military collapse of the Hohenzollern empire, by Naumann's concept of *Mittleuropa*, a large regional pattern (*Grossraum*) comprising the whole of Central Europe. To the banner of protectionism (and, by implication, of virtual autarky) flocked all those nations which for various reasons lagged in their industrial development behind free-trading England: France, once again ensconcing herself, after the liberal spell of the Second Empire, behind the protectionist shelter of the notorious Méline Act; the United States, where the Payne-Aldrich Act of 1909 erected a tariff wall of more than 40 per cent to protect domestic industries and where even as recently as 1922 some senators would have welcomed protective tariffs amounting to 500 per cent to shelter the home market from any winds of competition blowing from a foreign land.*

*

The Hungarian governing classes of landowners and capitalists found themselves faced with similar problems when, following the disintegration of the Hapsburg empire and after quelling the revolutionary upsurge in 1919 with the aid of foreign intervention, they were compelled to hammer out an independent economic policy. In spite of the massive resistance of the landed interests it was evident beyond dispute that, owing to the state of the country, industrialization had to be the first and foremost aim of any such policy. So it came that Hungary too sought shelter under the wings of protectionism in 1924. As a consequence, some progress in industrialization was achieved and foreign manufactures were ousted from the home market to a certain degree. The retrograde character of protectionism became manifest, nevertheless. But for a very few cases, the

* Donald L. Kemmerer: *American Economic History*, McGraw Hill, New York 1959, p. 564

domestic market of the small country proved too narrow for viable industries to be "raised" under the protection of a high tariff wall; it was, however, sufficiently sealed-off to afford profitable opportunities to the capitalist who purchased obsolete industrial equipment scrapped in Austria or Czechoslovakia and re-installed it in Hungary. The country, writhing in the stranglehold of this dilemma, remained poor and sick. In this distressing deadlock, the Horthy régime led Hungary into Hitler's clutches and into war. The resulting catastrophe swept aside all problems and dilemmas, which were dwarfed by its apocalyptic proportions. Economic policies, no matter how disastrous, were of little account at the dreadful moment when the annihilation of the nation—as visualized by the poet Vörösmarty nearly a hundred years before—seemed to have come true.

The country which rose from the ruins could not continue where its disgracefully defunct predecessor had left off, nor could it put up with an underdeveloped economy. Though eclipsed by the inflation of the first post-war year, the problem was still awaiting solution, and it was realized that the restriction of imports would in itself only enforce once again the autarkist tendencies with respect to manufactures. Agricultural surpluses, on the other hand, were not sufficient to pay for the most vital import needs of the country, starved as it was of raw materials. Hungary's participation in the international division of labour would inevitably have been on the lowest level, with all the well-known consequences arising from underdevelopment. The solution was provided by the opening up and steady expansion of the socialist market and, in 1949, by the formation of the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA).

To suggest that the economic considerations set forth above were the main factors determining Hungary's membership in CMEA would be rather far-fetched. It would, however, be equally absurd to deny the important part played by economic circumstances. Social progress has over the last few decades caused every nation to confront the present-day meaning of "to be or not to be," and we in this country should make no secret of the fact that we believe we found the right answer to the question when it was posed us. We believe it to be the right answer and the one justified by the logic of history. That we had the courage to break with the past and to take the road determined by progress and the laws of history, sufficiently proves our vitality. It enabled us to seize the opportunity of taking part in an international division of labour realized on a socialist basis and with a socialist content, thus opening up before our people new vistas of international cooperation.

What are the benefits that Hungary now derives from her participation in the CMEA and what is she able to offer to the other affiliated nations?

Among European countries Hungary is one of the poorest as regards raw materials. Her supplies of hard coal, water power, mineral oil and natural gas are insignificant, and so are the ore deposits, with the single exception of bauxite. Timber and salt are also lacking. The country has no coastline and is relatively densely populated. Those acquainted with Hungary's economico-geographic position are apt to view the significance of CMEA for the Hungarian economy primarily from the angle of raw material supplies. There is no denying the fact that scarcity of raw materials, on the one hand, and an abundant supply of manpower, on the other, are the two basic features of the Hungarian economy; the shortage of raw materials once overcome, the national economy may be said to have reached the half-way mark to success—but no more!

The following figures go to demonstrate the importance of raw material supplies from the CMEA countries to the Hungarian economy.

*Contribution of the CMEA countries in 1959 to
Hungary's imports of the most important industrial
raw materials (in percentages of total)*

Hard coal	100	Rock phosphate	83
Petroleum	100	Synthetic rubber	98
Iron ore	94	Cellulose	48
Furnace coke	100	Raw cotton	62
Lead	81	Timber	72

However, to follow the train of thought traced out above, CMEA's outstanding importance to Hungarian economic life does not lie primarily in relieving Hungary's shortages in raw materials and power. The experiences of the last decade induce us to view the problems of raw-material supply from a new angle. Neither at present nor in the foreseeable future is the danger of an exhaustion of the world's raw-material resources likely to become acute. To procure supplies of raw materials will in itself, consequently, constitute no problem whatsoever. In fact, the present-day rate of technological progress, with its unprecedented boosting of industrial capacity, is bound before long to reduce to the point of insignificance any advantage to be gained from the presence of raw material resources. CMEA's function, where Hungary's economy is concerned,

should be viewed, first of all, as enabling a small country to overcome the stage of underdevelopment without having to resort to protectionist autarky—a weapon that cuts both ways.

The above conclusions may seem somewhat far-fetched to the West-European reader accustomed to being informed by his daily press and by the politicians that the attempts to overcome the raw-material shortage are the biggest headache of the CMEA's experts. A case in point is the lengthy serial published recently in the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*. Surveying with a pretence at knowledgeability the "red economy" emerging under the aegis of CMEA, the essay, processed partly from official material and partly from stuff and nonsense, discusses the problems of the socialist countries with respect to raw material supplies.*

In this survey—as in many other discussions too—one comes across comments on CMEA's alleged efforts to achieve autarky. It is thus not surprising that the author comes to regard CMEA and autarky as synonymous concepts—as distinct from the "free market economy" of the capitalist countries.

It cannot be denied that in the present period of rapid industrial expansion, the securing of the necessary raw material supplies for the member nations constitutes one of the cardinal points of coordinated CMEA planning. In the course of this work, the raw-material producing capacities of the CMEA countries are being sized up together with the other sources of raw material supplies open in underdeveloped countries so long as their manufacturing industries are still not sufficiently developed. In addition, plans for the import of raw materials from other sources are drawn up. The process is no different from that taking place in any large-scale economic unit. No country has, so far, been spared the difficulties of securing an adequate supply of raw materials during the phase of industrial growth, and our generation has had to go through two world wars for, among others, the reason that the available domestic stock of raw materials fell short of the needs of the expansive capitalist countries.

* It does not redound to the NZZ's credit that the author of the survey resorts to a number of distortions in his attempt to substantiate his claims. An example is his effort to prove the "dependence" of the CMEA countries on Soviet deliveries. Referring to Soviet sources of information, the survey states that Soviet deliveries account for the following shares in the 1958 *total consumption* of the countries in question:

Iron ore	74,7%	Pig iron	84,0% (!)
Rolled steel & tubes	57,5% (!)	Cereals	83,9% (!)
Cotton	55,7%, etc.		

Now, these data obviously refer not to *total consumption*, but to *import aggregates*. Could the NZZ's contributor be ignorant of this? It would be an insult to him to think so. (NZZ, Dec. 17, 1960, No. 347, p. 10)

The symptom of the productive capacity of the manufacturing industries' surpassing the capacity of domestic raw material production, while, at the same time, the rate of growth is more vigorous in the former than in the latter, is so frequently met with in the history of industrialization that it has come to be regarded as a rule. England, Germany and Japan are cases in point. The United States in the 19th, and the Soviet Union in the 20th century are notable exceptions, a fact due in either case to the extraordinary size of the national territory as well as to other specific circumstances. Nor can a socialist planned economy any more than a capitalist country possibly avoid this transitory phase resulting from rapid expansion. But, for all its momentary magnitude, it would be self-deception to attribute decisive importance to the problem.

As for CMEA's supposed efforts to achieve autarky, it can hardly be denied that tendencies in this direction existed especially in the first half of the fifties, but not so much within CMEA itself as in most of the individual member countries, Hungary among them. We wanted to produce everything ourselves and to cut down all imports of manufactures with the possible exception of some mechanical equipment. For that misconceived economic policy we paid a high price and—what is more—we are still paying for it, though the course has been abandoned for several years now. It is easy to commit errors, but less so to get rid of their consequences. But to call CMEA's coordinated planning autarkistical is to abuse the term. How *can* this term be applied to a community of one thousand million people—one third of the total population of the globe? To say nothing of the fact that year after year, at various international forums—such as the UN General Assembly, the Economic Commission for Europe, ECOSOC and other bodies—the delegates of the socialist countries never tire in their emphatic insistence on the need for an extension of the international division of labour and in drawing attention to the benefits to be derived therefrom. To say nothing of the fact that between 25 and 30 per cent of the foreign trade of the socialist countries is being transacted with capitalist countries and that this proportion is speedily increasing.

Rapid though the expansion of trade has been over recent years, the rate of growth in turnover can hardly be deemed satisfactory. Nor is this the case with the composition of trade. The export of finished goods to the countries of the West (who are liberalizing trade among themselves) is checked by quota prescriptions on the part of these countries, while the most valuable part of agricultural exports comes up against their agrarian protectionism. Of both obstacles it has been stated by the UN and FAO—and not by ourselves—that there seems to be no prospect of their abolishment

for the time being. Thus we are treated to the odd spectacle of the western countries'—though ready to hail increasing purchases by the socialist states—displaying little willingness to buy from them anything beyond raw materials and fuel, while, at the same time, accusing them of autarkist practices. Yet it is enough to strangle one branch of trade for the other to wither away of itself.

CMEA gives Hungary the chance to develop such of her industries as are best suited to her peculiar position, and to build up an industrial structure which makes allowance for her riches as well as for her shortages. What I have in mind is, on the one hand, Hungary's plentiful supply of manpower resulting from her high density of population and, on the other, the country's scarcity in raw materials due to geological factors. It has proved feasible to alter the predominantly agricultural character of the Hungarian economy, to start and press ahead the process of industrialization—a process which, by the way is advancing with unprecedented rapidity,—although it has demanded some heavy sacrifices and was responsible for the appearance of some autarkist tendencies. But as regards the reshaping of the industrial structure (probably the most difficult undertaking in the field of production—remember Britain's textile industry, coal mining or ship-building!) this would, in all likelihood, not be possible without the active cooperation and assistance of CMEA and the incentives to specialization afforded thereby. The following table shows some achievements so far attained and some future targets:

Division of net output of the engineering industry expressed in percentages

	1955	1960	long-term plan target
Telecommunication equipment & apparatus ...	6.9	8.9	15.5
Instruments	6.6	7.3	18.2
Electrical machinery & appliances	8.8	10.8	14.7
By contrast:—			
Iron & metal mass products	18.9	14.0	5.3
Other machinery	58.8	59.0	46.3
	100.0	100.0	100.0

The combined contribution to the total engineering output of such highly labour-consuming products as electrical machinery, vacuum-technical equipment, and instruments rose from 25.1 per cent in 1955 to 31.4 per cent in 1960, that of material-consuming mass products was reduced from 18.9 per cent to 14.0 per cent, and in the course of imple-

menting our plans the proportions are being altered at a quickening pace, until the combined output of the most highly labour-consuming branches will account for little less than one half of total production in the engineering industry.

In addition to the data referring to structural changes within the engineering industry, it will be of interest to demonstrate the changes that have taken place in the structure of industry as a whole. The figures in the table below show the changes in the percentage distribution of net production values in the different branches of state-owned industry.

Industrial group	1955	1960
Basic industries, total	63.5	66.3
Mining	17.3	13.9
Engineering	24.7	30.4
Electric power	3.0	3.1
Building materials	6.3	6.6
Chemicals, rubber & plastics	3.8	5.2
Iron, steel & metals	8.4	7.1
Light industry, total	26.0	24.4
Textiles	12.7	10.0
Clothing	6.6	6.9
Wood, paper & printing	4.4	4.8
Leather, furs & other	2.3	2.7
Foodstuffs, liquor & tobacco	10.5	9.3
	100.0	100.0

It may be interesting to compare these figures with the available statistical data* relating to the composition of the industrial product of Great Britain:

Basic industries, total	64.4
Engineering & processed metal products	38.2
Iron, steel & metals	6.3
Chemicals	5.8
Other basic industries	4.3
Light industry total	27.7
Foodstuffs and tobacco	7.9
	100.0

* *Patterns of Industrial Growth 1938—1958*. United Nations, New York 1960. The figures relate to the year 1954.

The above comparison goes to show that the patterns are not significantly dissimilar. In Great Britain, as in Hungary, heavy industries and mining account for about two thirds of the industrial output, and light and food industries for the remaining one third. It is, of course, beyond dispute, that there *are* substantial differences between Hungary and Great Britain as regards the structure of the national economy as a whole; agriculture has a greater share in Hungary's economy than in Britain's, and per capita output as well as per capita national income are considerably lower in this country than in Britain.

Hungary's present-day industrial structure is still far from satisfactory, up-to-date chemical and plastics industries are of but recent standing; the degree of electrification in Hungarian industries is insufficient—a fact that stands out clearly when calling to mind that electric power output has of late only just been keeping step with the rise in industrial production instead of outpacing it. This was partly due to the failure of the power bearers available in this country (low-caloric brown coals) to yield low-cost current. However, the transcontinental pipeline now under construction, through which Soviet oil will flow west from the Volga region, will provide Hungary with an extremely economical source of energy, owing to the very low costs of transportation involved.

When discussing the question of industrial structure a further reference to international statistics may be made. According to the UN publication already quoted, industrial output in those European countries (Finland, Ireland, Italy) which according to the degree of industrialization are grouped into Class II* was divided, in 1958, as follows:—

Light industry	39.8%
Basic industries	60.2%

Back in 1938, the ratio had been 53.0 : 47.0. Thus, in these countries too, the ratio shifted considerably in favour of the basic industries in the course of industrialization. The question may now arise: how far is it justified to connect the structural changes in Hungarian industry with the country's role in CMEA, and with her relations with the other member states? To answer this question, reference must again be made to statistics.

* *Op. cit.*, p. 110: Countries were grouped into four classes according to degree of industrialization, in terms of estimated value added, in current US dollars, by industry per head of population during 1953. The intervals in US dollars for each class were as follows: Class I, 200 and over; Class II, 100—199; Class III, 50—99; Class IV, under 50. This criterion therefore reflected the extent to which the population was employed in industry as well as the productivity of the labour so engaged.

In 1959, machinery, factory equipment and other engineering products made up 36.8 per cent of Hungary's exports; this group accounted for 46 per cent of Hungarian exports to the socialist countries.

In the same year, Hungary's contribution to trade among the CMEA countries amounted to 6.6 per cent, but her share in the exports of machinery and equipment was 9 per cent.

It has been largely due to exports—and, above all, to exports to the socialist countries—that Hungary, within a period of ten years, was able to alter fundamentally the structure of her industry, with a simultaneous shift in the direction of more valuable products. Following the first stage of structural remodelling (with its emphasis on the basic industries and engineering), it was the long-term agreements with the CMEA countries that in the next stage enabled us to transfer the centre of gravity within the engineering industry to the lines and production programs determined already to a high degree by the international division of labour under CMEA, *i. e.*, telecommunication equipment, instruments, diesel-electric trains and engines, and food-processing and chemical equipment. These types of machinery and equipment accounted for 44 per cent of our 1958 machinery exports to the CMEA countries; advance contracts made so far ensure a rise of their share to 65 per cent within a few years. Long-term agreements with the Soviet Union provide for an increase of 160 per cent in Hungarian exports of machinery and equipment over the period from 1958 to 1965, and in the products of the telecommunication industry and precision engineering the increase will be more than tenfold. At the same time—and this is where the genuine character of this international division of labour becomes manifest—Hungary's *imports* of machinery and factory equipment from CMEA countries will, by 1965, already account for about 35 per cent of total imports from these countries (the corresponding figures having been 20 per cent for 1951, and 28 per cent for 1959).

A comparison of the composition of the machinery exports of Hungary, on the one hand, and those of the Western European countries, on the other, provides occasion for drawing some interesting conclusions.

Composition of Machinery Exports

Name of Products	Share in		
	Western European machinery exports	Hungarian machinery exports	
	(1954)	(1954)	(1958)
	(in percentages of total)		
Engines	5.0	10.5	5.9
Electrical equipment	15.5	15.7	16.8
Vehicles	34.5	44.0	34.4
Industrial machinery	21.5	16.4	17.9
Machine tools	4.0	6.4	5.0
Farm machinery	6.0	1.5	5.9
Precision-mechanical equipment	5.0	1.8	5.8
Metal mass products	8.5	3.7	8.3

Thus, by 1958, Hungary came already very close to the European average in the composition of machinery exports. In the course of the switch-over resulting from the cooperation within CMEA further shifts are bound to take place. There will be a further decrease in the quota of vehicles (ships, railway rolling-stock), which are material-absorbing to a comparatively high degree, while that of labour-absorbing products will increase.

4

Trade between member states is the most widely practised form of cooperation under CMEA. Its trend goes to show the extent to which plans for mutual assistance are carried out. Hungary's foreign trade was discussed on an earlier occasion*; here, only those aspects connected with CMEA will be considered.

Hungary has more than doubled her exports during the past decade. Deliveries to the CMEA countries have always formed the core of these exports, and most of the increase too has accrued from trade with the CMEA countries.

The swift initial rise was followed by a period of stagnation between 1953 and 1955, then by a setback in 1956—7 caused by the counter-revolutionary uprising. Following the 1956 low, Hungary's exports to the CMEA countries expanded with unequalled rapidity from 3,100 million

* The New Hungarian Quarterly, Vol. I, No. 1, Sept. 1960

forints to 6,200 million forints in 1960, an increase of 100%. Great Britain's exports to the sterling zone during the same period dropped from £ 1,448 million to £ 1,422 million, and her exports to Western Europe rose from 847 only to 1,018—an increase of 20 per cent.

To end this train of thought, let us now examine the composition of foreign trade, here again drawing international comparisons for clearer demonstration. As pointed out above, Hungary, according to the UN's classification, is included in the same category of industrialized countries as Italy. Let us, then, compare the composition of Hungary's trade with the socialist countries with that of Italy's foreign trade based on 1959 UN statistics.

Composition of Foreign Trade in 1959

	Hungary with socialist countries	Italy
	(in percentages of total)	
(A) Imports:—		
Foodstuffs, beverages	8.7	17.1
Raw materials & fuel	56.6	47.6
Machinery & equipment	27.8	11.3
Other manufactures	6.9 } 34.7	24.0 } 35.3
	100.0	100.0
(B) Exports:—		
Foodstuffs, beverages	15.7	17.4
Raw materials & fuel	19.3	10.2
Machinery & equipment	45.9	25.6
Other manufactures	19.1 } 65.0	46.8 } 72.4
	100.0	100.0

It is in the *machinery equipment* items that the most marked differences appear; here, the respective Hungarian figures indicate a higher degree of international division of labour, since the proportion of this group, both in imports and exports, is higher in the case of Hungary than in that of Italy. With regard to other manufactures (comprising also commodities of direct consumption), on the other hand, Hungary's participation in the international division of labour is less intensive. This gives Italy an advantage over Hungary inasmuch as the proportion of all finished products to her export total is somewhat higher than the corresponding ratio in Hungarian deliveries to the socialist countries. (Though not within the scope of the present paper, the curious circumstance should be men-

tioned that Italy, with chronic mass unemployment prevailing in the agricultural South—from where there is a constant migration of farm labourers to other European countries—has an almost equal proportion of food imports and food exports.)

5

It is time now to return to our point of departure. In our examination of the world process of industrial development, we have come to realize the fact that time-lag—coupled, in the case of Hungary, with a limited home market as a result of the country's small area—constitutes a two-fold barrier to the normal and necessary efforts to achieve a higher stage of development. On the one hand, underdeveloped countries are compelled to entrench themselves behind protective tariff walls or to employ other restrictive measures, lest external competition—the advantage of the advanced countries over them in accordance with the Ricardian theory of “comparative costs”—smother the rising industry in its cradle. We have numerous instances, from the last as well as from this century, of that process. On the other hand, the very limitation of the home market (a limitation which may be due equally to the small area of the country and to insufficiency of purchasing power resulting from underdevelopment), well protected by tariff walls and import quotas into the bargain, hinders the development of the characteristic features of modern industrial production—the necessary concentration on a few best-suited spheres of production and scientific-technical research, the wide application of up-to-date methods of mass production, the best utilization of the existing means of production, and the efficacious employment of skilled labour. Yet, failing these factors, world standards can never be achieved, not even behind the shelter of protectionism. The consequences of these contradictions are borne at present by a number of industrially underdeveloped countries all over the world, between the free play of the market mechanism, on the one hand, and state interference, on the other. The one they know to be fatal to their industrial development schemes; and to the other they can—in the absence of socialist relations of production and of planned cooperation among socialist countries—resort only inconsistently, in a haphazard way. The result—though the inevitable import restrictions may, to some extent promote the development of their industries—will not be satisfactory. The degree of underdevelopment may be reduced; the fact itself and the tensions it generates will abide.

The international division of labour realized in CMEA with its co-

ordinated planning and the mutual advantages deriving from its expansion, has sufficiently proved that in our time underdevelopment has ceased to be an irreversible fate. The pattern of the world is not defined for ever by the chain of specific historical circumstances that made industrial development gain ground first in Western Europe, then in the North American colonies, thus—with few exceptions—setting up an unbridgeable gap between the advanced countries and the underdeveloped ones throughout the world. Even as recently as the middle of this century, at the end of the last war, it seemed as if Hungary would never be able to overcome the backwardness caused by a hundred and fifty years of Turkish rule, subsequent colonization by Austria, and the blind class-egotism of the Hungarian landed aristocracy. It was the emergence and the rise of socialism as a world system, and Hungary's participation in this grandiose historic process, that has reversed the course of events. It enabled the country to get rid of the dilemma that is inevitable under capitalism and to achieve, in cooperation with the other socialist countries, a high stage of economic development within a historically brief period and to create thereby a solid material foundation for national advancement.

EPILOGUE

A Short Story

By

ENDRE ILLÉS

Thy faithful servitor, fair damsel!" The snow fell sporadically, in lazy, glutinous flakes that melted as soon as they reached the ground. The hoarse words were breathed right into the hair, or rather the left ear, of the young actress. She could not have been more frightened if a car had bumped into her from behind, as she strolled along the broad pavement.

The actress spun round in alarm and anger—to find a man's face looking back at her from as close as though she were holding a make-up mirror to her face. It was a nut-like face: oily, brown, wrinkled, but still young.

"Don't you recognize me, Ágnes?"

And he bowed, with the same clumsy, deep obeisance as six years ago, when he had played Serteperti in "The Wistful Tempefői" on the stage of the theatre academy—he, Serteperti, and she, Rozália. Laci had scored a roaring success and had immediately been nicknamed Baron and Serteperti. Since then, however, success had deserted him. When people spoke of him, they mostly did so with an expression of mild disgust. If he entered a room, there would be an offensive silence. All sorts of base suspicions clung to him, like so many shreds of a cobweb. In their last year, he had been expelled from the Academy. Now here he was, smiling, ostracized, somewhat corpulent. It was only at second glance that Ágnes recognized him standing there before her in a jacket, his mack slung loosely over his left arm. He still did not wear a hat. They were both silent, looking at each other.

"My humble person doth not deserve the honour your Excellency's attention hath bestowed upon her . . .," said Ágnes finally.

The young man's face lit up.

"You too still remember 'Tempefői'?" The question was put in a pleasant and warm tone.

But all at once Ágnes heard the old, insolent voice. It came from somewhere beyond the man, breaking through the sparse curtain of snowflakes, distantly, hoarsely, yet intelligibly saying: "What's wrong? What's up? Surely you wouldn't let love burden our lives? Having a good time and keeping it that way—that's all we need, old girl."

How deeply she had then been hurt by the facile way he had said it, the offensive challenge of his words. That jacket in winter, and that lecturing tone, even in the vortex of his embrace. "Ágnes dear, ecstasy like yours is harmful to public health. Decontaminate yourself, will you?"

She had been his mistress for nearly two years. When they parted, over a thimbleful of coffee at a café, the lad had once more clasped and squeezed her fingers by way of farewell.

"Reassure me that it's over."

"I shan't put it down in the complaint book," she had answered faintly.

At this he had furiously kicked his chair away:

"Of course, what you'd like to do now is blub! . . . Well just do it by yourself! All to yourself!"

He had stood up and left. He had not even paid for his coffee.

And now, four years later, he asked in his old Serteperti tone:

"May I venture, may I make so bold as to inquire how so fair a damsel spends her empty hours?"

The bantering unexpectedly came to an end. Ágnes started off, on her way.

"Don't be angry, Laci . . . I'm in a hurry. I've got a rehearsal."

"I know, I know . . . That Goldoni play. I've read that you've become one of the top set."

That was how it all began.

During the fourth performance he went backstage to look for her in her dressing-room. She was just having a cup of coffee in the small, crowded lounge, and he followed her and met her there.

"What was I like?" asked Ágnes finally, because the prolonged silence was getting on her nerves.

A smile. Then an eloquent gesture of the right hand. And the old tone—as though those four years had not passed by at all:

"You're good at portraits."

But they could not talk any further, for Ágnes was being vigorously called:

"Time to dress, madam!"

The third time they met was on the terrace of a small coffee-shop in Párisi Street. The place had been chosen by Ágnes, after he had rung

her up several times. She could not have explained why she was ashamed of this young man or of their meeting.

They just sat and drank their luke-warm, insipid coffee.

"What have you been doing since those days? I haven't seen you around."

"I acted at Szeged for a couple of years. And you?"

But he was reticent about himself. What had he done? Oh, a great deal. But what? All sorts of things. The theatre? No, no, a different type of job altogether.

"And are you earning well?"

But he just waved it off:

"Aw, nuts!"

And after that, this one word was his answer to everything:

"Nuts! . . ."

"Nuts! . . ."

"Nuts! . . ."

They had another date in the coffee shop.

"All right," Ágnes had finally agreed.

For this was the tenth time he had beseeched her over the phone to meet him.

They made halting, flat, stodgy conversation. There were two empty coffee cups and two full glasses of soda-water on the pocket-size table, and they pushed them about.

"It was you who let me sink!" he finally declared bluntly.

"I?"

"You too!"

"Can I help you in any way, Laci?"

"Help me?" Haughtily, bitterly, he sat up straight. "I've got a job . . .!"

"What is it, then, that you do?" Ágnes again inquired.

"Dots I paint—dots on pretty little plastic aprons and plastic kerchiefs. Now at last you know . . .!"

"Dots?"

"If you meet with one of these aprons or kerchiefs and see the green and yellow and blue dots on it, nicely scattered about, and even more nicely arranged, then they're what I've painted—paid by the piece. For I must tell you—I'm an outworker for a homecraft cooperative. Do you want any further information?"

There were two listeners to his irritated outburst—Ágnes and the light mack, put on the third chair they had pulled up to the little table.

"Not bad," the actress finally remarked.

"Why should it be?"

The young man's nut-like face, the easily wrinkled rubbery skin, suddenly became white, as though all the blood had drained out of it in a single moment. He snatched the girl's hand:

"You might as well admit that what you're now thinking is: 'Has this poor beggar really sunk so low?'"

"Not bad," Ágnes obstinately repeated. "No, not bad..."

She tried to free her wrist, but failed. In the end, she no longer wanted to. Nor did she pull her face away, when he roughly, impulsively kissed her. She had been expecting the attack for several minutes.

That Laci was working—this was no more than odd. But that he should spend his time putting dots on little aprons and pottering about with cheap women's haberdashery, bending for eight or ten hours a day over kerchiefs—the thought suddenly constricted her throat. They agreed that she would go up to him the next evening, after her performance.

Ten seconds, two words, a half-smile—perhaps it didn't even take that much for them to come to terms. The next instant she looked at him, as though she had emerged from the depths of a profound dream. Something had happened to her in the course of the dream, but she now snatched at it in vain—she had forgotten the real, the important part.

"When do you finish?" asked Laci in a peremptory, business-like tone.

"At ten past ten," she answered dizzily.

"You won't be able to find your way to my place. I'll wait for you outside the theatre."

Ágnes was coming to.

"You needn't."

She didn't want anyone to see them together.

"Don't be silly. I'll be waiting for you."

She could no longer gainsay him.

When Ágnes stepped into the street the next evening, she immediately noticed the young man in his mack. He was waiting for her with parcels wrapped in tissue paper—two, to be precise. He made straight for her, but then came to a halt. The actress was not alone, she had come out of the theatre with her friend, Kata Telegdi. Kata put her arm through Ágnes's, and they slowly sauntered along the boulevard. The two elongated, white parcels bobbed after them. The actress had tried twice to bid her friend farewell, but the latter kept on talking, without cease. When they stopped for the third time, Kata nudged Ágnes.

"You see that chap in the mack? He's following us."

"Only me. I'm so sorry..." And she left her.

One of the parcels contained two carnations, the other concealed a bottle of whisky. He pulled the white silken sheath apart an inch on both.

"You know I don't drink."

"But this is Scotch whisky. You must drink some of this!"

The way he showed the flowers and offered her the drink while they were still under way, was reminiscent of a young, excited student. Where was the old, nasty Serteperti, thought Ágnes sadly. The terrible power of time! Then she realized that it was a greater power that had intervened. That of poverty, of being outstripped, of lacking self-confidence, of fear. How excited the body of this young male, clutching the parcels wrapped in tissue-paper, must be tonight. How tremulous of the traps and humiliations that treacherously lay in wait for him. And how happy he was now! You just had to look at him—he was near drunk with happiness. He took big paces, then guiltily stopped, waited, swayed and lurched. Once he bent over the girl, as though to whisper something in her ear, but at the last moment he thought better of it. Ágnes smelt the scent of powder and eau de Cologne—it couldn't have been more than an hour and a half since he had shaved.

They kept on turning from one side street into the next, till the young man stopped in front of a battered gateway.

"Here we are."

Ágnes also stopped obediently, the two carnations on her right arm.

"You didn't really believe it, did you?" he said, tugging her on with a triumphant laugh. "You didn't really think I lived in a ramshackle house like that?"

And they again went out on the boulevard, this time coming to a halt before an immense, ornamented gateway of gigantic dimensions.

"This is it. Like it?"

Ágnes nodded silently—of course she liked it.

Then, in strained, hidden confusion:

"I live in the second courtyard. . . It's quieter back there, you know."

He lived in the second courtyard, on the fourth floor. There was no lift, or if there was, it had for years been rustily slumbering for lack of a motor. They stopped for a moment on the open passage, above the deep, dark abyss of the courtyard—the two young chests had no need to pant, but each suppressed its excitement in a different rhythm. An inquisitive, furtive-looking man answered the door when they rang.

"You didn't forget to put coal on the fire, did you?" asked Laci, in sudden fear.

"You could hatch eggs in there, it's that hot," grinned the man, who was obviously his landlord.

"Well, let's have a drink," said the young man immediately, as soon as they had removed their coats.

The actress protested.

"You don't have to intoxicate me, dear."

"What's the room like? Not too bad, eh? Heavens, I didn't notice there was such a mess here to receive you in."

And he hastily shoved a chair back a bit and kicked at a parcel in the corner.

It was a spacious, shabby, almost friendly room. But dangling from the ceiling by an invisible spider's thread, there hovered an unconcealable sadness. It was only later that Ágnes solved the secret. The room had that day been the scene of several hours' tidying—it laboured under the strain of an asphyxiated, enforced tidiness, such as this room had never yet experienced. The discipline imposed on it was nevertheless imperfect, and all of a sudden each object and every piece of furniture vociferously began to tattle. Carefully covered parcels here and there betrayed their shame. "Those'll be the plastic aprons," thought Ágnes and hardly dared look round, lest she discover some tell-tale instrument of the handicraft which he so abhorred and concealed.

"Your carnations," he cried to the girl as she stood waiting, speechless, in the middle of the room. "Give me your carnations."

He brought a glass and put the two flowers in it. The glass was low, the stems of the carnations long, and they kept toppling over.

"I say, Ágnes," and he embraced her shoulder from the back, "do you like it if someone loves you?"

"I think so."

Did she just think this, or did she say it? She no longer heard what it really was that she answered. The young man put his hands to her breasts, she thrust him away, he kept struggling, and now he was on the verge of being charming, nearly awkward. And this utterly strange hesitancy, this odd clumsiness, utterly paralysed her—she just stood there and let him undo two of the buttons on her blouse. Her complete immobility finally made him back away, and the blouse remained as it was, half open, the rest of the evening.

Laci now half-filled two water-glasses, and without offering the other, tossed his down at a gulp.

"You'll be less stuck up inamo' . . . I've got something for you that'll interest you."

With a rough movement, he tossed one of the suspicious parcels from the corner onto the table, causing the glasses to clink. It was a flat, portable gramophone. Laci immediately started the motor and dropped the record on the moving turntable.

"The gramophone isn't mine, nor are the records, or anything else... Nor you!"

Ágnes had expected the wailing of the saxophone, raucous and aggressive noises, but unexpectedly, she heard the light patter of French words. First a light song, then prose.

"D'you know who this is?" he asked her as though he were standing on a lecturer's dais, triumphant and victorious. "An outdated colleague of yours, who in his time had some inkling of the job. Well, don't you recognize him? ... You were always such a little know-all, quite a swot... Well, I'll tell you... I am letting Jouvét speak in your honour, my long-lost little sheep!"

The foreign words slowly lost their strangeness, growing more communicative as each moment passed and now even becoming intelligible.

"Is it really Jouvét?" the actress asked, curiously and incredulously.

"Well it certainly isn't Imre Szacsvey."

The turntable spun on, and the pattern began to unfold:

"Si tu meurs... la beauté mourra avec toi..."

He watched the effect, from behind a cigarette.

"Are you listening to the woman too? She isn't bad either... Not at all... Not at all..."

For now a woman's voice was continuing the text: "La beauté revivra sans moi..."

"Unfortunately I've forgotten her name, but maybe she won't be angry with me for it... Anyway, she's a pretty old girl now..."

The needle entered the last groove. Ágnes stopped the turntable, took the record off, and had a look at it.

"Jouvét and Madelaine Ozeray... A scene from Giraudoux's 'Tessa'... Where did you get this record from?"

"This?" He superciliously lifted his eyebrows. "This?... This and another ten or twenty, dear. I've invited great company for you here tonight..."

He flicked the lid off a brown cardboard box.

"M. Barrault, please come and let us have a sample of your art... Or no, no... that'll be boring... Better have Mlle. Tessier. You won't be angry with me for introducing you to an illustrious Hungarian actress, will you?... Oh, Printemps, dear Yvonne, no one can come before you."

He turned to the girl.

"Are you satisfied with the ladies and gentlemen? I invited them to amuse you. . . And you don't yet know what further surprises I have in store inside the box."

"But how did you manage to get these records?"

She had wanted to put the question in a tone of amazement and admiration, and now she was annoyed that her voice nevertheless carried a message of reserve and of coldness. Yet she could well imagine how much the young man had had to foot in that morning for the sake of the records, the gramophone, the money, the flowers, the drink, the warmth of the room. How insistently he must have pestered the unknown connoisseur to let him borrow his rare and heart-throbbing records for a night. But why didn't her heart throb? Surely it wasn't that her breasts had been touched? He had not meant to offend her, it was just his old style. But there, again, had been the surprisingly new feature—his effort, his fervour, his throat-constricting fear. The old and the new—both so strange! But what was he afraid of, this memory clad in a mack? They had finished, never, never again could they start anew. Didn't he know that?

She put the Tessa record on again. They listened without speaking.

"Once more!" he ordered. "And translate it. . . At one time you used to have a smattering of French. Or have you forgotten all you ever knew?"

Agnes started the turntable for the third time.

"If you die," she said, interpreting Jouvet's words, "the birds will be silent for ever. . . If you grow cold, the sun will no longer give warmth. . . Now a sentence I didn't quite catch. . . Around your grave the roses wither and fade. . . Beauty will die with you, my only love."

"And what does Madame say in reply?"

As he put the question, he filled his glass with the strong Scotch whisky.

Agnes was now translating as Madeleine Ozeray spoke:

"If I die, the birds will only be silent for one night. . . If I die, you'll forget me by the morrow. . . In the morning you will see the mountains, brilliant before you. . . Upon my grave a thousand flowers will open for you. . . Beauty will continue to live without me, my only love."

"A pretty little song," he said, swallowing his drink. "Just listen and adore. . . That's what I brought these records for, so you should have a good time here."

The heart-gripping thing about it all was that you could almost tangibly feel the shamefaced, bashful, naked truth in his words.

It was late at night by the time they went to bed. Both their heads were awl with the multitude of French and English records, the alien

passions and the sighs, the unknown despair and the unimaginable bliss that had been conjured into the shiny grooves. As though they had reached behind the ribs of people they had never seen, to clutch their hearts and their agonies. Ágnes laid her head on the hard pillow and dizzily, with a touch of nausea, gazed at the ceiling. The young man sensed something of the girl's despair and reached for the glass.

"I won't drink," said Ágnes, turning away.

He gently turned her back. "You must."

"Do you want to intoxicate me, after all?"

"You're no virgin. That's not why I'm making you drink."

And he gently forced her lips apart. The strong, fiery spirits, this breath of flame, ran onto the girl's tongue and palate. Ágnes, choking and coughing, gasped for air.

"But why?... Why do you want me to?"

"Because there's a right way to do everything."

He pointed to the flowers, the records, the spirits, the bed. It was only now that Ágnes noticed she was lying on blinding white pillow-cases and a freshly-washed sheet still smelling of chlorine. She had no strength left to put up any kind of defence. She drank, she gave in.

When they awoke at dawn, Ágnes immediately reached for her stockings, while he remained in bed. He looked at her as she dressed, and, when she had donned even her coat, he quietly said: "Go alone."

He said it in a frigid, almost hostile tone.

"All right," answered Ágnes simply. "Where's the front door key?"

"Wait a mo', I'll let you out there."

She had already started out, above the abyss, along the open fourth-floor passage, when he called after her in an impassioned voice:

"Your carnations!"

Ágnes obediently stopped. Then, in her left hand, she as obediently took the two carnations which had in the meanwhile regained their creased, white tissue-paper wrapping.

"Won't you lose your way?" he asked in a somewhat pacified tone.

"No."

"You must go through to the first courtyard."

"I remember."

"You'll find the bell by the gate, to the right."

"Thanks."

They both knew that they would never see each other again. Ágnes looked back, but she was late. Laci had pulled the door to.

Translated by József Hatvany

HOMERIC VOYAGE

by

GÁBOR DEVECSERI

No. What happened was not what I had so long yearned for; to board a ship and sail along the shores—some real, others only guessed-at—that Homer's Odysseus and his companions visited on their wanderings, as

All then quickly embarked and taking their seats on the benches
Smote with well-ranged oars the grey-green brine of the ocean.

It was all quite different. We travelled not from Troy to Ithaca, but only from Budapest and back again, with a chance nevertheless to evoke a host of notions associated with the Greek lands, and at last to feast our eyes on the historic regions themselves. With my wife, Klára Huszár, a stage-manager of the State Opera House, I went on an eight-day conducted tour to Hellas. It was as I had anticipated: those eight days were worth eight hundred to me.

It could not have been otherwise. After a theoretical stay there of twenty-five years, the reality of eight days had to comprise the past quarter of a century. For me, this quarter of a century—particularly its Greek associations—has been heavy with the burden of thousands of years, gone with the rolling ages. Yes, our all too brief trip was a real voyage, one of the finest of voyages, vying with journeys embracing years.

That it was Homeric leaves no room for doubt. In Marlowe's drama, Doctor Faustus faces the devil who enters his study with the question: "If you be the devil, how came you to leave hell?" "I have not left it," he replies, "where I am is hell." Interpreting this answer positively, and most emphatically without any allusion to hell, this is how I feel about the world of Homer: wherever I travel, I carry with me Homer's world, which has become the principal source of inspiration in my life. How could I have failed to carry it with me, when I was going where it struck its first roots,

from where it spread to every part of the world? Well, I did take it with me; from the windows of the aeroplane I looked down with eyes desiring to recognize, rather than to discover.

The joy of recognition was intensified by the eve of our departure. That evening was the first night of Euripides' *Iphigenia* presented in my translation at the Budapest Sports' Arena, converted into an amphitheatre for the purpose. Homer has perpetuated the history of the Atreids in a record of sombre scenes, but with the radiant serenity of his verse suffusing his response to chaotic events with the spirit of wise constancy and gay imperturbability. Aeschylus, the gloomy poet who built a castle of Cyclop stones from the "crumbs left over by Homer," painted these events—if possible—more dismal even than were the actual facts he depicted, while Euripides again shed light on them, though not the light of sunshine, but that of a searchlight, in an almost or entirely hopeless quest for truth.

Months of struggle with Euripides and then of work together with the enthusiastic theatre ensemble culminated in artistic enjoyment on the eve of our departure, providing an overture to the planned visit. In the voices of Agamemnon, of the old servant, of Iphigenia, of Clytemnestra fighting, arguing, shrieking for life, on the lips of the chorus, it was the town of Chalkis, the Island of Euboea, the Pass of Euripos that most frequently resounded. Hardly half a day later, we could gaze from the aircraft at Chalkis, Euboea and Euripos, bathing in sunshine. Recognition was easy, for from that height the country below looked very much like the maps in semi-relief, seen on the walls of schoolrooms. Height, however, did not bar us from discerning the vivacity of the foliage displayed by the trees covering the mountains like cloaks of moss; nor did it conceal from our eyes the rocking of the sea and the lighter, translucent scintillation of the waters washing the shores. To me this country was a face, a face long beloved, but revealed to my eyes for the first time in its own essence and its enchanting loveliness, and in full sunshine.

We alighted—and found ourselves in a friendly oven. When we stepped under the wings of the plane we could feel the blessed relief offered by shade, and on our way along the asphalt road to the building, again the heat. At the time, we did not know that one can endure this heat, for it is mitigated by gusts of wind blowing from the ocean. But we minded the heat no more than the possibility of meeting mythological monsters, so long as we were in Greece. We met no monsters. On the contrary. Visitors from every corner of the world appeared before our eyes, providing a multi-coloured and very enjoyable picture of Hellas' magnetic power. Finally a bus arrived, bringing a previous group of Hungarian visitors.

They excitedly surrounded us, eyes sparkling with the pleasure of their experiences. I have seen it in others as well as in my own case: when one enjoys a place, one is sorry to leave, but when one has found it quite wonderful, even the departure is filled with joy.

They chattered, nineteen to the dozen. They spoke about what and how much they had seen; they praised the guide, they railed against the guide; for the country they had only appreciation. They warned us against walking about in shorts, if we had any such intentions, as on some summer excursion, because this might be a holiday resort for us, but for the Greeks it was their capital. And an imposing one too, for in the past few years it had grown into a metropolis, in many respects more advanced than Paris. My friend, Tamás Blum, conductor and a bundle of nerves, supplied me with good advice and sunglasses. My wife promptly inquired whether I wished to wear a straw hat or would prefer a parasol. There could be no question of using neither of them. Remembering the dignity of the mandarins, I decided in favour of a parasol, which from that moment became my faithful companion and rendered extremely useful services. Particularly later, on the sweltering hills of Mycenae and Tiryns. It was there that my friend, Tibor Nagy, the eminent archaeologist, dubbed it the symbol of sovereignty.

However, for the moment we were driven to the heart of the capital, our way winding among summer villas and then running along avenues. I am sure that every traveller grasps the character of present-day Athens on this first bus drive. The frequent and consistent alternation of antique and most up-to-date buildings, of historical relics and modern phenomena, is so astonishing and at the same time so natural. Between the double lines of the latest semi-skyscrapers we soon caught sight of the Acropolis, appearing, now no less than ever before, as the crown of the city, an anticipated surprise, and, I must repeat, absolutely natural to behold. In the vicinity of the bus terminus, wedged in between news stands and ice-cream terraces, huge Corinthian columns, the remnants of the temple of Zeus, pierce the deep blue sky, while the pineapple slices of a fallen column demonstrate the technique employed by its ancient makers. Near-by stand the statue of Byron, who loved and gave his life for Hellas, and the Emperor Hadrian's gate, then again hotels, apartment houses and stores—a harmonious medley of the fruits of remote epochs communing with one another. And cleanliness. Not a trace of the one-time "Balkan" filth; except for some parts of the harbour. The town is, as we were able to find to an increasing extent later, one great inner city, diversified by villa districts, containing one and a half million inhabitants. There are marble

pavements and fine lofty houses, each wearing a new coat of paint (made compulsory for the owners by the State). An underground takes you from Omonia Square to the Pireus. Friendly, ingenuous-looking people stroll about the streets.

We reached our hotel in the neighbourhood of Omonia Square with its fountain. Regarded in Athens as a place of middling standard, it was not a luxurious establishment in our eyes either, but it was completely satisfactory in every respect. After an hour's rest we thought we should make a start at the town, devouring and drinking in the Acropolis, the Museum, more museums, the whole universe simultaneously, taking in our stride all that was Greek and first of all everything that has come down from antiquity; that was our idea and desire, dictated by our long pent-up eagerness. However, Greek gods of quite human aspect interfered, admonishing us to observe proportion, moderation, the enjoyment of sober pleasures, and advising Olympian discipline. They recommended that we visit the sights in due order of succession and thus return the series of visits they had paid me, breathing life into my pen during the last quarter of a century when I uninterruptedly translated ancient poetry into Hungarian.

A favourite dish or drink, a favourite poet, a favourite colour or place are common notions. But have you, dear reader, a favourite god? Well, I have. He is Hermes, the messenger of Zeus, the youthfully wise pilot, the gentlest, most playful god, "*superis deorum gratus et imis*," an amiable talker, an enlightening, philanthropic god, who makes the tortoise-shell lyre, consoles Priam, approves the union of Aphrodite and Ares, a god who is tender, subtle, and helpful to travellers—and what a vast number of further engaging traits one might cite among his attributes! As befits his quality of messenger, here, too, it was he who visited us in various shapes, first in the person of a childhood playmate. But it behoves us to act on the advice of the gods not only in the arrangement and schedule of a tour, but also in recording memories, and to grace each chapter of this diary* with the name of an Olympian god. Let the first be:

HERMES

In the hotel situated between September and October streets, I received a call from November. My friend, László November, commercial counsellor of the Hungarian legation—with whom I used to play nearly thirty years ago at the Salt-Baths of Buda—now came to take me to an even brinier

* This issue presents the first chapter of the diary. The quotations from Homer are in Cotterill's translation. (The Ed.)

bath. He brooked no objection, called off the museum and the Acropolis, put us into a legation car, and drove us to the seashore without a moment's delay; the first two items on our program were thus decided. In the afternoon, we went to a very homely beach of minor size, next morning to the extensive and smart lido of the summer resort district of Glyphada. I might have admired the colours of the ocean, the serene, shimmering varied scenery, the infinite zest of life displayed by the bathers, but I must confess that I concentrated all my attention on the snatches of conversation to be heard; in the first days, I found it most thrilling to discover how well-known expressions, long familiar from the classics, live on, though somewhat changed in meaning, form, and pronunciation, and also inserted among new words.

Just as when thirteen years ago, while gazing at the growing number of signboards from the window of the Croydon to London bus, we could not help feeling as if we had strayed into the chapters of a novel by Dickens, so now, seated in the car winding its way to the beach, I could not help being amused by the signboards warning motor-car drivers against exceeding the speed limit with the very same words the Homeric heroes used when calling on their troops not to run away: Μὴ τρέχετε! Do not run, Argives and Achaeans! They nevertheless do. Enjoying life to the full, they speed along the pleasant motor-roads, gay when they look at the sea, on one side of the road, and saddened only when they glance at the other side, lined with boards advertising flats and houses to let, for while there is a housing shortage, the numerous offers are of no avail, because rents are exorbitant, rendering them unattainable for ordinary mortals.

At the beach itself, at the fashionable big lido on the second day, I had an experience that was rather grotesque when viewed from a philological viewpoint. I tried to read Greek papers—and I was successful. Though I had devoted only a few hours of study to modern Greek in the weeks preceding our tour, with the aid of classical Greek and a system of my own resembling that for solving cross-word puzzles, I got on quite well. My system was derived from the method of eating fish. Remove the head or the tail, or both, of the old Greek word, and in most cases you get the modern Greek word. It is easier to understand when you read, because, in writing, *i*, *y*, *oi*, *ei* and *é*, which all sound as *i*, have retained their individual classic forms, so when you hear the word *ithopios* you would never guess its meaning, but when you see it spelled out in a theatre column in the form of *étho-pois*, you easily recognize it as character maker, to wit, actor.

As I have said, I was looking at the papers, which were full of reports

on events in the Congo. There being about three thousand of their compatriots on the scene, many families in Athens followed the news from the Congo with apprehension. Thus one could understand the detailed reports on the Greeks in the Congo, including one with the Christian name of Homer, *i. e.* Omir, who knows the language spoken there. When a Congolese rushed into a restaurant and hastily telephoned somewhere, his compatriots asked this Greek, "Ti eepe, Omire?" "What did he say, Homer?" The text in the paper could be read in the classic language as "Ti aype, Homere?" It made one meditate; these may once have been the very words used by spellbound listeners when they questioned the blind minstrel about the utterance of a god or demigod, which could be fully comprehended and interpreted only by the poet. $\tau\acute{\iota}\ \epsilon\dot{\iota}\pi\epsilon$ "Oμῆρος; and he replied: "Achilles said would that wrath might vanish from the hearts of men, wrath which is sweeter than honey when it arises like wreathing smoke to the nostrils." "That is what Achilles said," explained Homer. His later namesake only answered that the Belgian jeeps were approaching, and that this was the message the Congolese man had passed on by telephone.

Wrath continues to swirl like smoke and without a touch of sweetness, and much remains to be done if it is to be not only quieted, but soothed into reassurance. The world is quaking. But here on the sands everything is calm; the serenity and cheerfulness that reign here we may hope to achieve perhaps in years. At all events, we were now drawing an advance on this calm serenity and looked around, at the beach and at the water, which, with its sparkling waves, evoked the real, mythical Hermes, who travels as a sea-mew, ruffling the ripples.

Between the two bathing expeditions we again encountered Hermes. He appeared before us in another of his forms, in the shape of a whole family. This time it was we who paid the call. In the evening, we set out on the streets of Athens, enlivened by day-time traffic, and visited a friend of ours, Máró, Feriz Berki's wife, who is Greek-born and was spending the summer with her parents. She was having a holiday with her father, and for a Hungarian poet and classical philologist it was a pleasant experience indeed to meet him. He has a publishing house, issuing bilingual editions of the classics; the two languages are Greek and—Greek. He has chosen to undertake the difficult job of acquainting his compatriots with their own national past, their great heritage. The elaborately decorated volumes of serial editions are to be seen in many Athenian homes. I gladly told him about the veritable renaissance that has been developing in our country in the cultivation of Greek art. On this first evening the chief thing was that we found Máró—a mere coincidence, since she was on the

point of leaving for a two days' fishing trip on her brother's yacht. She invited us to accompany her. In vain did we explain that—despite our gratitude and enthusiasm for her plan—we had only a few days in Hellas, and not months. Ultimately, however, it turned out that there was no more room on the boat, and the problem was thus solved.

So Máró left. Her family forthwith became our Hermes, as she herself did later, with natural kindness, charm, and agility. The parents took us to a seaside terrace for cold drinks, which are highly welcome there even at night. On this terrace smartly luxurious and simple summer tourist clothes were seen to tolerate each other's propinquity in peaceful harmony. The waiter proved to be as much of a character as if he had been a waiter in Budapest, for he brought us not what we wanted but what he thought the most appropriate for the occasion.

Shortly before midnight, Máró's children came to see their grandparents. Later we found that with the Greeks midnight was early evening, the traffic in the streets was greatest around half past six in the morning and nine o'clock in the evening; children usually appeared at eleven p. m., and so did all the other people driven into their houses by the heat; at midday—from one to five o'clock in the afternoon—on the other hand, Athens is deserted, shops and offices are closed, everybody sleeps or tries to get some sleep, and only a few erratic foreigners ramble about in the streets. Then Máró's parents took us to our hotel.

In the lounge several members of our party inquired whether we did not feel like going for a walk; so we stepped out again into the night-time day of Athens. We looked at shop-windows, admired the inexpensive and attractive shoes and home-spun products of popular art, but were appalled by the orgy of philistine tawdriness that was exhibited. At every step we saw miniature wooden copies of the most beautiful and celebrated vases, covered with some extraordinarily disgusting varnish, with pictures reminiscent of the inane scenes depicted on the paper hangings that used to be employed to protect kitchen walls. The same kind of thing was displayed in gold at jewellers'. A confectioner's huge, exact copy of the Acropolis prepared from a meringue-like substance we saw before we beheld the original. It was not more beautiful.

Then again it was very tempting to see the numerous tiny snack-bars, nestling even at the foot of modern luxurious buildings, offering lamb, roasted on a spit, fried potatoes, and oriental sweetmeats. We soon yielded. In each case the proprietor, standing at the door, had imperatively invited us in. Finally, a young man addressed us as if we had been meandering about for ages when we really wanted to go to his shop, but could not

find the way, or had hesitated because we failed to realize that we had reached the destination we had been yearning for. So when he shouted at us in an encouraging, reproachful, categorical tone—we entered. He seized the roast lamb we were to consume, broke it into pieces—sending chips of bone flying all over the place—and put them before us. The meat tasted good, we washed it down with a sort of beer, and then went home for the brief night that still separated us from the dawn of the second day, and the second bathing.

We came home from there early enough to pay a rather short visit to the National Museum. We entered the door, and in the next moment stood face to face with Agamemnon's gold mask. Slyly and expertly it had been placed by the museum's curators directly opposite the entrance, so that it might immediately dazzle the visitor and make him feel without a moment's delay that he could turn back if he chose, for he had seen the most important sight. But not the finest, though it certainly gave food for thought. I remember I was a schoolboy spending my vacations at Nógrádverőce, when Frigyes Karinthy, picking up a pebble from the bank of the Danube, remarked: "What makes people so keen on searching for antiques? Here is the oldest antiquity." It was said half in joke, but I think even so he was not quite right. A thing that is *old* is not necessarily an *antiquity*. It must have some correlation to *man*. Directly or indirectly, wholly or partly, it must have been produced by man. That is what came into my mind when I caught sight of Agamemnon's mask, because it has *manifold* correlations to man. First, it was made by a man. Secondly, of a man. Moreover, thirdly, on a man. There is something awesome and horrible about this—true, only in our eyes. To his contemporaries, it would certainly have seemed terrible and shocking, if such a wealthy ruler as Agamemnon had been left without a gold mask after his death. For me it is frightful to look at, for I virtually feel the heat of the living face, evoking the bitterness of evanescence all the more forcibly. A stark skeleton can never conjure up the picture of death with so much power as can the preserved hair or skin of a corpse, or, though indirectly, its preserved features. Agamemnon? But we know he was not Agamemnon! What a sad fate. This unknown king is not only dead, but forgotten. So utterly forgotten that his face has been given to another, namely Agamemnon. It does not preserve and commit to memory—not to mine either—his unknown self, but instead, Agamemnon.

If I were able to draw, I could put down every detail, so deeply has this face been engraved on my memory. Especially since after so many photographs I have finally seen the original. It is by no means beautiful. The

dashing, cocky moustache and vacant eyes are rather depressing. Its fate, reviving the memory of another's life, is more tragic even than that of Agamemnon. Could this man have said to Odysseus in Hades:

"Many a time hast thou been where warriors lay in their life-blood, fallen when fighting alone or in midmost shock of the battle; ah but a sight like this—it had made thee to groan in thy spirit, how all round by the side of the bowl and the high-piled tables slaughtered we lay in the hall, and with blood swam all of the pavement."

He could not. Yet he may at all events have easily had to suffer a like fate, because at that time it was not uncommon there.

Agamemnon continued:

"Sound most woeful of all that I heard was the cry of Cassandra, daughter of Priam, who, stabbed by the treacherous-soul'd Clytemnestra, fell right over me there as I lay; and my hands I uplifted, e'en though dying, to clutch at my sword; but that pitiless shewolf left me, nor found in her heart, as I went to the mansion of Hades, even my eyelids to close, or my lips press gently together."

One may well muse over these ethics and rules concerning the forms of conduct that require murder, including even the killing of a consort. That Clytemnestra and her lover murdered her husband was, it is true, already pretty wrong. But what was really intolerable was that—after having murdered Agamemnon and his share of the booty, the princess of Troy—Clytemnestra did not even close the eyes of the husband she had murdered, as required by the rules of propriety, and it was because of this that she was considered depraved and evil-eyed. There were customs that had to be adhered to. The killing of a spouse did not contravene the rules. On the contrary: in some measure it actually was part of them in that age—it was a sad event, but no one was proof against a similar accident. However, to omit closing the eyes was not only cruel, but also bad form—an offence against the rules, a cause for complaint from beyond the grave. I have no wish to jest about the typical fate of an Agamemnon. It is too grim for such treatment. But memorials of this type, which do not so much represent a work of art as rather the revelation of a particular individual and are too workaday in their adherence to their own past era, shed a brilliant light on everything that—in the closed epochs of history—strikes us as grotesque and absurd. The grotesqueness and absurdity disappear only when we consider the distance between the two ages and observe the proper perspective. I said "workaday", for solemnity does not arise from conforming to a ceremony—in this case a funeral ceremony—in the customary manner, but from rendering it sensible and real through the

power of art and emotion. And one more thing. The fourth contact with man, the fourth correlation of this memorial to man, also rouses such thoughts. Namely the fact that it is of gold. Of the fatal metal, "apt to provoke danger." Πολύχρυσος; Μυκῆνη—"Mycenae abounding in gold." Stained by blood, and again by blood. On the face of the dead king, gold was the sign of value, of respect, demanded by propriety; demonstrating compliance with the rules of decorum. Why, the relatives of the sovereign might have come in for censure if he "who had acquired so much" had not been honoured by burial with a golden mask. This is expressed on a more modest level in the *Odyssey* by Penelope's speech on her *living* father-in-law, Laertes.

"Princes, who sue for my hand—since dead is the godlike Odysseus—patiently wait, though eager to hasten my marriage, till fully woven this web—lest vainly I forfeit the fruits of my spinning. Lo, 'tis a shroud for the hero Laertes, to wrap him, whenever bringing his destined doom low-laying death overtakes him; else in Achaea's land might well some woman reproach me, were he to lie, who possessed such riches, lacking a grave-cloth."

For the tomb, a handsome shroud was the due of Laertes, the patriarchal husbandman; a golden mask that of the gold-acquiring princes of Mycenae. Though gold called for a high standard of workmanship, it could not answer the artistic requirements in such measure as to make the gold *incorporate* the respect and value, previously referred to, and not only *symbolize* it.

Let us step into the museum and contemplate works where the material does not *compete* with the message they have to communicate, where value does not depend on material or function, at least not mainly on function. works whose power of expression is not enhanced by material however precious, where matter is only destined to serve and pay homage to art. Such are the vessels of Vaphio, the numerous jewels of Argos and Pylos, and, no less so, the vases. The first we beheld was an old friend: the warrior vase, impressive but nonetheless modest, standing unobtrusively to the right, not far from the entrance. But we could not stop for long before any of the relics; we zig-zagged, darting about in some embarrassment, overwhelmed by the desire to see everything at once, which, as mentioned before, had taken hold of us on the first day and was at the moment dictated by the imminence of closing time. We did not mind too much, for we knew that we would come back in two days. Zig-zagging about then brought me ever nearer to a point of rest.

Presumably you too, dear reader, have the habit of returning at the moment of farewell to the favourite you have chosen from the disconcert-

ingly rich, marvellously delightful collection in which you have been wandering; perhaps you even close your eyes on your way out, lest new beauty should divert you from your carefully selected favourite. That is what I did about a nude by Degas in the French collection at the Ermitage, and also after having seen the Dionysos vase at the Pushkin museum in Moscow. At the Louvre such a course of action is unnecessary, since of the antique collection the Nike of Samothrace stands there to receive and to speed the guest.

But here you always had to look about a little among the many antique statues until you found the one that had captivated you with such mighty force, immediately, in the first hour. Indeed, it was mighty itself, despite its small size. It was kindred to the great Mediterranean mother-goddess, related to the latter in workmanship of sculpture, but undoubtedly male. It was sitting opposite the comparatively giant effigy of the great Mother, in a glass cabinet, among various similar statuettes, and playing on an instrument. The instrument was a sort of lyre, he himself a god, or perhaps already a man, at all events an entranced, inspired musician, a creator absorbing and emanating a whole world—in the process of creation. In the wide, shield-shaped face over the thrown-back neck only the nose was carved out; the mouth (open or just indicated), the eyes (closed or staring into the distance, no! high up) must have been painted in the remote past. Now only the smooth surface was raised to the skies, ecstasy radiated not from the obliterated features, but from the poise of the head, the whole body suggesting the ecstasy of the *face*. The invisible inspiration of the face was so clearly discernible, in their dumb silence the missing strings of the lyre sounded with so much power, that one felt tempted to accost this mysterious ancient singer—so comprehensible in his humanity as he glorified existence:

“What are you playing on your beautiful, smooth lyre? Who were you? I know the answer, even if you don’t reply. You are the feeling of awe itself. You sing of the joy of being, you sing it sadly. You accept the bitterness of life, you accept it happily. Forceful is your song. You besiege the glass of your cabinet, you besiege the glass of the sky, with your complaint, poet!”

He gave no answer.

We said farewell, for the time being, and after lunch we hastened to the Acropolis. On this occasion our Hermes was sitting at the wheel. He was one of the Athenian taxi drivers whose splendid athletic bearing showed closer resemblance to the heroes of the Iliad or rather the Odyssey than did any mask, and who surpassed even “Menelaus good at the war-

cry," when an attempt was made to cram a seventh passenger into the car that was at the moment holding only six. This time there were, however, only four of us, my wife, Pál Kadosa (our illustrious composer), his wife, and myself, to alight from the car before the fronted columns of the Acropolis. The view of the Parthenon, the Erechtheion, the temple of Nike, and the whole grandiose surrounding region was exactly as we had expected: breath-taking, without paralysing—on the contrary, stimulating. We found ourselves in an atmosphere of lofty serenity. And there, around us, moved the world.

I should not like to be thought frivolous, but the marble-paved space shut in by the holy buildings, its floor worn uneven and bumpy by the steps of innumerable visitors, gave me the impression of a built-in swimming pool, in whose water one might splash, without ever being swallowed up, and in which studious tourists, Greek school-children, withered but sprightly hundred-year-old English spinsters, northerners taking photographs, visitors from every shore of the oceans, and even soldiers were being rocked as by artificial waves. A priest of the orthodox church, wearing a deep-black cassock, a long beard, a silver knot beneath his headgear, wandered among the crowd, in the company of his old wife, using his black umbrella as a sunshade; but when a tourist wanted to photograph him, he refused with the same unworldly disapproval on his face as is shown by Zoltán Kodály when he is asked for an autograph.

Such were the pictures that showered in upon me. Rapture, too, must be given time to ripen. It appears at the first moment, then vanishes, admitting contradictory, conflicting impressions, to return and assert itself with hundredfold, thousandfold strength. It is not here that I want to describe the Acropolis, after the first visit, or in prose. But let it be stated now—rather as gratifying self-vindication than in surprise—that there too, we felt the presence of the monumental *and* of intimacy simultaneously and inseparably, as almost always when reading Greek works, when contemplating Greek scenery and Greek art.

Taking a brief look at the great Dionysos theatre at the close of that afternoon only confirmed our feelings. It has been recorded of Socrates that he never visited a theatre unless the play presented was written by Euripides. I wonder where he may have sat. His seat has not been marked by a memorial tablet, nor could it have been marked so, because *at the time* it was not deemed important to mark it. Now I feel as if he were rising from *every* seat, turning straight to me, and asking with affectionate irony:

"Tell me, guest-friend, does it really mean so much to you to see this theatre with your own eyes? Or shall we say that in reality it was your

knowledge of it which meant so much to you, and that this is why stepping on the scene has made you so exceedingly happy? Shall we say that what in your life so far has been of utmost importance to you is that which you thus far learned? Shall we say so or not?"

"Yes, let us say so, Socrates."

"If that be so, can a mere glimpse of this theatre contribute essentially to all that you have known before? Does it contribute a little or not at all? Or how much?"

"Its contribution is infinite, Socrates. As great as it was for your pupils when they were permitted to see you, though the most important thing for them was to hear what you had to say. They would not at any price have forgone hearing it from your lips directly, though the words would have been the same if they heard them indirectly or read them, would they not?"

"You are astute, guest-friend, and have undertaken no mean job if you have set out to get the better of Socrates. Because I can give you the slip every time you think you have caught me. What would you reply if I asked you to make your choice: either the knowledge taught about human history, works of the intellect and of art by the spoken or written word, by description, by books, and pictures, or else this moment, when standing in the orchestra of this theatre you turn to the place you suppose to have been mine. Let me hear your reply and your decision, or are you unable to answer? Shall I think that you cannot answer?"

"No, Socrates, I believe I can. I should answer that it is unnecessary to choose between the two, and it is good that I am spared the choice; that this moment is the flower, the acme, the crowning of every content, and that I must not give it up in exchange, because, in itself, it greatly contributes to those very contents. And that at this moment it is they by whom I am possessed."

"Then shall we say that at this moment and on this spot you are happy? Shall we leave it at that?"

"At that, Socrates."

“TIHANY ANTIQUA”

by

LÁSZLÓ PASSUTH

Sunset on a Sunday. Watched from the hills, the chain of returning motorcars converge towards the capital like a snake of light, but if we turn off a few paces from the misty, purple mirror of Lake Balaton—a mere stone's throw from the highway—the legends of a thousand years seem to come down to earth. The names of the surrounding villages, like Örvényes within whose borders we are walking, were mentioned in one of the very first records of our language, the letter of foundation of the Tihany monastery, issued in 1055. I am standing in front of the remains of the church at Apát, a ruined medieval village; its loop-hole-like window, its simple but noble Romanesque forms are already sufficient to fire the imagination.

We go up the hillside a little higher and, seen from up there, the ribbon of the concrete highway fades away. The higher we get, the more clearly we see in the signs which remain, in the blue ribbon, the Roman military road of ancient fame.

Those who live here and know every inch of the northern “historical” shores of the Balaton, among themselves call that long, running ditch, which cuts through the narrow neck of the Tihany peninsula, “Pliny's canal.” The guide-books scarcely mention it, excursionists rarely stop at it—it is not among the known attractions of the Balaton. Pliny, however, the traveller of the ancient world, who was known for his keen, discerning eye and excellent pen, mentioned it when he visited the Roman world of Lacus Pelso—that was the Latin name for the Balaton. He saw in it the strange work of ancient peoples, long vanished, yet there are other sources which claim that it was the Roman emperor, Galerius, who gave orders for the peninsula “to be converted into an island.”

There is no more exciting walk than to follow Pliny's canal and with the eyes of an archaeologist to guess at its original form. It starts from the

small bridge which crosses the road, like an ordinary, middling-deep ditch: the banks are covered with brushwood, the empty channel cushioned with moss. A few paces further on, you can no longer see the bottom, for the "canal" is already at least 18 to 24 feet deep. Although the first section could perhaps be regarded as a work of nature, here we can see that it is actually a line of demarcation created by the hand of man, hollowed out, perhaps, with stone-age tools by peoples of ancient times, in many places in hard, rocky ground.

What was the aim of this strange indentation? We think it may have served a double purpose. At a time of flood it played the role of a conduit, carrying off the wild waters from the "outer lake," which was drained at the beginning of the 20th century. Its second purpose is still more striking: it becomes evident when we cross to the steeper side of the channel and gaze down into the almost "bottomless" depths. Before our eyes the attacking line of a pre-historic enemy comes to life, stealthily drawing nearer, then suddenly stopping short on unexpectedly running up against the canal. By whom this work of man was created, when it was hollowed out of the hard, rocky soil, will probably remain a riddle for all time. A strong wind has begun to blow; in the twilight Pliny's world is inexplicable, frightening in its antiquity.

*

We are within the borders of Örvényes village. The archaeologists have unearthed a Roman villa here. The local people have known about this ancient settlement, at least to the extent that the men of former times built with excellent stone.

The news of every excavation captures the interest of the Hungarian village, indeed young and old alike stand around the exploratory trench to see what "treasures" are thrown up by the archaeologist's spade. The excavation of the villa, however, took place during the summer work period, and so it was only the village children who hovered around Tihamér Szentlélek, the curator of the museum and discoverer of the Szombathely altar to Isis. The "novel of archaeology" haunts this region with a thousand motifs, so it is no wonder that the boys said they too would like to try their hand at archaeology. When the children got there, one of the fine houses of the Roman world on the shores of Lake Balaton, surrounded here and there by a few feet of wall, had already been opened up in its original purity, and the archaeologists did not need a helping hand from the uninitiated. Still Szentlélek did not want simply to refuse the proffered help, which arose from a warm and well-meaning romanticism. He

marked out a line between two trees, parallel with the shores of the Balaton, and ordered them to "dig an exploratory trench here." The village boys took up the spades enthusiastically, as though the curator of the museum had been in the possession of some secret. They worked with a will—and hardly an hour had passed when they came upon the lovely bronze statue of Minerva, unbroken and perfect, and now one of the most beautiful items in the Tihany museum. We were visiting the excavations with the sculptor Miklós Borsos, when we heard from the young archaeologists working there the news of the "finding" of a few days before. One of them jumped on a bicycle and brought the bronze statue from his hostel, rubbing off the layers of soil of two thousand years. It was the sculptor who first took it into his hands, his fingers merging with the lovely curve of the bronze shoulder. Work and artist were one, the beauty of the work of art that moment became more understandable, more consciously felt by me than ever before. I preserve the adventure of the "archaeological" expedition to Örvényes among my most cherished memories.

*

Óvár—Old Fortress—in most cases signifies an old town, usually that part of town which surrounds the fortress kernel and was at one time walled. But if a wanderer makes his way to the Tihany Óvár, he will find nothing of the sort. There are still stone remains hidden within the huge, spreading system of earthworks, but he who walks around aimlessly would scarcely notice that the stretch of hills here was not framed by nature, but by the sense of proportion and experience of generation after generation of military engineers, the builders of ancient earth fortresses.

It is said among the local people that the Avars, the one-time builders of great, earthen castles, must have created these fortifications round about the 7th and 8th centuries. It is probable, however, that they only made use of the works of those who had lived on the peninsula many hundreds, perhaps even thousands of years earlier. You have to climb up to Tihany Óvár from Dióstető, in order that the "strategic" perspective of the whole should be vividly revealed to you. Imagination makes the whitely winding highway down below, built between the Balaton and the hill, vanish from sight. The hill in its original, fearful steepness, here fell sheer into the sometimes quiet, sometimes stormy waters. Thus it was almost impossible to approach or attack the Tihany hills from here. The back of the plateau on the other hand, was safeguarded by impenetrable woods thus the enemy could only approach it from the West, from the direction of the Roman military road.



Drawing by Miklós Borsos

The side of the hill leading towards Óvár is today still completely barren, its bleakness scarcely broken by one or two new nurseries of trees. How could this region have remained so sparse of vegetation on the generally so fertile Tihany Peninsula? Obviously the defenders of the earthen fortress destroyed all the plants, as though creating a glacis, which the enemy could reach only without being able to mask their movements behind any kind of scrub, while the defenders in the earth fortress—depending on the era—could overwhelm them with an avalanche of stones, a hail of arrows, or with rifle fire.

If the enemy nevertheless managed to fight their way across the barren plateau, they were here confronted by what are really the earth fortifications proper. This monumental earth fortress still defies time today, almost untouched: several yards high, it protectively embraces the oval-shaped region in its basin-like lap. On the rear side there is a fresh earthwork, like some inner wall. Only if the enemy gained possession of this could he break forward to the core of the fortification system, to the summit where the monastery church stands today.

The Hungarian fortresses, practically without exception, were destroyed



Drawing by Miklós Borsos

at the order of the Austrian Emperor in the first years of the 18th century after the suppression of the "kuruc" rebellion and in order that they could not again serve as strongholds for new uprisings. The Tihany earth fortress, however, could not be torn apart by any Austrian gunpowder. The earth here formed firmer, more mighty fortifications than any castle walls built of stone and mortar. At the side of the earth fortress, the one-time "corner-bastions" can still be seen; the earth fortifications run round the whole imperilled region and only peter out at the rocks rising above the Balaton, because no attack could come from there in any case.

In the long history of Tihany there is no record of its ever having been captured or overrun by an enemy, certainly not at the time of the Turks, in the 16th and 17th centuries. The pagans who held the southern shores of Lake Balaton in their hands were never able to set foot here. It is at twilight that we visit the fortress system, hardly a soul is to be seen here, and we rest among the press-house walls, built from volcanic stone. The question wells up within us: who might have been the original masters of the earthen castle of Tihany? Why did they entrench themselves precisely here? And yet how did it happen that they vanished so completely from this impregnable system of fortifications? Press houses... the

starlings invade the ripe grapes in dense ranks. The farmer's slingshot, the sound of which frightens off the greedy birds, is at rest. From the cellar, hundreds of years old, he brings us the old wine, harvested on this mysterious hill.

*

What people can have named the Balaton *Lacus Pelso*? What words of a lost tribe did the Romans take over? With the vanishing of the Roman world from the Balaton, new barbarian peoples descended on this gentle, cultivated land, in those decades when the agony of the West Roman Empire began.

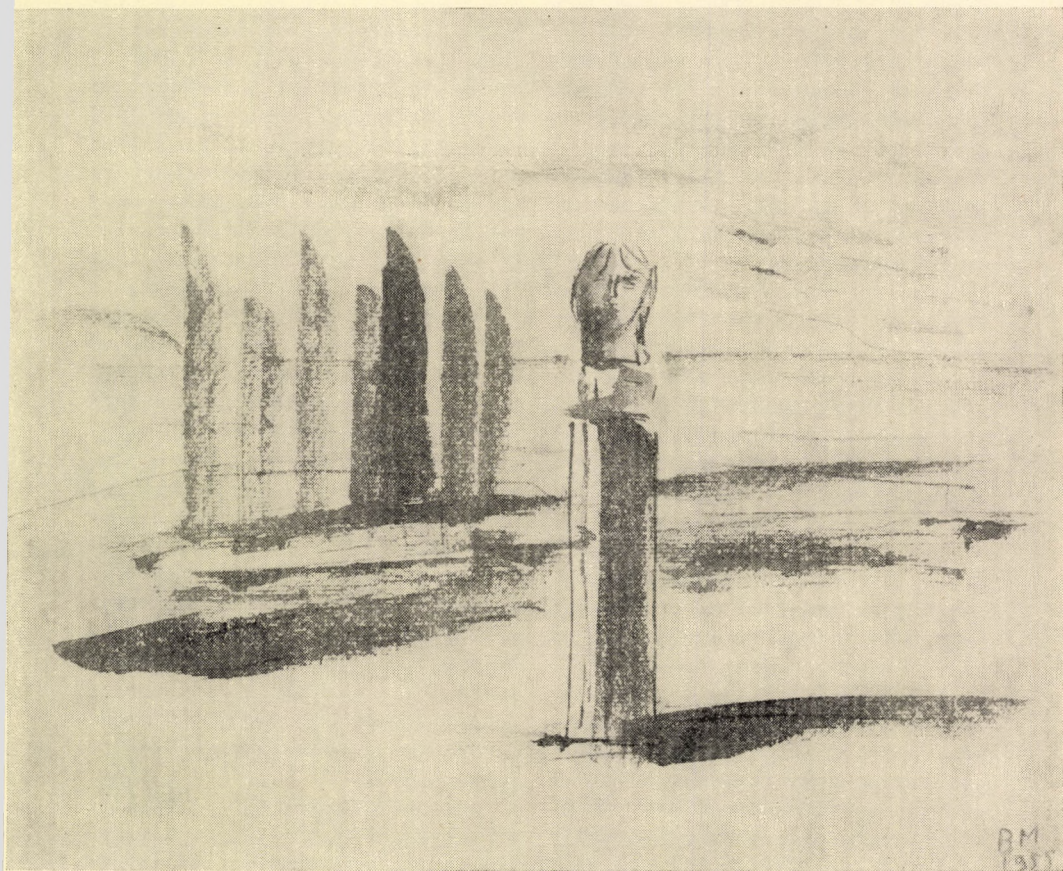
The last chroniclers of the ancient world call the northern part of the Balaton the birthplace of the famous Gothic king, Theodoric the Great. The time is certain, 1,500 years ago, or 455 A. D. to be exact: the birthplace is less certain. According to present-day conjecture, it is most probably at Fenékpusztá, close to the town of Keszthely, that the Eastern Gothic prince saw the light of day—he, who, in the period between the Ancient and Middle Ages, gave Rome a last, golden age of 30 years. The reason why the choice falls on Fenékpusztá is that, according to the testimony of the archaeologists, this one-time important Roman town survived the fall of the Empire and continued to be an inhabited place perhaps right up until the coming of the Magyar tribes.

After the death of Attila, at the time of the celebrated division of the spoils, Theodoric's father, the reigning prince of the Goths, received that part of the country which stretched from the northern shore of Lake Balaton to the Austrian border. It was here, on the shores of the Balaton, that the barbarian prince was brought up until at the age of eight or nine, as a result of a change in political fortune, he was taken to Byzantium as a hostage.

What could this undoubtedly precocious boy have taken with him in his world of memories? According to contemporary sources it was the nostalgia, rooted in his childhood, which, at the age of twenty, called him back from the city that was then the capital of the world. There followed two obscure decades in his life—the darkest period of the early Middle Ages. After that he took the road which led him from victory to victory—into Italy. Seeing the daily groups of tourists visiting the mausoleum of Theodoric in Ravenna, which (in the words of Dietrich von Bern) is unparalleled in architecture, one wonders: are they aware that this puzzling, interesting figure of European history passed his childhood, sunk in obscurity, on the shores of Lake Balaton?

*

Our master mason once wanted to have the cellar in his press-house widened. It was on this occasion that they struck upon a tunnel from which a "golden spur," a bracelet and a skull was supposed to have peered forth. That happened some twenty years ago, in the middle of the war. There was little room then for archaeology and the authorities of that time walled off the entrance "until better times." Where the tunnel was, one can only guess, because it is concealed by rows of barrels. But Master Lőrinc promised that on some quiet spring morning he would bring out his tools and summon us to this strange, unique, Tihany passage. Then we shall see which centuries it leads to, into what depths of the past. For wherever a trench is dug on this strange peninsula or an old wine-cellar opened up, when a road is built or a well bored—in some form or other mysterious Antique Tihany shines forth with its face of many thousands of years.



Drawing by Miklós Borsos

THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT AT BUDAPEST UNIVERSITY

by

MIKLÓS SZENCZI

Whatever the work you are engaged in, it is worth while to stop sometimes and reflect on what exactly you are doing, how your work could be improved, what the objectives it serves are, how certain difficulties can be overcome, *etc.* The invitation by the Editor of The New Hungarian Quarterly to write about the work of our English Department gives an opportunity for heart-searchings of that nature. I wish to raise here some points which may be of interest to the English reader.

University work always has a twofold aspect, *viz.* teaching and research. In our case the balance inclines rather heavily in the former direction; the pedagogical duties predominate over scholarly research. This is due to various causes, among them the nature of our university curriculum. Our undergraduates in the Faculty of Arts study two major subjects for four years, while the fifth year is devoted to practical training in school work and teaching methods, and to writing a thesis in one of the major subjects. English is usually combined with Hungarian, although many of our students group it with French or German, some with Chinese or Arabic. The compulsory subjects for a degree in English include the descriptive and historical grammar of the language, the history of Great Britain and the United States, and the entire history of English and American literature, with

seminar work and practical language classes. The whole scheme of study seems too comprehensive, too encyclopedic in character; it makes excessive demands on the student whose knowledge of English is usually very far from firm, it also tempts the lecturer to lay too much stress on factual information; in general, it leaves little scope for originality and freshness of approach. Fortunately, a change is now coming. The excessive burdens laid on the undergraduates have been a matter of complaint for some time, and the new programs of study which will shortly come into effect envisage some welcome changes. Much of the dead wood in long-established curricula will be cut out, minor authors, literary works of secondary importance will be relegated to non-compulsory, special courses, while the vital movements in the history of language and literature, and their connection with the life of society at large will be studied more closely, and the really great authors and literary works will receive more attention. We wish to satisfy the individual talents and inclinations of undergraduates by offering them a wider range of optional courses, while the linguistic level will be raised by a more intense study of the spoken language.

Such a revision and reorganization of the material taught, together with the modernization of teaching methods, is bound to lay

an additional burden on university teachers. It involves, among other things, the preparation of text books and other aids to study in which the compiler will be faced with a twofold task: to utilize and assimilate elements of abiding value from traditional scholarship, and to approach problems from the fresh angle of modern Marxist science. What is envisaged is not a series of eclectic textbooks, a hotchpotch of old and new, but guides to study that will open the students' eyes to the real values and living problems of English language and literature.

Useful as it is to our day students, such a series will be indispensable to the large number of adults who attend correspondence courses. The latter category of students presents a special problem to our staff. Their studies must be directed, problems arising in the course of study are discussed at meetings held at regular periods, compulsory examinations are conducted—all these tasks must be shouldered by the teachers of our Department. We are five in number (last term there were only four of us), and our duties are definitely on the increase; the re-introduction of evening courses is impending, and this will add further to the work of the English Department.

Nevertheless, such developments are to be welcomed, not complained about. The burden laid on the teachers can be lightened by new appointments, especially in language teaching, where the appointment of people with an English background and education seems imperative. But the broadening of university work is essentially the result of the cultural revolution which has opened wide the doors of highest learning to all classes of society. It is a most satisfying experience to a university teacher to watch students with a working class or peasant background rise to the top in the class, and do work which is equal or superior to that done by their companions.

It must be admitted, however, that good command of English among freshmen is

less general than it was between the two world wars. There are several reasons for this. For one thing, it was chiefly the upper and middle classes who insisted on their children being taught foreign languages; the social importance of these classes has now disappeared or declined. Nor was the atmosphere of the Second World War or the cold war favourable to English studies. In Budapest the status of the chair of English was reduced to a Readership, while at Debrecen degree courses in English stopped altogether for several years. A similar reduction occurred in the number of secondary schools in which English was a compulsory subject. Moreover, there was hardly any student or teacher who had a chance to study in Britain or America. All this partly explains why at present we have so few experts in the field of English studies; another reason is that most of the talented graduates in English took up posts in the publishing trade, in broadcasting or the diplomatic service, while few were attracted by the relatively meagre prospects of an academic or scholarly career.

Since 1957 conditions have eased considerably. In the autumn of that year full professorships at Budapest and Debrecen were re-established, and closer cultural contacts with Britain were resumed. One of the first heralds was a truly imposing gift of books presented by members of Cambridge University to the Institute of Literature of the Hungarian Academy, followed by presentations of books to five Hungarian Universities and Institutes of Education by the British Government. With the systematic acquisition, in addition, of English and American books by our University and Academy libraries, our scholars are now in a position to consult the most essential books on English language and literature published during the last 20—25 years.

Hungarian scholars and undergraduates have also begun to reappear in England. Assisted partly by Hungarian Government grants, partly by British Council scholar-

ships, some of our students and young university teachers were given facilities to attend summer courses in Cambridge; there are prospects of having the scheme extended also to London. Mutual visits by senior university teachers have also started. As early as the summer of 1956, two Readers of the English Department in Budapest attended the Cambridge Conference of the International Association of University Professors of English. One of them, Dr Éva Róna, later received an invitation to lecture at Royal Holloway College, while Dr Tompkins, Vice-Principal of the College came to deliver some interesting lectures to our students. Such visits have since been gathering momentum. In 1959 Professor Országh of Debrecen and myself attended the Lausanne-Berne Conference of the IAUPE and the Stratford Shakespeare Conference. From England we had such eminent lecturers as Dr Donald Davie and Dr Arnold Kettle, while our contacts with English scholars of the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, and the German Democratic Republic have also assumed a more personal character through the visits of distinguished German scholars like Professors Lehnert, Schlösser, Wirzberger, and Dr Weimann to Budapest, and my own visits to our Soviet and Czechoslovak colleagues.

Such visits are no mere pleasure trips—they are necessary links in that widening of horizon, that spirit of international fellowship which are essential requisites for solving the problems before us. Without the vivifying breath of mutual trust and international collaboration, the humanist values inherent in the study of foreign cultures cannot be grasped and appreciated. To my mind, the contacts outlined above should be but a beginning—they should be extended so as to include a wide exchange of students in both directions. The London students who are preparing to take Honours degrees in Hungarian at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, the Cambridge undergraduate who wishes to study

Finno-Ugrian linguistics, together with the future English experts and translators of Hungarian literature must be given facilities to come to this country and study these questions, together with the life of present-day Hungary, here on the spot. It is equally important that a much larger number of Hungarian students should be sent to Britain, should get a chance to study at British universities, read in British libraries, get acquainted with the most recent results of British and American scholarship and weigh them on the scales of their critical intelligence, made more sensitive by their acquaintance with the methods of Marxist literary scholarship.

Our Department has a number of promising students whose further development demands our care and attention. They have shown their ability in seminar work, in literary competitions, in preparing their theses, and in writing articles and reviews for our periodicals. The subjects studied include comparisons of classical and Elizabethan tragedy, the influence of stage conditions on Shakespeare's dramatic art, Coleridge's literary criticism, the heritage of the Enlightenment in Byron's poetry, various aspects of the English novel (including the social background of Hardy's novels), aspects of contemporary American drama, the rise of Marxist literary criticism in England, *etc.* It may be confidently expected that some of our present students will contribute to such joint enterprises as the volume of essays we plan to publish on the four-hundredth anniversary of Shakespeare's birth.

This brings me to the second aspect of our work to which I can refer here only briefly. Scholarly research cannot be sharply separated from our teaching duties or our tasks as cultural workers. A few months ago we tried to draw up a plan of English studies for the whole country for the next ten or twelve years. In the field of literature this would include the writing of full-length books on such masters of the English novel

as Swift, Dickens, Thackeray, Hardy, comprehensive studies of Sir Philip Sidney, Shakespeare's comedies and English romantic poetry, close investigation of the various trends in twentieth-century English literature, a study of the connection between working-class movements and literature in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, English and American theories of the novel, a history of American literature, *etc.* The scheme is supplemented by bibliographical work, linguistic studies, research in Hungary's literary connections with Britain and the United States, *etc.* It is much to be hoped that this scheme, of which I have quoted only a few items, will materialize through the collaboration of all workers in the field of English studies—we must always bear in mind that beside the teachers of the Budapest and Debrecen chairs of English there are English scholars at the Department of World Literature of Budapest University, at the Institute of Literature of the Academy, as well as at several other institutions. Yet it seems to me that, with the stress laid on the urgency of university reform, much of the energy and time of university teachers of English will be diverted during the next few years to the writing of grammars, histories of literature, the compilation of anthologies, historical readers, *etc.*—in short, text-books of every description.

There is yet another feature of our cultural life which acts as a brake on purely scholarly pursuits: this is the demand of the publishing houses on our English experts. I have mentioned that some of our

best men have joined the staff of publishers; the rest of us also find it difficult to resist their attraction. There is no danger, of course, of all university teachers turning publishers' readers; but the fact is that when an English book comes out now in Hungarian translation, it is usually supplied with a preface or a postscript, often with notes, the translation is compared with the original, *etc.* In the case of poets, complete works are rarely published, so poems must be selected, edited—not to speak of the fact that all English works must be translated. In all this activity the chairs of English have a direct or indirect share. Their teachers either perform part of the work themselves, or they provide the people who do it. That is why we pay so much attention to our budding poets and men of letters; and give them guidance also in the theory and practice of translation. In our view university chairs should be not merely centres of academic research but intellectual *foci* transmitting the values of English and American culture on several levels and in many directions.

The upshot of all this is that teaching and research are interdependent—neither of them can be pursued exclusively without detriment to the aims and objectives of our university work, though one aspect may predominate in a given phase. The object of our work may be summed up in a single sentence: to build up a dynamic community of teachers and cultural workers able to satisfy the needs of our rapidly developing society and add our contribution to international scholarship.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH, AMERICAN AND FRENCH BOOKS

The critical miniatures published below may be regarded as preparatory fragments for a treatise on a larger scale, but they came into existence to serve a practical purpose as well. They were originally intended for the periodical *Világirodalmi Figyelő* ("Observer of World Literature") issued quarterly under the auspices of the Institute of Literary History of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Through comprehensive essays and shorter reviews this periodical keeps the interested public informed of recent developments in literary theory, of the present position of this science and of the most interesting points of discussions going on within its confines.

DAVID KRAUSE: *Sean O'Casey, the Man and his Work* (Mac Gibbon & Kee, London, 1960, 340 pp.)

David Krause's book is a highly remarkable, thorough and painstaking monograph on the greatest living Irish dramatist. In many respects it may be called exemplary; its seven chapters not only closely examine O'Casey's life and works, but give a picture of the Irish social position, Irish literature, the beginnings of the Irish drama, the history of the Abbey Theatre—and all this without deviating for a moment from the main issue, *i. e.*, the history of Irish nationalist movements, the roles and development of Yeats and Lady Gregory, the delineation of the figure of Jim Larkins, the magnificent Dublin labour leader, or of the careers of scholars and writers who fought a losing battle for enlightenment against the catholic clergy, to the extent that these issues have affected O'Casey's life and creative path. The book is not a mere biography or critical analysis, but may justly be regarded as an introduction to the complicated and fascinating history of modern Ireland.

In conjunction with the analysis—supported by carefully selected and ample passages—of O'Casey's works, the book discusses his contemporary and later critics, citing their arguments, analysing and in most

cases exposing the groundlessness of their censure. As a matter of course, the author shows more partiality for his subject than is consistent with a dispassionate evaluation. On the other hand, it is precisely this sympathetic partiality which enables him to penetrate so deeply and illustrate so vividly the beauty and novelty of O'Casey's works.

The extraordinarily interesting historical process in which O'Casey took an active part was marked by the flare-up of the labour movement in the early 1910's, culminating in the great Dublin strike of 1913 (when O'Casey, then a young workman, acted as commander of the labour militia); an account is given of how the combatant spirit of the working classes was diluted, then broken by bourgeois and petty bourgeois nationalism, to such an extent that labour was unable to play an effective, not to speak of leading, role in Ireland's social setup.

These facts explain many features of the future dramatist's works, of the impulses to which they give vent, even of his path through life—such as his voluntary exile in the 1920's. Krause offers a remarkable analysis of Shakespeare and Boucicault's influence on the development of O'Casey's art as a dramatist. His disquisitions on the appearance of the antiheroic in the early dramas are of particular interest, as are those on the growing antiwar spirit

evinced by O'Casey's writings; his analysis of O'Casey's tragicomic vein is no less sound than his statement that ever since the late twenties O'Casey has written almost exclusively prophetic or comic morality plays.

In the presence of so much that is valuable, it is regrettable that Krause endeavours to minimize the significance of O'Casey's conversion to communism and its influence on his dramatic art; he sees it as manifesting itself only in the dramatist's general humanism. In reality, it has played a much greater role, and numerous features of the prophetic morality plays call for a different interpretation in this light.

PIERRE DE BOISDEFRE: *Une Histoire Vivante de la Littérature d'Aujourd'hui*. (A Vivid History of Present-Day Literature)—(Le Livre Contemporain, Paris, 1959, 775 pp.)

The author is thirty-three, and fills an important post in the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, yet he already has to his credit no less than two novels and five books on literature besides the one lying before us; the latter commands respect not only by its imposing size (nearly eight-hundred pages) but also by its vast index covering almost fifteen hundred names.

These evident facts enhance the reader's interest—to be promptly deflated by the work itself. The title promises to give a "vivid" history of French literature of the last twenty years, from 1939 to 1959. And there can be no doubt that Boisdeffre has produced a useful manual which contains the necessary biographical and bibliographic data on almost every more or less noteworthy writer, a fact that can only be fully appreciated by those who in their daily work are often compelled to engage in a desperate search for details relating to modern authors. Indeed, this is the sole significance of the work: instead of giving the promised "vivid" history of contemporary French literature, it presents, under a

semblance of positivist objectivity, the lives of authors and synopses of their works without presenting a definite point of view.

Of course, this objectivity also has its limits; and it is these limits, and not objectivity, that in his systematization induce him, for instance, to separate Aragon and Eluard and the communist poets of today—thus falsifying the perspective of the whole of modern communist poetry in France. In general, instead of a "vivid" history we are faced with a well-nigh baffling mosaic. The work consists of two volumes which embrace four or five parts; these again fall into three or four chapters and innumerable subchapters; novels, plays, lyrical poetry being strictly separated, some authors appear in three or four different places, connected only by the index. At the same time the writer fails to produce a life-like account illustrating the dialectical development of various forms, because he has too much respect for the individual authors and insists on too strict a grouping of his material according to authors.

His documentation is useful, interesting, and important; yet his work is no history of literature in the country of Lanson and Thibaudet. He might have achieved more if he had been less objective and complete; if he had passionately declared his own prejudices and desisted from attempting to smuggle them in between the lines; if he had boldly dropped or inserted works in line with his own judgement and convictions, instead of striving to satisfy more or less every taste and to leave all susceptibilities unruffled. As it stands, the work is no more than the rather prolix literary encyclopedia of a good mid-century French writer.

ROBERT A. BONE: *The Negro Novel in America* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1958, 268 pp.)

Since the excellent pioneer bibliography of Hugh Gloster and Maxwell Whiteman this is the first literary work to go in for an accurate study of the novels belonging to

the period embraced by Whiteman's bibliography. Its scope is narrower than Whiteman's, confined as it is to the novel, and disregarding autobiographies and even short novels—more or less arbitrarily, since from many aspects it is difficult to draw a line between them. The book covers a whole century but actually comprises the novels written over a period of sixty years. Between 1853 and 1890 altogether three novels were published by Negro writers; American Negro literature really got under way at the close of the century and gathered strength in the 'twenties.

Bone writes rather as a sociologist and critic than as a historian of literature, but in such pioneer work these qualities may well be more advantageous. First he examines socio-historical changes in American Negro life and their influence on the birth and development of the Negro novel; he then proceeds to a critical analysis of the outstanding novel of different epochs, giving as much biographical data as are indispensable for understanding the genesis of the works in question. He outlines the abolitionist-assimilationist trend of the close of the century (Griggs, Chesnutt, Dunbar, DuBois, *etc.*), followed at the end of the First World War by the "Negro Renaissance" and "Harlem School" (McKay, Hughes, Cullen, Toomer, *etc.*) running parallel with the "jazz period," and setting up Negro folklore and the bohemian world of Harlem against the Victorian values of the earlier era. Notwithstanding the author's basically anti-communist attitude, he evinces praiseworthy impartiality in attributing due significance to the educational and stimulating role of the American Communist Party—particularly after the onset of the great economic crisis—and the consequent awakening of Negroes to literary consciousness. Negro literature of the 'thirties and 'forties was inspired by Negro awakening and social indignation, which found their loftiest expression in the works of Richard Wright.

Since the end of the Second World War—especially during the persecution of the communists in the Truman era—Negro writers, according to Bone, have abandoned themes of protest against racial persecution and social injustice in favour of mystical and metaphysical subjects and adventure stories.

Bone's aesthetic judgement is pretty reliable though hallmarked by his political attitude. The book has the regrettable drawback of viewing Negro novels in strict isolation, making no or only perfunctory allusions to preceding or contemporary American (or Anglo-Saxon) literature. It is nevertheless a useful handbook which—due partly to its elaborate bibliography—provides valuable information on this to us rather unfamiliar, yet highly interesting and rich literary harvest.

J. M. COHEN: *Robert Graves* (Published in the series "Writers and Critics," Oliver and Boyd, London, 1960, 120 pp.)

This is one of the first volumes in an attractive series of critical essays. The aim of the series is obvious; it seeks to give a critical evaluation of outstanding English authors of today and the recent past. The volume is astonishing for two reasons: first we have never thought of Robert Graves as rising to the level of other writers dealt with in the hitherto published volumes of the series, either in achievement or in the eyes of the public; secondly, because Robert Graves, whom we know only as a novelist—chiefly as the author of historical novels—is presented and evaluated by J. M. Cohen mainly, indeed almost exclusively, as a poet.

"I write poems for poets, and satires or grotesques for wits. For people in general I write prose, and am content that they should be unaware that I do anything else. To write poems for others than poets is wasteful", Graves himself declares, though the picture painted of his poetry by the study is far from presenting him as an inaccessible, esoteric poet.

Cohen emphasizes Graves' unique position, coming as he does after the generation of Yeats, Eliot and Muir and preceding Auden and his group, yet remaining entirely unaffected by both the symbolism of the former and the strong social impulses of the latter. His poetry appears to stand somewhat apart from time; in the 1910's he represented the rear-guard of romanticism, in the 'twenties, when the Continent and Britain were swayed by the vogue of various "isms," he reverted to a kind of classicism, which was later relaxed—owing chiefly to his deeply individual quality, his sentimental and ironical attitude. Towards the close of the 'forties, his poetry exerted an influence on young contemporary poets.

Cohen's study offers a few excellent verse analyses, the comments of an expert with a fine ear for poetry. He is regrettably parsimonious where biographic features are concerned. It is even more regrettable that he is unable or unwilling to look beyond the poems themselves, isolated from the historical atmosphere in which they were conceived and which they—in one way or another—reflect. Graves' poetry, it is true is little suited to such treatment, because of its pronouncedly personal and lyrical quality. Almost all of it is love poetry, far removed from the affairs of the world.

Less attention is devoted to Graves'

novels than the reader could wish, and they are handled with a mild disdain, suggested perhaps by their author himself; yet it is conceivable that the novels are worth more than the poems and will outlast them. Cohen makes the very apposite remark that Graves' historical novels owe their peculiar flavour to the circumstance that, whereas other writers of historical novels have mostly been stimulated by a story or mental process, selecting an appropriate age for their plot, Graves is always attracted chiefly by the age itself; often he hunts for the mysteries of an era with the circumspect tenseness of a detective. This explains the weakness of his latest historical novels (*King Jesus, Homer's Daughter*); he over-complicates historical events to obtain sensational or at least astounding results at all costs. This also renders his mythological commentary (*The White Goddess*), displaying immense knowledge, more than problematic; without any definite view of the world or a basis for interpreting history, he rambles about his material, and is capable of disregarding generally acknowledged facts for the sake of astonishing parallels.

J. M. Cohen's very enjoyable study grapples with these problems on a high level and gives a satisfactory portrait of an artist imperturbably following his own course.

P. N.

BUDAPEST BOYS ON HEROES OF FICTION

(A contribution to the Psychology of Literary Influence)

No one will dispute these days that literature is an essential factor in the intellectual and moral education of the growing generation. Expedient exploration of the instructive power inherent in literature is facilitated by knowledge concerning the qualities of fiction heroes which are the

most fascinating for children and elicit their liveliest response.

The principal endeavour of the present study is to find out, on the basis of information gathered from the boys themselves, what it is that schoolboys expect of their fiction heroes, and to throw light on this

hitherto rather unexplored sector of literary interest. The question the boys had to answer in writing was: "What qualities do you estimate as the most valuable in the heroes you read about?"

In their answers the schoolboys underlined the qualities which they found most impressive. These are denoted in the present text as *stressed* qualities, the rest being marked *secondary* qualities. The children were given six to eight minutes to formulate their reply. Some 1,200 Budapest boys—from 8 to 14 years of age—were involved. They supplied nearly 4,000 data. These sufficed for drawing up a chart reflecting the views of the investigated group concerning fiction heroes. A few laws of pre-puberty and puberty psychology influencing the interests of these schoolboys could thus be revealed with adequate reliability and important starting-points have thus been gained for future educational measures.

The schoolboys' replies have been arranged according to the following five groups: the hero's *outward appearance* — *physical aptitude, fitness* — *intellectual qualities* — *behaviour, moral traits and character* — *other data*. This last served to include meaningless answers and such as missed the point. The summary clearly reflects the chief features marking the literary interests of Budapest schoolboys from 8 to 14. It is gratifying that the group of *behaviour, moral traits and character* is stressed by 61.6 per cent of the boys (as secondary quality by 49 per cent), a convincing illustration of the close connection between youthful reading and the development of the personality's moral features. The answers falling into the group of *physical aptitude, fitness* take second place in frequency with 16.8 and 29.2 per cent, resp., and also give a good picture of the rôle played by this interest in the lives of boys. The mention of *intellectual* qualities is hardly less frequent (12.6 and 16.2 per cent). Their prevalence bears witness to the growing part of logic in the views of children at the threshold of

adolescence. Finally, the replies stressing *appearance*, amounted to 0.9 and 4.1 per cent, resp. Apparently the hero's exterior exerts little influence on the experience derived from reading. The children's attention would seem to have been attracted in an overwhelming measure by the previously-mentioned three qualities. They are decisive in forming an opinion, in conceiving a liking or dislike, for the hero.

Further inquiry into the summary will help to disclose other instructive aspects of the interest boys display in their fiction heroes.

Behaviour, moral traits and character

The qualities listed under this heading follow this order of precedence: *brave, heroic—honest—loves his country and his people—kindhearted, well-meaning, noble—just—a help in need—strongwilled—reliable—modest, silent—calm, self-possessed—fond of work—obedient—polite—possessing other moral qualities*.

Heroic conceptions and enthusiasm for great deeds have often been considered characteristic features of the childhood period under investigation. This could hardly be proved more convincingly than by listing the qualities most appreciated at this age. Half of the data referring to *moral traits and character* emphasize the *brave and heroic* conduct of the hero. This line of interest prevailed in every age group; it is true also of secondary qualities. These results stand confirmed also by the studies of János Cser concerned with the moral notions of children aged 10 to 14. Of twenty pairs of moral notions, *brave—cowardly* has been found to occupy the first place. Thus with children of this age, these notions have an unequivocal meaning. (János Cser "Az erkölcsi tulajdonságok ismeretének vizsgálata a 10—14 éves korban" — "Inquiry into the Consciousness of Moral Qualities at the Age of 10 to 14." Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Psychological Studies, 1961, volume III.)

The schoolboys' replies unambiguously show that by the end of primary school, at

the age of about 14, the virtues of bravery and heroism visibly lose attraction. At the same time other, previously scarcely mentioned or completely absent demands gradually come to the fore. This is evidenced by admiration for the hero's patriotism, honesty, moral conduct in general.

The above-cited shifts in a boy's views concerning the hero are closely connected with the development of personality. Under the influence of educational forces in the environment, the family, and particularly at school, the child's development is directed more and more definitely towards the pattern expected by society. As development proceeds, the moral features of personality become more marked. The thorough change becomes peculiarly obvious when the notions of nine-year-old boys are compared to those of fourteen-year-old youths. In the intervening years the structure of interest has undergone radical shifts and readjustments that bring about a noticeable change in the boys' relationship to what they read.

As shown by experience, development in harmony with the requirements of society ensues only as a result of *favourable environmental and educational* influences. As concerns literature, the demoralizing effect of trash that corrupts and inhibits the development of the moral sense, is well known. However, the relationship to books and the development of the whole personality may be disturbed not only by trash but also by books of artistic value read before or after the time when they would most favourably affect the child's development.

It may thus be stated that admiration was elicited by moral qualities and conduct in half of the boys aged 8 to 9, and 70 per cent of those aged 14 to 15.

Physical aptitude, fitness

The order of precedence among the hero's traits of physical excellence was the following: *strong, brawny—skilful—steady hand, good*

shot—quick, active—invincible—acute senses (sharp eyes, excellent hearing, etc.). Boys are evidently impressed by the physical aptitude of the hero, for 16.8 (stressed) and 29.2 (secondary) per cent of the replies were prompted by this reaction. The diminishing tendency of the older boys to respond to this quality nevertheless permits the inference that with the passage of years this aspect gradually loses its earlier significance. In the age-group of 14 appreciation of physical aptitude sank from second to third place.

The consistent accentuation of physical aptitude and fitness comes as a natural consequence of that often admired vigorous activity which is so typical for this stage of development. Exuberant, overflowing vitality is manifested in various fields of conduct (longing for adventures, fondness for work, readiness to act, etc.) All these serve to acquaint the individual with surrounding and remote reality. They also cause the child's interest to turn towards achievement. As a result of this fundamental attitude he will skip the descriptive parts of a book, bored by the passages in which the writer delineates the country-side and the exterior of the characters. Description he requires only in so far as it is indispensable for grasping the plot. Youthful readers are captivated first of all by vital, active characters ready to undertake exceptional deeds. This explains the particular success of stories about expeditions, discoveries and travels in the later stages of childhood.

In the replies stressing the hero's physical aptitude *muscular strength* occupies first place. The total of stressed secondary qualities taken as a whole evidences a fluctuation of interest. The picture is nevertheless uniform enough to confirm the fact that the strong, brawny, athletic hero is highly popular among the investigated age groups up to the age of 14 or 15.

The skill of literary characters also draws much attention. The curve of these qualities displays a break, though not a

conspicuous one, at the age-group of 13 to 14. This phenomenon coincides with the process noted in connection with the summarized data referring to physical aptitude.

The group marked *steady hand, good shot* closely approximates the above criteria. The picture gained so far would be incomplete if these manifestations—though not numerous but disclosing the peculiar hues of childhood experience—were not taken into account. Both librarians and instructors are well aware of the powerful influence exerted on some children by books whose heroes possess these qualities (Indian stories). Children whose thoughts are centred around achievement expect their heroes to surpass everyone in quickness and skill, and to handle rifles like a master shot. Those who lack such virtues cannot aspire to the status of impressive heroes.

Intellectual qualities

Appreciation for the intellectual qualities of fiction heroes showed the following order: *clever—resourceful and cunning—witty—educated, erudite—prudent, far-sighted*.

The notions *clever, educated, erudite* are closely related as to content and it is improbable that children should be capable of discriminating the fine shades they imply. It is therefore permissible to discuss these data under one heading.

The majority of psychologists regard the years between 9 and 12 as the classical period of objective interest and the most actively receptive period of learning. This is shown also by the violent flare-up of interest for books which in some cases may lead to alarming excesses. Owing to the rapid development of intellectual life—ceaselessly nurtured by school- and home-life alike—the originally naively contemplative child begins to assume an exacting and later on a critical attitude to the heroes of fiction. Demands concerning intellectual aculties become evident as early as the age of nine and, with slight fluctuations,

increase until the end of school (at the age of 14 to 15). Only as secondary qualities do they suffer some loss of interest. The epithets *clever, intelligent, educated, erudite* denote the most valuable intellectual qualities of the hero. Their absolute number steadily increases. However, their percentage within the group displays a fluctuating tendency. It is striking that the relative low-water mark (in per cent of the total) appears at the age of 10 to 12, when, as a rule, the thirst for knowledge is apt to increase. But when this phenomenon is placed in due relationship to the whole, it becomes clear that the shift involves only a varying accentuation of intellectual properties and not a generally valid decrease in enthusiasm, because the summarized development curve of appreciation of intellectual qualities reaches its peak at the age of 11 and 12, while a moderate waning of interest ensues only afterwards. From all this it may be concluded that during the whole period under discussion children evince considerable and consistent interest in the intellectual features of the heroes of fiction.

The hero's exterior

The qualities connected with the hero's outward appearance are stressed in less than one per cent of the answers. Their role in awakening interest in the hero is nevertheless convincingly confirmed by the fact that 4.1 per cent listed them among the secondary qualities. The order of emphasis ran as follows: *good-looking, handsome figure—tall—young—clean, neat—manly*.

As evidenced by the sporadic and irregularly occurring data, the hero's appearance suddenly grows more important at the age of twelve (the number of data leapt from 7 to 42). The numerical increase is most remarkable as regards *good-looking, handsome figure* (rising from 3 to 28). This is a noteworthy symptom at the initial stage of adolescence, when the endeavour to please, the longing for good looks appear as new fea-

tures. It is therefore plausible that in the evaluation of the heroes of fiction children do not neglect this aspect either.

Summary

From the point of view of the psychology of pre-puberty and puberty, the following conclusion may be drawn from the replies analysed in the preceding pages.

1. *The sequence of the qualities that impress* 8 to 14 year old schoolboys was the following: conduct, moral traits and character—physical aptitude—intellectual qualities—outward appearance. All these qualities are of a positive character, which is most valuable from the educational and developmental viewpoint.

2. In the group including the replies referring to *moral traits and character*, those stressing *brave, heroic conduct* constitute half of the answers. Notwithstanding this striking preponderance, by the end of primary school (at the age of 13 to 14) interest in these qualities shows a definite decline. Simultaneously the role of other moral features, e. g., of patriotism gradually grows more prominent.

3. For *physical aptitude* children are liable to display diminishing appreciation.

In this group of qualities *muscular power* is mentioned most frequently, followed by *skill, good shooting ability*.

4. *Intellectual qualities, such as resourcefulness, cleverness, wit*, make the deepest impression on 11 and 12 year old youngsters.

5. Apparently the *hero's exterior* does not influence the readers' views to any significant degree. From its at times surprisingly frequent appearance among secondary qualities it may nevertheless be suspected that the hero's appearance is a factor of some importance in attracting and winning the sympathies of the readers, particularly at the threshold of adolescence.

The qualities cited in the replies form an extremely vivid, colourful tissue. Its composition changes from year to year; some trends grow stronger, others weaken, and even new interests crop up. All this takes place in conformity with the total personality, owing to the effect of incessant exogenous impressions. The *anticipatory character of this dynamic process* is, however, unmistakable: there is a tendency for the youthful reader to come closer and closer to adult patterns of judgment and increasingly to appreciate the heroes of fiction by the moral standards and with the eyes of a grown-up member of society.

BÉLA TÓTH

THEATRE AND FILM

THEATRE REVIEW

Five New Hungarian Plays

To such an extent had Hungarian dramatic literature learned to express itself, to evoke history, to reflect periods, to move and to amuse its audiences by the turn of the century, that it was fully justified in entering the contest of international drama on the world's principal stages, where it scored many a notable success. Although in the 1920's and 1930's a rather grave decline took place, serious efforts have been made in the past fifteen years for the Hungarian drama to regain a firm footing. For a time these efforts manifested themselves chiefly in the individual aspirations of several Hungarian writers who were seeking their own way. In the past decade results were achieved mainly in the field of historical subjects. But recently topical Hungarian themes have increasingly gained ground on the Hungarian stage. This is easy to understand: the changes taking place at present in private life and in the mode of existence of different social groupings and classes have accumulated a great deal of exciting and dramatic problems. Hungarian cinematographic art has scored its notable initial successes in the same field, and its example has attracted our playwrights too. Cultural policy in the field of theatrical art seeks to encourage the presentation of present-day Hungarian life on our stages. In this theatrical season so far seven remarkable new plays dealing with Hungarian subjects have been produced in Budapest. In our

latest review we reported on two of them—Iván Boldizsár's "The Leaning Tower" and János Kodolányi's "The Frog Pond." The five plays produced since then represent new trends covering a fairly wide range of subjects, genres, and values.

György Sós's play, *The Baker*, is on the program of the Intimate Stage of the Madách Theatre. It deals with the life of working people in a Hungarian village of today. With exemplary industry the old baker, Márton Forró, sees to it that the village community should always have enough bread. His assistant is about to get married, and the weary old man undertakes to do alone the work of both of them for the two weeks the newly married couple are on their honeymoon. As he is ailing and tired, it becomes more and more difficult for him to keep his promise, and when he learns that his assistant is quitting the village for good, that the new help is unsuitable for the job, and that the man who was to replace him is not coming after all, the old man breaks down, the more so as there is something wrong with the bread too: neither is the quality up to the mark, nor does it amount to the prescribed quantity. During the ensuing investigation the old baker is acquitted, since it has turned out that he collapsed under the weight of a heavy sack of flour, which explains how the missing quantity got lost. The valiant old worker has stood a hard

test. Full justice is done him, and when he learns that his successor is an industrious and decent man, who will do his work with enthusiasm, he is able to die in peace.

"Taken from life"—that is how this sort of sentimental genre painting was characterized in the past. György Sós's play differs from the traditional variety of this popular genre mainly in that it peoples the stage with our contemporaries; or to be more precise, people struggling with the small, workaday problems of today, uttering words deriving from today's life, people who rouse personal associations in today's audiences. His characterization does not delve deeply. His superficial realism merely dons characters picked out from among the so-called "eternally human" types in a modern attire. Some of his critics praised the character drawings as achieving a depth reminiscent of the symbols of a tale. The lesson to be drawn from the sentimental play recalls a parable: it is the honest man that shows us the right path to be followed upon entering life's jungle. In this case, those of the older generation, constant in their convictions, steadfast in doing their jobs, and seeing the meaning of their lives in the fulfilment of their duties, can rise above themselves by handing over to the young generation their faith, their humanism, and the responsibility they feel towards the community. In an earlier comedy of his, Sós proved that he had a talent for creating effective scenes, for setting up an atmosphere that will fill up the loose structure of the plot, for writing touching dialogues and for shaping impressive roles. It is a forte—and at the same time a weak point—of this play too that it is built upon a single outstanding part. The anaemic events, the conflicts that get slushy without gaining their points, and the dramatic episodes that emerge now and then are all subordinated to this role, on which the director too has based the whole production. Luckily, an eminent

actor was found for the part: Sándor Kőműves has succeeded in solving the large number of posers set by the drama and in filling with life the figure of the hero, the old baker, who is a rather sketchy character. In the touching part of the decent old man's wife Manyi Kiss fully matches his brilliant performance.

Fire at Dawn, József Darvas's new play,* also takes its subject from the life of a Hungarian village today. The highly dramatic subject is completely up-to-date, the interests involved are of a much wider scope, and the problem—that of the socialist transformation of agriculture—more burning than in Sós's play. In the village of Tiszahalász the fight for the establishment of a cooperative farm is in full swing. Two brothers, József and Lajos Bónis, natives of the village, are the heroes of the struggle. Both of them have risen from the destitute life of poor peasants by dint of hard work. József, who became a teacher, had to leave his village because of the role he played in the Communist Party. In the early 'fifties he unjustly suffered imprisonment. Now he has returned to his native village in order to convince the peasantry—by his experiences, by his faith, and by the weight of his personal prestige—of the right way: that of cooperation and of the socialist forms of agriculture. The other brother, Lajos, has always remained at home. By toiling from sunup to sundown, by looking at every penny, and by his exemplary work as a small peasant, he has acquired a house and a few acres, and brought up his only son to become a teacher. He is the most respected person among the individual farmers and the real leader of their resistance. In his wrath he turns his own brother out of his house. Although, after a hard struggle, his resistance is broken and he signs the application for admittance to the cooperative, in spirit

* The first act of the play is published in the present issue on pp. 100—121.

he remains alien to the new community enterprise. On the day the establishment of the cooperative is celebrated, he sets his house on fire. His deed makes his brother József Bónis, and along with him the people of the village, waver in their resolution. József Bónis goes through a crisis of conscience and feels that he has not acted in the right way; but he draws new strength from the young people who remain staunch in their faith. In a keen argument, which goes back to the depths of their common past, he succeeds in convincing his brother that the latter's embittered action has created the impression of his having joined the clique of the former wealthy peasants. When the cooperative seems to be on the point of disintegrating, the brothers find each other, the stirred-up passions abate, and the village community becomes firmly united again.

In several earlier plays Darvas has proved that he is courageous enough to deal on the stage with the most burning issues of present-day Hungarian society. Inspired as he is by populist realism, he is able to raise to symbolic heights an actual situation or authentic figures of contemporary Hungarian village life. In this drama too he has remained true to his past: his attitude is that of a man unequivocally faithful to his party allegiance and to the idea of building socialism. Not for a single moment does he leave any doubt in the audience about his disagreeing with the people who oppose the formation of the cooperative. In disclosing their difficulties, he emphasizes that their reservations, though comprehensible from a human point of view, are politically wrong. He conjures up the turbulent world of human emotions and passions, of eagerness and reluctance, for the purpose of demonstrating that his convictions are sound. Thus the events taking place on the stage are arguments in favour of a clearly expressed thesis. Darvas is an experienced writer and a realist. He knows that a proposition, if announced too crudely,

will render the live material used for his argumentation too rigid and sharp. That is why he sometimes attaches too many episodes to the structural framework and makes parallel use of several lesser dramas. At times the play seems to exist for the sake of its episodes. These episodes offer a good foundation for the unfolding of the drama in the first act, but in the second act they expand into an excessively circumstantial genre-painting that falls into a somewhat loose pattern on the stage. As there is no time and possibility for all the loose strands to be sewn together, several questions remain unresolved at the end of the play. The very abundance of episodes makes the play, though deliberate in its ideological structure and steadily purposeful, somewhat heavy in its middle part; its lesson, moreover, is a bit bare and can be foreseen in advance. The production of the *National Theatre*, although providing an opportunity for some of our most eminent actors (Ferenc Kállay, Ferenc Bessenyei, Béla Barsi, József Bihari and János Rajz) to put on the stage several true-to-life figures, regrettably tended to emphasize the unevennesses and loose edges of the play, instead of smoothing them out.

Lajos Mesterházi's play, "*The Eleventh Commandment*," also delves into the very centre of the sweeping transformation taking place at the present time. In the beginning, this drama too seems to deal with contemporary private problems. But soon it becomes clear that these conflicts are closely interwoven with questions of public life affecting the fates of many people. No sooner do crises, which from a distance could be treated as illustrations to a generally valid, abstract moral philosophy, touch the life of a thinking and feeling individual, than the falsehood, both of the theorem and of appearances, is laid bare. The hero of the drama is a popular writer, a man of great standing. With specious words he analyses socialist morals and comments on them. In connection with a

lecture of his, broadcast on the radio, he meets with a concrete crisis of our present life. The happiness of two young people is at stake, because the marriage of the young man's parents has come to nought. His mother has left the family in order to find the meaning of her life with her truer lover, who does not consider and treat her as a slave but as a partner. While the writer, taken at his word, interrupts his wedding anniversary in fulfilment of his duty of finding out what has happened, his own life comes to a crisis. He has to admit that he himself has exploited his wife for his own comfort and for the sake of his work. His descent into hell leads the writer through a village pub and through the Budapest flat of the woman who has left her family, back to his own home. His final purification is expressed in a beautiful monologue about the eleventh commandment of humanism, and of the love and esteem we must have for one another. This outcome of his descent to hell is symbolized by the writer's wife seating herself at the typewriter, no longer as an oppressed victim but as a loving fellow-being, to write down her husband's latest thoughts about more genuine socialist ethics. The problem of the young people also gets solved, and the woman who left her family is forgiven, though the question of her guilt remains unanswered.

Mesterházi, however, was not seeking to write a regular drama with a self-contained plot and with an unambiguous moral lesson. He rather wished to touch upon the basic motif of moral conflicts resulting from the new situation: to the still unsettled character of the final sense of the new human attitude; to the need for sincerity in our relationship with reality; to the re-opening of social and private sores hidden behind fine appearances. He wished to point to their existence and not their causes or cures. The framework within which he cleverly developed the love and family dramas of three couples—dramas which partly run parallel and

partly are intertwined—afforded excellent opportunities for effective, intimate scenes, some of them full of tension; for lively dialogues bouncing back and forth like table-tennis balls; for mass scenes—filling an entire act—that at times cover up the deep and serious current of the drama with the full-blooded effects of comedy; for characters developed with a real mastery and for splendid acting. The play even provides an occasion for some fashionable "style-breaking," since the writer is not only the hero but also the narrator and *raisonneur* of the play. Mesterházi is a Budapest writer. His characters are essentially town-dwellers—the village people are only fleeting shadows or caricatures of particular types. The whole mentality of his play, its idiom, jokes, emotions, sarcasm, veracity, banter, all join him to the traditions of Budapest playwrights, several of whom have scored successes on Western stages. I think he could find his truer self if he made up his mind to write a comedy which, without lacking a firm ideological foundation, but at the same time avoiding direct tendentiousness, would merely seek to make people laugh. His success, which, by the way, is due, to no small degree, to the smooth and captivating production of the Gaiety Theatre, would be more genuine. In Hungary too, people are fond of fun.

Emil Kolozsvári-Grandpierre's satire "*The Two Sides of the Horse*" tries to meet this demand. However, he is not yet able to supply much of the lightness of touch which is a must with a good comedy. The audience laughs chiefly because it has gone to the theatre for the purpose of laughing. To understand the play one must understand the title first. In the course of debates, production and other conferences held in the past years, the warning has often been uttered that mistakes are chiefly due to the fact that over-zealous people often fall on "the other side of the horse," in the same way as inexperienced and over-impetuous riders will do when mounting their horses.

In the present case, the bad rider is a certain Latorka, who, unawares, is the bogey of his firm. He is a born pessimist who finds fault with everything; he meddles in the public and private lives of his colleagues, he nips their self-confidence in the bud, he saps their ambition to work, and drives both his superiors and his collaborators crazy. His latest victim, the previous manager of the company, who has fled from the nerve clinic, rakes him over the coals. At that, Latorka goes from one extreme to the other: he becomes kind, obliging and courteous to everybody. However, his optimistic actions, intended as positive incentives, cause perhaps even more harm than his negative clumsiness did. Finally, after the manager, the chief engineer and the highly gifted inventor, he himself is also committed to the nerve clinic.

Grandpierre's play lies somewhere in between satire, which cuts to the quick, and farce, which gets its effects through farcical situations, buffoonery and facetious remarks. It is full of ideas, but they are crackers calling for a good actor and a clever director to get them to explode. The Jókai Theatre has deployed its best actors to ensure the success of this comedy of exceedingly mixed values. If the theatre had produced it in the style of an unequivocally up-to-date *commedia dell'arte*, the author's fireworks might have risen higher and sparkled more brilliantly. In that case the audience, somewhat ill at ease, would not draw the lesson from the play that in the world as it is, talent, good intentions, a warm heart, and wickedness lead to a mental hospital no less than do the extremes of clumsiness. The basic tenor of the performance is, unfortunately, a realistic one. In the details of the characterization and in the sentences of the figures on the stage, the audience can detect far too many familiar features. Though the play is meant to be a satire, its structure is consequently anti-satiric. In this comedy every character, whether good or bad,

clever or clumsy, decent or villainous, is not only in the same boat but is equally ridiculed. The playwright need not necessarily pass judgement from the point of view of a particular principle. But the writer of a satire loses the edge, the force, and the very sense of satire if he fails to make clear what or whom his attack is directed against.

It is a great asset of one of the most notable novelties of the season that the audience has no doubt about where its authors stand. *Three Nights of Love* has three authors: Miklós Hubay, György Ránki and István Vas. Hubay is a dramatist, Ránki a composer, and Vas a poet. This in itself is enough to indicate that the work they have written is a Hungarian representative of the new mixed genre, the musical, *en vogue* all over the world. The Petöfi Theatre, which seems to aim at specializing in musicals, had successfully pioneered with a performance of "The Beggar's Opera" (Dreigroschenoper), the work of Gay-Pepus-Brecht-Weil. The Hungarian novelty which succeeded it was not unworthy of its predecessor. Its hesitations and falterings are due to the inexperience of youth, which, though lacking practice in details, has set itself a very high goal. The authors have dived into the world of fascist terrorism in Hungary, into the very vortex of the most abominable events of our age. What they have brought up from those depths—the ghastliest memories and a terrible prophecy—they display to their audience with the light touch of the Graces, who can face even the horrors of death with a smile.

The rich owners of a villa in Buda, in the elegant residential district of Budapest, have fled from the approaching tempest of the war. It is to this place that a young poet and his wife find their way, as it were from the street, to guard the forsaken villa, as far as their feeble powers permit. But the rich people, who left in a panic, have forgotten to notify their friends of their departure. The unsuspecting young people,

who are longing for a twosome, suddenly find themselves amidst a company that has come to dinner and is out for adventure. One of the guests is a public prosecutor, whose wife suggests the staging of a trial as a parlour game. In its course the young poet is sentenced to death. The second and third acts conjure up the manner in which the sentence is carried out: the poet is sent to the front, his wife comes under suspicion at home; the poet escapes and gets home, but along with his fellow fugitives he is killed by the same unknown guns that murder his wife. The three comrades, by whom he sent home the contents of his will, forget it in all the misery they have to go through. But another young couple who move into the same villa and the friends who have survived the holocaust set up a living memorial to the immortal dead.

This, of course, is but the framework, the bare bones of the plot. It is filled in with the remembrance of the terror that has scarcely passed; with the rebirth of passionate protest against it; with ardent confidence in the future; with a hard and caustic delineation of the Budapest upper classes of the past, now doomed to extinction; and with the heroic and warm highlights of friendship, love, faithfulness, and perseverance. The play is characterized by animated and terse dialogues that hit the nail on the head and by scenes full of tension. Though its structure is seemingly loose, the play is made extraordinarily

interesting by its symmetry, by the counterpoints of ideological and emotional elements, by the balancing of logical and poetic features, and by a hovering equilibrium of music, prose and verse, of reality and make-belief, of tragic austerity and glimmering cheerfulness. It is a pity that the performance is not uniform in quality. Side by side with some excellent artists, first and foremost among them Vera Sennyei and Gábor Agárdi, the performances of the young actors appear too faint and pale. This is not surprising, since they have not—and cannot have—a sufficient amount of experience to lend appropriate depth to such characters as the young poet and his wife.

The five plays in question demonstrate that the interest in plays representing contemporary Hungarian life has grown on the part of writers, theatres, and audiences alike. More than one useful tradition of Budapest dramatic literature, which had a good reputation in the past, has been revived in works that express up-to-date aspirations. These plays present numerous exciting problems ensuing from the basic transformation which both public and private life are undergoing. They contain the seething elements of the endeavours and achievements of new European dramatists. They are paving the way for the representative Hungarian drama of our time.

DEZSŐ KERESZTURY

MYTH AND REALITY

(In memory of a Hungarian Shakespeare enthusiast)

Already in the first half of the nineteenth century, in Hungary as in other countries, the concept of the theatre was virtually identified with Shakespeare, without, however, filling the Shakespearian concept with an appropriate content. In other words, contemporary audiences became "reconciled" to Shakespeare—they accepted his existence, they recognized that he was a giant, that he was fascinating, and that he should and must be played and admired. After all, they seemed to think, you don't have to understand every monumental figure—it is quite enough to pretend to understand and even enjoy him hugely. The Shakespearian myth was built up sky-high; and, in Hungary, no iconoclast could be found similar to Tolstoy in Russia or G. B. Shaw in Britain with the courage to declare his antipathy; yet fruitful negation would at least have helped to spark the process of reassessment, of discovering the real Shakespeare.

It may not have been mere chance that, in Hungary, the first step towards understanding Shakespeare was taken by a poet, János Arany, one of Hungary's greatest. G. B. Shaw had the name of János Arany repeated many times by a visiting Hungarian, as he wanted to learn the name of one of the world's most congenial translators of Shakespeare. (*Hamlet* and *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* are still played in Hungary in the almost 100-year-old translations of János Arany.) It is an unusual coincidence that the Hungarian who assisted G. B. Shaw in committing the name of János Arany to memory was none other than the theatrical expert Sándor Hevesi, who was destined to take the second (and no less significant) step towards really establishing Shakespeare's hold on the Hungarian stage.

The first monograph¹ on the life and work of one of the most significant (and probably the best-known) students of Shakespeare on the continent has only now been published, nearly two decades after the death of this Hungarian creator of the new Shakespeare theatre. Anna László's book not only summarizes and clarifies Sándor Hevesi's work but also furnishes new data regarding the invaluable service he rendered in fostering the Shakespeare cult in Hungary.

Incidentally, Sándor Hevesi, as Anna László points out in her book, was not unknown among theatre-minded Britons. He visited England several times and held lectures mainly on Shakespeare—in 1927, at the London Pen Club, and, in 1929, at King's College and the Shakespeare Association.

Sándor Hevesi gained marked significance also as a literary translator. His numerous translations from English in themselves form a whole lifework—besides five of Shakespeare's plays and some of the works of Dickens and Oscar Wilde, he translated into Hungarian some twenty plays of G. B. Shaw.

His still vivid writings in the field of aesthetics and drama criticism fill several volumes; and his stage plays and stage adaptations place him among the most notable Hungarian playwrights of the first decades of this century. But—and this emerges clearly from Anna László's book—he indisputably gained most significance as a stage manager and theatre director (he was director of the National Theatre in Budapest from 1923 to 1932), on account of

¹ László, Anna: *Hevesi Sándor*. Budapest, 1960. Gondolat Publishers, 442 pp.

his disclosure of "the real Shakespeare".² Through his Shakespeare cycles he actually started Shakespeare on the road to real popularity in Hungary, turning him from a more or less empty concept, an enigmatic natural phenomenon, into a spontaneous national experience.

*

Hevesi's conception of Shakespeare—viz., that the secret of the real influence of Shakespeare lies in an obedient return to the original technique of the Shakespearean theatre—may be open to question today. But in practice, Hevesi himself went beyond that and in all of his productions sought possibilities of expressing the original Shakespeare in a modern way.

According to Hevesi, contemporary misinterpretation of Shakespeare was to be sought in the style of both playing and staging, in circumventing the laws of Shakespearean stage-craft and dramaturgy. The essence of the Globe Theatre's dramatic views ("Fit the actions to the words and the words to the actions") has become a truism. In connection with the Globe Theatre's dramaturgy, Hevesi observes:

"The modern stage, with its thousand technical miracles, its striking lighting effects, is beggared by the greatest nabob of the stage. It merely limps along behind the poet; with all its machinery, it cannot catch up with his soaring flight. For though it is true that the Shakespearean stage was a bare structure that had no *décor*, it was, nevertheless, a stage with unlimited possibilities. Divided as it was into three superimposed sections, that stage—a survival from the Middle Ages—was able to embrace the whole world, and it did so as soon as the poet appeared who was capable of expressing the whole world. But this

stage looked to the poet for all its paraphernalia, including the settings. On this stage, there was no scenery painter, no lighting technician and no stage-manager (every *mise en scène* was the same); only the playwright and the actors were there. Here the spoken word is all-important. And night after night, Shakespeare would decorate and light up his own stage, and night after night the scenes on the simple wooden structure would alternate with miraculous speed."

Hevesi continues his train of thought as follows:

"Shakespeare's are never real settings, but only possibilities of expression for the human will, which must travel a long road until its tragic fate is consummated. Hence the dramatization in the Shakespearean theatre of the settings in the characters of the play, with the actors, as it were, all the time carrying the sceneries in and out and turning the hands of time. This kind of stage-craft proclaims that the human being, not his environment, is important; that we want only as much environment as emanates from the human being.

"Therefore, in the Shakespearean drama, the actor, the living human being, must not be placed amidst richly decorated scenery. On his barren stage, Shakespeare's vision and dramatic power almost always condense epic events into drama. Realistic settings, intervals and intermissions irrevocably and distressingly shift the emphasis onto the epic event, which they cause to collapse on the stage. Shakespeare's great dramatic visions are only dissected, decorative short stories on the modern stage."

Today, the views expounded by Hevesi in the passages quoted above may appear more or less self-evident; but the Shakespeare cycles he staged in the twenties and the practical application of his dramatic concepts have gone a long way towards making Shakespeare the most popular playwright

² Hevesi, Sándor: *Az igazi Shakespeare és egyéb kérdések* (The Real Shakespeare and Other Problems), Budapest, 1919. Táltos Publishers, 269 pp.

in the Hungarian theatre of the present day. Now that the Hungarian National Theatre is presenting a new Shakespeare cycle, the productions, built on Shakespeare's poetical force rather than on spectacular stage settings, bear out the bard's modernness. Or isn't modern stage-craft, operating with cues and an uninhibited manipulation of time, essentially a return to Shakespearean techniques? These productions are also designed to prove that Shakespeare has emerged from the luminous cloud of myth and is giving the public not only an imagined and suggested experience, but one which is as spontaneous and as thrilling as he provided for his first audiences that packed the rows around the stage of the Globe Theatre.

Or perhaps it is not as spontaneous, really. For years Hevesi kept up contact with Gordon Craig, one of the most profound and most original of British stage-managers. In an article devoted to Craig³ he mentions that Craig protested several times against the idea that the stage, originally destined for the people, should be reserved by playwrights such as G. B. Shaw for

a few connoisseurs. The great dreamer (for Craig's bold vision of stage setting always hovered slightly above reality) could have no idea that within a comparatively short time the two extreme notions of "connoisseurs" and "people" would come so close to each other that the gap between the two would more and more disappear.

As Arthur Miller, one of the greatest and most modern playwrights of our time, confesses in his preface to the London edition of his plays, the object of drama is to develop a higher consciousness and not a cheap attack on the nervous system and emotions of the audience. It is such higher consciousness that Shakespeare's present-day producers should aspire to develop, because their audiences are demanding more and more the supreme experience thus produced. On his stage, Hevesi expressed the true Shakespeare who replaces the Shakespeare of the irrational myth. Our time must recreate again and again the Shakespeare who speaks to the new audiences—new "connoisseurs"—of our day, so his lustre may never wane.

TAMÁS TÖRÖK

³ Gordon Craig *sikertelen nagysága és dicsősége*. (The Frustrated Greatness and the Glory of Gordon Craig.) *Nyugat*, Budapest, Vol. 1931. No. 18.

BÉLA BALÁZS AND THE FILM

Since the appearance of Béla Balázs's famous work, "The Visible Man" (*Der sichtbare Mensch oder die Kultur des Films*, Wien-Leipzig, Deutsch-österreichischer Verlag, 1924), hardly any of the more ambitious works concerned with filming have failed in some way or other to refer to Balázs's work on the theory of the film. His fundamental theoretical findings have trained and are training an army of artists and critics throughout the world, and have provided inspiration for a whole series of masterpieces. His name has become a rallying point for all who have endeavoured to achieve an independent status for the art of filming and its recognition as an art in its own right. His work on the theory of the film has become particularly popular in the German-language territories: this may be explained by the fact that after the defeat of the Hungarian Soviet Republic in 1919, Balázs was forced into exile and his activities as a scenario writer and a theoretician of the film developed first in the atmosphere of the Austrian, and then of the German film industry. This was at a time when America was the leading great power of the film world in the artistic sense as well. Hence for a long time he was regarded in the film world—due to the language and place of publication of his books—as a German writer. However, Béla Balázs's activities were not only concerned with the film: he had formerly been a poet and as an important member of the great generation of Hungarian poets at the beginning of the century, the group of writers of the journal "Nyugat" (West) who created a literary revolution, he was also the librettist of Bartók's "Miraculous Mandarin" and is thus an inalienable figure of Hungarian culture. The most recent research into the history of the film has revealed that his writings on the theory of the film were actually the continuation and crowning of

those initial, theoretical attempts which appeared in the Hungarian film press at the beginning of the century and one of whose pioneers was the young Alexander Korda. These promising experiments in the theory of the film were interrupted after the defeat of the Hungarian Soviet Republic, for under the Horthy regime the best forces of the then developing Hungarian art of the film—Alexander Korda, Michael Curtiz, Paul Fejős, etc.—were notoriously forced into exile, later to become outstanding figures abroad, in American, British, Austrian and German film art. Béla Balázs was also forced to go abroad and there became a classical writer of works on film aesthetics; indeed, according to one view he was the first to lay the foundations and work out a system of film aesthetics which was lasting and effective. But although his work on the theory of the film won international recognition, in his own country his activities in this field were practically unknown up to 1948, when his last and most complete work on film aesthetics, "The Theory of the Film," appeared.

Research which aspires to scientific exactitude cannot evaluate Béla Balázs's significance merely on the grounds of his being the first. Indeed there had been attempts to explain the film as a new phenomenon of the human spirit, attempts to map and work out the aesthetic laws of film art, before "The Visible Man." On the basis of precedence in time, it is at present generally considered that the "father" of film aesthetics was the Frenchman, Ricciotto Canud, the first to champion the film as an independent art. And before Balázs, Vachel Lindsay, the outstanding American poet, had also written a work about the film in 1914; Gleichen Russwurm and G. K. Chesterton, among the writers, Gordon Craig, the theatrical producer, and indeed more than one of the film directors

par excellence—Urban Gad, Rex Ingram, Sergei Eisenstein, David Griffith, Dziga Vertov, Paul Wegener, *etc.*—had already developed some vitally important aesthetic ideas in connection with the film; not to mention the French school of film theory—the work of René Clair, Louis Delluc, Germaine Dulac and Jean Epstein—who moved among the same problems as Béla Balázs and attempted to answer the same questions. Obviously it was due to this that the French discovered Balázs relatively late, indeed we may say only in our days, whilst in the Soviet Union Balázs's theoretical work—he was from 1931 until his return home in 1945 a professor at the Moscow film academy—was pushed into the background by the somewhat later, similar writings of Eisenstein and Pudovkin, which in some cases penetrated more deeply into the problems.

Still we must agree with Aristarco, the first historian of film aesthetics, who in his book "The History of the Theory of the Film" (1951), names Béla Balázs as the first notable pioneer, the first systematizer in this field, as well as with all those who together with Eisenstein, Pudovkin and Arnheim, honoured his outstanding service in laying the foundations for our knowledge of the theory of filming as an art. For Béla Balázs was really the first whose activity around, and effect on, film aesthetics, outgrew purely professional bounds and whose impact on the educated public had the force of a revelation.

When the film was still in an embryonic state, Béla Balázs saw the great promise it held for the future, indeed when his first work on film aesthetics was published in 1924, it was scarcely ten years since the advent of the first three-thousand-foot film, and a little more than ten years since Griffith's, Lubitsch's and Chaplin's art had evolved and become generally known. Balázs recognized that the film was an independent art, following its own principles, laws and aesthetics, with a clear

boundary and a fundamental theoretical difference dividing it both from literature and from the theatre. In the film—unlike the theatre or literature—it is the pictorial effect that raises it to an artistic level; the essence of the film, its expressive force and artistry, lie in visuality. Film scenes—and this was at the time of the silent film—"must be formed from the unmixed material of pure visuality." Contributory to and springing from this was the second basic conclusion of Béla Balázs's film aesthetics, according to which: "The film is the art of movement and organic continuity." Visuality and movement—these are the two key words to Balázs's film aesthetics, which have since become the "Open Sesame" of film aesthetics.

From these two basic principles—around which more or less all attempts at film aesthetics were groping at that time—Balázs clearly developed his system of film aesthetics and film dramaturgy. He determined the film's characteristic aspects, its divergence from the traditional forms of narrative art, the theatre and literature; he gave an exact description of the difference between acting for the stage and for the film (*i. e.* the silent film), between visual and verbal narration, then, after careful analysis of the contrasts between the stage and the film, he turned to the elaboration of the typical artistic and technical problems of making a film. He showed convincingly that the most important special methods of expression in the new art are the close-up and cutting, the film's means of laying emphasis, of appraisal, of directing the onlooker's attention. He dealt in detail—thus anticipating Eisenstein's brilliant research—with the tempo of the images, the order of their sequence, the relationship between film time and real time, the analogy between the association of pictures and the association of ideas, with montage, or as Balázs put it, the basic aesthetic role, significance and novelty of leading from one image to another in film art.

Within the confines of this short study it is not possible to acquaint the reader with the rich theoretical material of "The Visible Man" in its entirety, for Balázs's attention extended to the most minute problems of film dramaturgy and artistic technique. We would, however, like to point to the three factors in his theoretical activity which, we believe, constitute the "key positions" of Balázs's film aesthetics.

Above all, while earlier works were in their bulk either entirely abstract and theoretical, or else wholly technical and practical, Béla Balázs perceived and demonstrated the characteristic philosophy of a new art as manifest in the practice of filming, deducing the peculiarities of its practical "dodges" and means of expression from the philosophy of a new artistic perception. This convinced and fascinated all those who did not find the theory in itself sufficiently convincing and the practicalities sufficiently interesting and of sufficiently general philosophical validity. Added to this was the fanatical enthusiasm, almost prophetic in its passion, with which he affirmed his faith in the art of the film, and which appeared clad in the attractive garb of a very witty essay style, full of aphorisms, combined with a note of militant polemics. What gave added authenticity to this, was that the proclamation of the independence of film art from literature and the theatre was delivered by a distinguished writer and playwright. The final impact was provided by the all-embracing and systematic completeness—in contrast to the partial nature of the work done up till then—with which he endeavoured in all his works to respond to every contemporary problem of the art of filming, and with which he embraced film art as a whole.

All this together, the depth and consistency of his ideas, the suggestive force of his conviction, and his graphic systematization made it possible for Balázs to succeed where those who had preceded him had at most only half succeeded. He was

the first to break through that intellectual indifference and disinterest, and indeed rejection, which—in spite of its mass appeal and popularity—surrounded the film as an aesthetic subject, as an art, and he created a public opinion and a camp prepared to champion film art.

Today it arouses no particular surprise if we hear or read about the problems of film aesthetics. But in 1924, when Béla Balázs used an expression that today—we hope—is accepted as natural, it was reckoned as revolutionary indeed to call attention to the appearance of a new star in the firmament of artistic recognition. Balázs saw the creation of a new art *in statu nascendi*, at that time still—in his own words—"in the primitive state of a fair-ground spectacle." Public opinion among the educated only saw the film as a technical discovery, as some form of new procedure for reproduction and duplication, a twin brother to the gramophone, whose task it was to preserve the experiences of the eye. But that it should be an art produced a storm of stupefaction and protest; such presumption appeared absurd. Not long ago, I chanced upon a statement of Thomas Mann's about the film in 1930, in which—six years after the appearance of *Der sichtbare Mensch*, and after a number of world film successes—he roundly denied that filming was an art.

If Béla Balázs had achieved no more than this, then he would still be worthy of an important place in the history of culture. But Béla Balázs went further. He discovered the possibilities in the development of a new visual culture, in the shaping of a new artistic form, a new artistic language, the power of expression hidden in the movement of the picture, and differing in its effect from all the other arts.

This outstanding feat was repeated six years later in "The Spirit of the Film," which was concerned with the sound film. Béla Balázs could not anticipate the new problems of the sound film. But it is

to his credit that—in the new situation which the revolution of the sound film had created and which meant the almost complete surrender of the results achieved up to that time by the silent film, and an unprecedented lowering of the artistic standards of film art, characterized by a renewed predominance of the conceptions of the photographed theatre and of mechanical reproduction—he again championed the claim that the sound film too represented an art, and started to work out its aesthetics, in other words to develop further the aesthetics of the silent film. Béla Balázs took up the fight against those who now used the very positions he had defended in connection with the silent film, to attack the idea that the sound film was an art; and he added to his artistic analysis of the moving picture a fundamental elaboration of the artistic problems of the sound picture and the presentation of sound, as well as the possible artistic impact of noise, sound effects and dialogue. He pointed out that the sound film discloses our acoustic environment, “interprets the sound of things, the intimate language of nature. It redeems us from the cacophony of noise, because it transforms sound into expression.” But the sound film, he stressed, will really only become an art when the director guides our sense of sound in the same way as the director of the silent film guided our sense of sight.

Whilst his first book, as he himself wrote, ‘was a recognition and confession of love’ and “The Spirit of the Film” was ‘the theoretical diary of an eyewitness and participant,’ he characterized “The Theory of the Film,” which appeared in 1948, as ‘a work of systematic art history and aesthetics.’ We have no reason not to accept Béla Balázs’s appraisal and, following several of his adherents who place “The Visible Man” ahead of “The Theory of the Film,” to rank his works on film aesthetics in a different manner. “The Theory of the Film” was Béla Balázs’s most mature and

systematic work on the aesthetics of the film. What differentiates it from “The Visible Man” is in the first place determined by the difference in ‘artistic form’ which distinguishes a confession of love—appropriate in its own time and circumstances—from a fundamental study intended as an aesthetic system. It is determined, in the second place, by the new characteristics and achievements resulting from the birth and success of the sound film. In the third place there is an advance in that, while in his earlier books he—understandably—used illustrative material chiefly from the West, his new work is supplemented by his experiences in the Soviet Union and the results achieved by Eisenstein, Pudovkin, etc. These differences are often referred to by him; for example in the ranks of the film’s real, creative artists—to which in 1924 he reckoned the director, the cameraman and the actors—he in 1948 also includes the scenario writer as having a determining role. In actual fact this “contradiction” springs logically from the fact that the sound film is more varied and synthetic, has a greater number of component factors, and portrays life in a much more differentiated way; but this does not signify that Balázs gave up his basic principle of the autonomy of the film and accepted the concept of photographed theatre. Naturally, the viscosity which was the sole means of artistic expression in the silent film now became the leading means of artistic expression in the sound film, that is to say, its role was modified. Béla Balázs saw this problem when in “The Theory of the Film,” as well as in his preceding study, “Thoughts on the Aesthetics of the Film,” he finally summed up his standpoint as follows:

“In my first work on film aesthetics, *Der sichtbare Mensch*, which appeared in 1924, I held the silence of the film to be not only the essence and the principle of stylization of the new art, but greeted it as a great revolution in the history of culture. On the other hand, in 1929, at the time of the

appearance of the sound film, I asserted, in disputation with my first book, that at the time I was mistaken in the absolutism of silence in the silent film, since I could not foresee the sound film. (*Der Geist des Films*, 1930.) Today I have come to understand that my first theory was correct. I have realized that everything I said about the aesthetics of silence in the silent film is still valid today. (The arts all more or less reduce the functions of the organs of sense. A picture of the world becomes a homogeneous picture if I *only* see, or *only* hear, or *only* read, etc.) The silent film was not a primitive and clumsy form of the sound film. Nor is the sound film a higher stage of development of the silent film. No more than painting is a higher stage of development, a fulfilment of graphic art, just because colours are "added" to drawing. These are two different arts. The sound film is not a higher degree of development, just a different art, which has only temporarily ousted the silent film from fashion."

It is a pity that these fundamentally important ideas get lost in Béla Balázs's film aesthetics, that this "difference" which he discovered with such good sense does not represent the nucleus of his theories. This is the origin of what we feel to be lacking in his system of aesthetics, and in its final elaboration in "The Theory of the Film." In a more mature form, which clarifies for the most part—if not entirely—his initial exaggerations, Béla Balázs here reveals the wonderfully rich artistic possibilities of the creative camera, of the visual world; he outlines with similar precision the means of expression through sound effects, gives proper weight and emphasis to the scenario, the problems of music, etc. Yet it is as though he were piling up the components of the film one beside the other a little mechanically and not examining their real relationship to one another. He analyzes the elements of film effects, but does not attempt to conquer the hidden problems of synthesizing the associated arts. In its final

form, his aesthetics exposes its own genesis: the aesthetics of the silent film, plus the aesthetics of film sound-effects, is the inorganic chemistry of the film, but he fails to give the organic chemistry, to give a satisfactory reply to the question: what are the common elements which, in spite of the differences between the different types of film, classify them—both the silent and the sound film—as belonging to one unit, one aesthetic category.

For Béla Balázs's aesthetics of the film—in spite of its historical merit—is not a system which can be regarded as final and free from error. His first and great experience was the silent film, and although he gave evidence of great resilience in the face of the sound and talking film, the technical restrictions of film art, the given technical level, necessarily limited his own theoretical investigations. As a result of his taking the silent film as a point of departure, visuality assumed an absolute, even mystified form in his short essays, and the prejudice—easy to understand from the human psychological point of view—with which he approaches his "love," his discovery of the film, resulted in harmful exaggerations that offended against the equal status of the arts. By converting the correct principle of the relative independence of film art into something absolute, he sometimes almost cut even those roots of the new art which in reality bind it to the common soil of art. The fact that the film is not identical with literature, the theatre, painting, music, etc., becomes, with Balázs, an exaggerated and distorted claim that the art of the film had nothing to do with literature and the other arts, and thus, in the name of autonomy, a sort of artistic vacuum was created around the film. But we must not forget that when Béla Balázs stepped on the scene, even these exaggerations and errors were useful and almost necessary, for the development of film art was threatened precisely by the "imperialism" of literature and the theatre.

And what is decisive, these exaggerations and errors of principle were not of such a nature as to influence the truth of Béla Balázs's practical findings in a negative direction.

The findings and conclusions which Béla Balázs reached regarding the different means of expression of the film, film effects, the characteristic and specific qualities of the language of the film, and the role of planes and montage, have stood the test of time and to this day form a fundamental and valid part of any scientific film aesthetics.

For this reason his teachings are indispensable to all who are concerned with the aesthetics of the film; that is why the history of film aesthetics since Béla Balázs has become the history and further development of his studies, or debate over his findings—for both are simultaneously necessary. Béla Balázs touched on the most burning problems of the film when he examined the material character of the art, and gave an aesthetic survey of the art of the film which has become the corner stone of all future investigations.

ERVIN GYERTYÁN

A NEW IDIOM

Excerpt from "The Theory of the Film"

by

Béla Balázs

If the film even in its first years introduced its own new themes, new characters, new style, and indeed new artistic form, why do I nevertheless say that basically it was not a new art, but only theatrical drama, photographed and presented through a new technique? How and when did cinematography proper come into being, as an art essentially independent, differing in its methods from the theatre, and using an entirely new idiom? What is the difference between photographed theatre and film art? Indeed, both of them are moving pictures projected on the screen in exactly the same manner. Why do I say of the one that it is only a technical reproduction and of the other that it is independently created art?

The basic formal principle of the theatre is that the audience sees the scenes which are acted wholly in space. All the time I see the entire field of the scene. It may happen that the stage only shows one corner of a particular room, but all the time the scene is taking place, I see the whole of that corner, and all the time everything which is happening in it within one and the same frame.

The second basic formal principle of the theatre is that the audience sees the scenes the whole time from a determined and unchanging distance.

In photographed theatre the scenes were already shot from varying distances, but within the scenes the distance did not change.

The third basic formal principle of the theatre is that the audience's stance (visual angle, perspective) does not change. In photographed theatre the perspectives did change sometimes, scene by scene. But within one single scene, the visual angle did not change, nor the distance vary.

Naturally these three basic formal principles of the theatre are inter-related and belong to the fundamental principles of the artistic means of expression and style of the theatre, irrespective of whether we see the theatrical scenes in question directly on the stage or in photographic reproduction and irrespective of whether the scenes in question are such as could not be presented on the stage, but only in the open air with the help of photographic technique.

These three basic principles of theatrical art have been overcome by the art of the film, which starts out from precisely where these three laws of portrayal end and replaces them with new methods. These new principles are as follows:

- 1 Changing distance between audience and scene within one and the same scene and between scenes, and consequently changing magnitude of the scene within the framework and composition of the picture.

- 2 Breaking down the over-all picture of a whole scene into details.

- 3 Changing stance (visual angle, perspective) in relation to the detail pictures even within a scene.

- 4 Cutting, that is to say the determined joining together in sequence of the disjointed detailed pictures, in which not just one entire scene follows another (however short they are), but also the smallest details of the pictures, from which, as from a mosaic of small pictures set one after another in time, the whole scene is assembled. (Montage, cutting.)

This revolutionization of visual art expression, set on an entirely new basis, took place in the United States of America, in Hollywood, at the beginning of the First World War. David Griffith was the name of the genius who accomplished this. He not only created novel masterpieces, but began a fundamentally new form of art with them.

One specific feature of film art is that we see the atoms of life in the separate details of the entire scene not only from close to, with hidden secrets revealed, but also in such manner that the intimate mood of these hidden secrets is not lost as in the open exposure of the theatre or painting. It was not storms at sea and volcanic eruptions which were the new themes shown by the new means of expression of the film but rather, for example, the single tear glistening in the corner of an eye.

The film director does not allow us to look around freely, finding our own points of focus in the scene. Our eyes are compelled to follow the assembled picture from detail to detail, to the end of the series of montages. In this method of placing one detail after the other, the director has the opportunity of stressing and, as a result, does not just present the picture but at the same time also interprets it. It is by this means that the individuality of a film creator finds expression. Two films which have exactly the same action, exactly the same acting, but differ in cutting, will express two completely different individualities, and will portray two different views of the world.

AN AID IN PRONOUNCING HUNGARIAN NAMES

Readers unfamiliar with the Hungarian language are likely to find difficulty in pronouncing Hungarian names and as a result their enjoyment of literary works in particular may be impaired. This is notably true of certain consonants, of which we here give some of the most easily mispronounced with an indication of their correct pronunciation.

c	is pronounced like	ts	in arts
cs	» » »	ch	» church
gy	» » »	de	» hideous
ly	» » »	y	» lawyer
s	» » »	sh	» she
sz	» » »	s	» see
z	» » »	s	» these
zs	» » »	s	» leisure

ECONOMIC LIFE

METHODS OF DEMAND ANALYSIS UNDER SOCIALISM

An extensive monograph on the problems relating to demand was recently published in Hungary.* In this work the author has summed up the results of more than ten years of practical experience and theoretical research and is the first in the economic literature of the socialist countries to treat the subject in such a comprehensive and detailed manner.

The introduction to the treatise recapitulates the motives that prompted the author to intensify his investigations in this field and to publish their results.

As a first motive he points to the present state and the prospective development of the socialist economy. In the initial stage of socialist industrialization, when the means required for the development of the productive forces had to come mainly out of the modest resources of an agrarian country, demand analysis was of but minor importance. The agricultural population, constituting a majority of the total at the time, purchased relatively few commodities, while the investments required for laying the foundations of future progress could be secured only at the cost of foregoing the satisfaction of current needs. At present, however, the socialist countries, after having consolidated their economy, have set themselves the

task of overtaking and eventually surpassing the most advanced capitalist countries in per capita production and consumption. The rapid advance in living standards, again, makes indispensable the analysis of such problems as the objective relationship between income and consumption, commodities and demand, structure of supply and requirements of the population. The importance of a thorough understanding of these relationships from the point of view not only of current, but also of long-term planning is obvious.

The author mentions as his second motive the new trends in socialist economic theory. From the very outset, Marxist economics had taken up the study of the laws governing the exchange of goods needed for production and subsistence in the successive stages of the development of human society. Up to the emergence of socialist states the main preoccupation was, quite understandably, with the relations of production, viz., in the last analysis, the relations between individuals and between classes. Yet, the rational social features of the economic process are evidently different for the various economic systems, and for socialism among them. A rational (purposeful) economic process and a relevant theory exist under socialism, and the socialist economy too has functional problems of its own.

To accomplish a rational (purposeful)

* Prof. József Bognár: *Kereslet és keresletkutatás a szocializmusban*. [Demand and Demand Analysis under Socialism], Közgazdasági és Jogi Kiadó, 1961.

economy under socialism, a number of theoretical concepts, relationships, and ratios must be known: models of reproduction, inter-branch relations, the figures characterizing the structure and the dynamics of the various productive branches, technological coefficients, comparisons between social input and output, and so forth.

Beyond the profound analysis of the production relations forming the basis of society, socialist economic science must be ready to give an answer to problems of this character too.

The first chapter of the work under review gives an outline of the general problems of economic theory in relation to the category of demand, as well as of the character, the historical evolution, and the prospective development, of the discipline centering around this category.

In the course of the subsequent analysis of consumer demand it is pointed out that the methods evolved and employed in demand analysis can also be applied in the investigation of numerous other scientific problems.

It is beyond the scope of the present article to review the monography from chapter to chapter. To give an idea of the structure of the work and of the author's method of investigation let it suffice to point out that he begins with the observation, description and classification of the phenomena of demand and then proceeds to the analysis of the factors influencing demand trends. Without eluding any of the "delicate questions" the author gives a thorough analysis of the circumstances which, in a socialist society, may lead to an inadequate satisfaction of demand. Very interesting, for instance, is the argumentation in connection with the price of newly introduced commodities. In the author's view there are three distinct phases in the marketing of such commodities, and it would not be right to fix a single price for the three different phases; such a price would tend to prove too low for the first phase when

potential demand is still considerable and production only in the initial stage, whereas it may be too high for the third phase in which demand slackens while capacity is still capable of considerable increase.

Surveying the factors which influence the trends in demand, the author gives an interesting picture of the social background of the various economic problems. His work constitutes a convincing proof of the fact that the exact quantitative analysis of the phenomena may be combined to advantage with the methods of sociology and psychology. The chapter dealing with the mentality and behaviour of the consumer under socialism is particularly interesting from this point of view. The characteristic features of the socialist consumer are summarized in the rapid advance of his living standards, the feeling of material security, and the conservatism in the tastes of the older generation. Owing to the rapid advance of standards he endeavours to offer his family—and especially his children—everything that he himself formerly had to do without. His optimism, deriving from a feeling of security, induces him to consume most of his income and to be relatively less inclined to thriftiness. The conservative taste of the older generation, on the other hand, corresponds in many cases to the wish to imitate the former upper classes. The position is quite different with young people, who in their ignorance of past habits are instinctively seeking up-to-date forms in satisfying their requirements.

Another most interesting chapter is devoted to the examination of the novel-type village household emerging in the wake of the establishment of the cooperative farms. The father having ceased to be the "employer," the "boss" of his children, the entire character of the village family has become transformed. As a consequence the village youth have developed more independent buying habits: they follow their own town-influenced tastes in dressing and are emancipating themselves from village tra-

ditions which often were more severe than Spanish court etiquette.

The author bases his examination of the various economic problems on data and figures referring to the past ten years. Most instructive, for instance, is his map showing the territorial distribution of purchasing power in Hungary, or the chart which demonstrates the flow of demand in particular economic regions.

Income constitutes the overwhelmingly dominant factor in influencing demand. The author rightly points out that income under socialism tends to assume a strongly commodity-consuming character, owing to the absence of income accumulation (e. g. for the purchase of land, for investments in commerce or industry, or for plant expansion), to the comparatively low cost of a great number of services (rents, public utilities, entertainment and education), and to the very wide-ranging social benefits over and above wages. Saving, of course, is not unknown in a socialist society, but its purposes vary from the purchase of durable consumer goods to travel and holidays abroad and home-building.

Analysing the distribution of savings deposits in Hungary, the author endeavours to establish a connection between the higher deposit brackets on the one hand and the purchases of the population on the other. In the same chapter an account is given of a panel-method investigation undertaken with the aim of discovering the intentions of the population regarding the purchase of durable consumer goods, and consumers' decisions in general.

Examining the role of price as a factor influencing demand, the author points out that in a socialist economy the problem reduces itself to making that particular price variant effective which will eventually induce consumers to buy the optimum quantity of the commodity in question. On the other hand the price ratios best suited to serve the purposes of economic

policy as incorporated in the general economic plan must also be established.

Analysis of the elasticity of demand for a particular commodity as a function of price provides the means for ascertaining—on the basis of the *Cournot-point*—the price which will secure the optimum income from the sales tax on the commodity in question. The price elasticity of demand, though a less significant factor in a socialist economy than under capitalism, nonetheless constitutes an essential relationship, and a more thorough study of it can prove very helpful in achieving a sound structure of consumption.

The examination of the population factor has led the author to introduce a new concept into economic literature, that of the demographic elasticity of demand. This is defined as a combined index-number to be established for a definite economic period as a function of the growth in population, the demographic changes, and the trend in the average size of families over the period in question.

The influence exercised by supply on demand is also examined by the author in great detail. He points out that—as a general rule—the supply of goods for which demand is rather inelastic tends to be elastic (foodstuffs), whereas an inverse tendency may be observed with regard to the supply of goods with great demand elasticities (durable consumer goods). It will therefore prove expedient—particularly in a socialist economy—to examine the elasticity of supply from the angle of the length of time required to meet a change of a given dimension in demand. Here again a new concept, that of the time elasticity of supply is introduced. The time elasticity of supply differs in two aspects from other types of elasticity: it is not a ratio but an absolute figure expressing not a quantity but a length of time. In the case of an anticipated increase in the demand for a particular product at a certain point of time, this concept is extremely useful in planning,

since it indicates at what moment measures should be taken to organize production so as to meet the increased demand.

In connection with the commercial aspects of supply the author examines, among other things, the influence of the forms of marketing on consumer demand. From observation and inquiry among consumers it appears that in self-service shops 40 per cent of the shoppers purchase goods which they originally had no intention of buying, whereas the corresponding percentage for old-style shops is only 18.2.

After the examination of the factors affecting demand—which includes also the subjective factors—the author turns his attention to the question of the consumer's freedom of choice, his sovereignty. The question of freedom is generally discussed together with that of equality—a practice which must also be followed when defining economic concepts. The consumer is free and sovereign in the sense that he may buy whatever he chooses; his decisions, however, are subject to various laws and rules. This qualification applies to every form of society. Yet there are those who speak of forced consumption and of state dictation in socialist society. In the course of his very interesting exposition Professor Bognár points to the fact that in every type of society production is based on anticipations of future market situations. In a planned economy these anticipations assume a macro-economic character, whereas under capitalism they operate micro-economically. It stands to reason that the anticipation of a future market situation cannot be called dictation on the macro-economic, and freedom on the micro-economic level. In a planned economy the emphasis is on the long-term aspects of scientific development, whereas in a capitalist system the elasticity aspects are prominent. It follows from the foregoing that a planned economy will be slow to adapt itself to changes caused by unexpected developments. Capitalist economy, on the other hand, suffers

from the insecurity of cyclical fluctuations. It devolves, no doubt, on socialist economic research to work out appropriate measures and incentives designed, in the case of unpredictable developments, to facilitate the process of adjustment.

Analysis of the factors affecting demand is followed by discussion of the methods employed in demand analysis together with their logical-epistemological background.

The last chapter is devoted to the problems of economic decisions. The analysis, this time, proceeds exclusively on the macro-economic level. The author's primary concern is with the substance of the decisions, with their objective (internal) effects; the organizational problems involved in taking decisions are, for instance, entirely left out of consideration. In a socialist economy two types of factors must be distinguished: those which are predictable, and those which—with due consideration of the inherent laws of the economy—are susceptible of normative regulation. To give an example: The trend of population figures over the next decade is a predictable factor, the price level, *viz.*, the purchasing power at a given time, a normatively regulable one. The aim of economic decision is to bring about that particular constellation of the predictable and the normatively regulable factors under which the planned target will become an optimum. Demand under socialism may thus be transformed into a guided reaction.

After giving a classification of economic decisions the author, for the sake of demonstration, works out two models of decision. One of these refers to the growing and the buying up of potatoes (illustrated by a process chart), the other to the production and the turnover of washing machines. The considerations devoted to the role played by the time factor and the emplacement of the various time systems in the economic process are particularly interesting. A distinction is made here between the absolute and the

relative time requirements of a reaction. The difficulty of economic decisions lies precisely in the fact that while factors of different speed are set into motion, the planned result of their combined effects must materialize at a predetermined definite time.

Ample space is given to the examination of the direct and the indirect effects of the various factors. Economic relations too may have indirect effects on future developments, and it will be advisable to keep these in evidence. The growth of the economy is generally initiated by economic decisions. This applies especially to the decisions affecting investment. Functional disturbances in the process of growth may be reduced to a minimum if the indirect effects of the various factors are taken into account, together with the strains bound to arise from the processes and the phenomena which these effects bring into being.

Several of the book's chapters are almost

essay-like, manifesting an extensive knowledge of literature and a deep sociological interest. The author's erudition in the economic sciences is paired with his humanist education. His work may be considered path-breaking in Marxist economic literature. The reviewer makes no claim to having given an exhaustive study of the contents, but has limited himself to an outline of the structure and the principal problems of the work, together with some illustrations of its extremely rich material. Throughout, the author links theory with practice and bases the proof of his theoretical findings on extensive practical material. Not only will the work be of great assistance to the professional economist, but the man of practice will also greatly benefit from its reading. It is bound to give a strong impetus to research work in the field of demand analysis now unfolding in the socialist countries.

ANTAL MÁTYÁS

RURAL SELF-SERVICE STORES

The immense growth in retail-trade turnover and the wealth of choice which would formerly have seemed incredible, has made it imperative for commerce all over the world to seek new forms of marketing. This tendency has made itself felt also in Hungary, where the doubling of trade volume since 1938, coupled with an ever broadening variety of goods, important modifications in the composition of trade, and the increased number of consumers has rendered the traditional channels of trade insufficient. It may be added that during the years of forced industrialization, when numerous shops were closed down, not even these traditional channels were adequately developed. Thus it is easy to understand that

in Hungary too new means of coping with the increased trade turnover are being sought.

The disproportion between trade turnover on the one hand and the commercial network on the other is particularly conspicuous in the villages, where before the war the network of shops had been greatly neglected whereas, owing to the social changes that have since taken place, the rate of growth in rural trade turnover has been very much greater than the national average. The paradoxical fact that it is precisely in the villages that the novel forms of marketing have scored their first successes is a comprehensible result of this situation.

The present-day network of village trade, with its neon-lighted speciality shops and self-service stores, constitutes an extraordinary advance over the inter-war period. According to 1940 trade statistics the number of shops per one thousand inhabitants was 6.1 in the provinces (municipal towns excluded) as against 14.4 in the towns. However, the discrepancies then existing between town and countryside are very inadequately expressed in these figures, owing to the fact that in the statistics warehouses, the largest emporium and the smallest grocery were equally counted as one unit. While there was a considerable number of emporia and big shops in Budapest as well as in the more important provincial towns, a great majority of the villages in the inter-war period had but grocer's shops. According to the same census the average number of employees in provincial shops was 1.2 as compared with the national average of 1.7.

There was a great preponderance in the provinces of trade in foodstuffs with its many small shops (representing 61.59 per cent of all shops). Second in number of shops and the volume of turnover came the trade in animals and land produce, *viz.*, trades which do not cater directly for the consumer. With respect to the number of employees the textile trade occupied second place. Commerce in forest produce and mining products closely followed suit, while the trade in such items as hardware, glassware, stationery, household articles was considerably smaller in proportion.

This network of village shops became entirely incapable of meeting the changed trade requirements which presented themselves in the Hungarian villages after the war and especially since 1953, a circumstance that goes a long way towards explaining the perhaps unique phenomenon alluded to above, *viz.*, that the novel forms of retail trading found their widest application in the villages.

The changes the Hungarian village has

undergone in the course of the last sixteen years are fundamental indeed. The primitive character of village trade and the low living standard of the village population in the inter-war period is reflected in the innumerable grocer's shops and in the poor choice of goods available even in the better equipped cooperative chain stores. The data on retail trade in village shops in the years preceding the war are very scarce. The most reliable perhaps are those contained in the estimates of the Hungarian Institute for Economic Research for the 1936-1937 commercial year, which put the country's total retail-trade turnover at 2,200 million pengős. In the same period the chain stores of the "Hangya" Cooperative had a total turnover of about 140 million pengős, about 6.5 per cent of the national total. According to the 1950 data (the first year covered by the trade statistics of the National Association of Cooperatives, which is responsible for the bulk of village trade), the share of the farmers' cooperative shops in the country's total retail trade was 12 per cent. Taking into consideration the village fairs which constituted an additional source of supply for the village population, it may not be far from the truth to put the total of village retail trade at about three times that of the "Hangya" stores, that is at about 20 per cent of the country's total. This ratio is, of course, only approximative. Due regard must be paid also to the consumption of self-grown produce in the village household, which was considerably greater than at present, and to the fact that many of the villagers made their purchases in town. All this can, nevertheless, not obscure the truth that the rural consumption level was relatively very low, because the income of the majority of the village population was inadequate to meet even the most primitive requirements continuously. For the same reason the bulk of the goods entering into retail trade in the villages was made up of foodstuffs, while manufactured articles—mainly clothing—formed

but 20 per cent of the total. This also accounts for the narrowness of choice, with the number of articles never reaching more than 300 to 400, even in the bigger stores.

The narrow range of goods is illustrated also by the annual reports of the "Hangya" Cooperative. These show the bulk of the turnover to be made up of goods of daily consumption, such as salt, sugar, paraffin. Wearing apparel, though accounting for quite an important part of the turnover, was extremely narrow in range; indeed, it was confined to but a few articles. Of cotton cloth only the cheap varieties were sold. The biggest item was printed and dyed cotton fabric with a total yearly sale of 2.5 million yards. The woollen cloth sold was of the cheap quality worn by workers, and the same applies to underwear. The stationery consisted mainly of packing material, toilet-paper, copybooks, and paper napkins. Hardware was made up of enamelware, iron bars, spades, hoes, shovels, ploughs, harrows, horse-shoes. The list of household articles contained soap, brushes, cart-grease, and toilet articles such as tooth-paste and soap. Other articles on hand were paints, artificial fertilizer, copper sulphate, cement, tar products, and other building materials.

The present-day farmers' cooperative shops present an entirely different picture. These shops have by now become responsible for the entire retail trade in the villages, amounting in contrast to the pre-war figure, to 30 per cent of the country's total. The transformation of village trade is reflected in the changes its composition has undergone. The increase in rural trade turnover since 1953 is 237.8 per cent. But the proportion of foodstuffs to the total of goods sold has decreased—from 54 per cent in 1953 to 43 per cent in 1960—while the aggregate volume of food sales in the country as a whole over the same period has increased by 189.3 per cent. The corresponding percentages for wearing apparel are 28

and 27, for sundry manufactures 18 and 30, respectively, with an increase in the national aggregate of the former by 227 per cent and of the latter by 395.5 per cent over the same period. The stagnation in wearing-apparel sales may be attributed to the fact that their soaring between 1953 and 1955 resulted in a certain degree of demand saturation. In 1955 the proportion of wearing-apparel sales to total turnover was 31 per cent.

These trends in village trade correspond to an enormous increase in the purchasing power of the village population and in the demand for consumer goods. The increase again is the resultant of a number of factors. First and foremost, it was the expansion in agricultural production that secured an increased cash income for the village population, especially since 1953 when some of the more harmful effects of forced industrialization were eliminated. The favourable trend in the prices of agricultural produce also dates from this time and has added to the population's cash income. Taking into consideration, moreover, that the peasants at present no longer pay any rent, but receive it instead, and that as a consequence of the formation of the co-operative farms they have—in sharp contrast with their land-hungry practice of pre-war times—discontinued to hoard money with the aim of increasing their holdings, it will become clear that the growing income goes primarily into the purchase of consumer goods, thus making for a steady rise in the living standards of the village population. The statistical figures clearly reflect the well-known fact that, food and clothing requirements once satisfied, demand tends to turn increasingly towards durable consumer goods. The electrification of the Hungarian countryside has given added momentum to the demand for this type of commodities.

It is against the background of social and economic conditions outlined above that yearly sugar consumption in the villages

has risen from the pre-war 4,000 to the present 7,000 wagons and that of rice from 900 to 1,400 wagons; that side by side with cheap cotton fabrics and woollen cloths, and other low-priced piece goods, a town-level choice of ready-to-wear articles and high-quality piece goods is on display in the village shops; that the yearly turnover in women's underwear amounts to 315 million forints; that whereas the village shops before the war sold only brogues and boots and other rather insignificant footwear requirements were met by the shoemaker, the present-day rural turnover in men's, women's and children's shoes amounts to several million pairs a year; that the yearly sale of bicycles has risen from the pre-war figure of 30,000 to 94,000 in 1960, while that of kitchen ranges has increased nearly twentyfold; that 51,000 radio receiver sets, 10,000 motor-cycles, 260,000 gramophone records, 2,400 record-players, and large quantities of many other varieties of durables and commodities inconceivable in a village shop before the war were sold in 1960.

These developments in village trade reflect not only the increased purchasing power but also the determined realization of a commercial policy aimed at bringing the goods within as easy reach of the consumer as possible. On-the-spot supply lightens the burden of productive labour and saves the agricultural population much time, trouble and expense. The old network of shops was obviously unsuitable for the display and marketing of such a quantity, range and diversity of goods. Thus, to meet the increased requirements, resulting from the growth in purchasing power, on the spot and to place them within easy reach of the village population, a reorganization of the marketing system became inevitable. At the outset, when only the volume of trade was changing without any simultaneous change in its composition, it sufficed to raise the number of shops. From 1954 to 1956 an annual average of 1,500 new

units was added to the network of village shops, and the rate of increase remained considerable over the subsequent years too. The total number of shops has by now reached the 14,000 mark. Specialization went hand in hand with the increase. The proportion of general stores has decreased from 75 to 30 per cent of the total, with the district centres leading in the specialization process.

The growth in trade volume as set forth in the foregoing is, however, accompanied by simultaneous changes in its composition. The changes affect not only the relative proportions of the main classes of commodities; considerable shifts occur within the classes themselves. It thus becomes imperative for the cooperative trade to work out solutions which, by steadily improving the methods of salesmanship, serve to bring about an increase in the selling capacity of the individual shop. The old-fashioned shops were by no means adapted to the display of, say, six-hundred different sizes and models of shoes. Similarly, the turnover in ready-made clothes could be raised and the goods made attractive to the consumer only by a broad range of choice. None of the old shops had been suitably equipped for this purpose. The problem could be solved only by the introduction of novel selling methods. The establishment of new-style shops was started on a large scale in 1959 and within two years 734 food shops, 513 shops dealing in sundry manufactured goods, and 362 clothing shops—a total of 1,618—were converted into self-service shops. The first experiments already brought good results, and as a consequence the entire apparatus of rural consumer's cooperatives began to set up shops of this type. At the present moment the new-style shops account for 20 per cent of the total turnover in cooperative trade. These shops have come up to expectations and proved suitable both for transacting the increased turnover and displaying the merchandise in an up-to-date form.

An examination of the results leads to the conclusion that the rate of increase in turnover was greater in the self-service shops than in the traditional ones. With a 16.6 per cent increase above the previous year in aggregate food sales in the country as a whole, the increase in food sales in self-service shops amounted to 29 per cent. As regards the products of industry a similar situation prevails. The total sale of manufactured goods increased by 11.6 per cent, while at the same time the increase in self-service shops was 23.6 per cent. Within the category of manufactured goods the corresponding percentages were 19 for shoe and 27 for clothes shops, 37 for hardware and technical goods stores. The increase in the turnover of self-service bookshops, for instance, was 30 per cent.

This increase in turnover was not exclusively due to novel selling methods, it was also greatly promoted by the up-to-date furnishing and technical equipment of the shops, by ensuring that the show-windows came up to the standard of urban requirements. Nowadays villages with a couple of thousand inhabitants often have several neon-lit self-service stores.

In general, the new village shops quickly became popular. There were initial objections to opening up modern shops in the villages on the grounds that it might endanger the *couleur locale* and village traditions. But such hesitations were mostly prompted by sheer backwardness. The increased turnover proves that the majority of the villagers are pleased with their new shops, with the novel forms of selling. That the modern shop should be filled with an adequate supply of merchandise is, of course, an absolute necessity and precondition. Unfortunately there are still a few shops where the conservative management to some extent still insists on the traditional, less diversified composition of the stock.

The new selling methods particularly favour off-hand purchases. People are often induced to buy simply by taking the

merchandise into their hands. Many a new article will find a readier market if the customer is enabled to examine it closely, to read the directions for its use; eventually he will buy it in order to give it a trial. A case in point are detergents which were formerly quite unknown in the villages. Even if they did not boil their own soap at home, village people in the past bought only soap at the grocer's. At present, thanks to self-service, the total sale of detergents in village shops amounts to 145 millions forints a year. With cosmetics the case is similar. Whereas formerly only articles relating to infant hygiene were purchased, the turnover in cosmetics amounted to 36 million forints in 1955 and has now reached 70 million forints. The trend as regards women's hats is particularly interesting. These hats were previously entirely unknown in the Hungarian village, but in the first quarter of 1960 their sale was launched by a few self-service specialty shops. The hats had scarcely been put out in the shops when they were already sold, to the great surprise of salesmen who did not expect to sell a single piece. In all the shops the whole lot sold out during the first morning, to the dismay of the late-comers.

With regard to books a similar situation prevails. Only a couple of years ago it would have been unimaginable for works of high literary quality to find an extensive market in the village. With the introduction of self-service the sale of books too has witnessed an enormous upswing. People are free to browse among the books, there are chairs and tables in the bookshop, the customer may make his choice as he pleases. In Bács county, for instance, where previous to the introduction of self-service total book sales amounted to a mere 294,000 forints a year, the turnover now surpasses the 5 million mark. Thus self-service not only makes for more civilized ways of trading, it also gives an opportunity to learn and arouses countless new interests.

All over the world the new forms of selling are said to throw temptation in the customer's way. In the village this danger is insignificant. People know each other and set store by public opinion. In the self-service shop confidence is placed in the customer. Moreover, as the buyer in the cooperative shop is himself a member of the cooperative, his feeling of responsibility is also enhanced. The confidence placed in them is highly valued by the villagers and defalcations in self-service shops are less frequent than in the traditional ones.

With their wide choice of goods the self-service shops do a great deal for the elimination of the differences between town and village. The rural character, the "provincialism"—in the sense of inferior standards—is disappearing not only from the shops' exterior but also as a feature of the goods. It could hardly be otherwise. A vast mass of goods marketed on a large scale is being produced by industries equipped for serial production and is being distributed by a centralized wholesale organization. This in itself tends to lower the proportion of characteristically "pro-

vincial" goods. As the rural sale of ready-made articles increases by leaps and bounds, village clothing also tends to assume an urban character. The process is being accelerated by the fashion shows held for the purpose of popularizing ready-to-wear clothing. In 1960 alone 585 fashion shows were organized in villages and hamlets. Where but a short time ago 5—6 peasant skirts worn one over the other were still "the fashion," beach costumes, blue jeans, silk and linen dresses with a bolero, even taffeta dinner gowns are now presented—and sold.

Thus village trade has changed in outward appearance as well as with regard to its composition. Of course, many a neglected shop may still be found, many a village where the shop-windows are not illuminated, where the display of goods is poor and the new forms of marketing are still unknown. Nonetheless the *novel* features are the characteristic ones. Village trade not only adapts itself to the new ways of village life but to some degree also tends to influence the course of its development.

RÓBERT HARDI

FACTS AND FIGURES

THE HUNGARIAN CENSUS OF 1960

In the interest of establishing population figures for the world as a whole, composed of comparable data relating to the individual countries, the Statistical Committee of the United Nations recommended that the member states hold a uniform census in the 1960's. Together with the other member states and in agreement with the major methodological conceptions, Hungary too accepted the recommendations and accordingly carried out a population census, which also included data on dwelling units as of January 1, 1960.

In Hungary, the first enumeration of the population which could be called a census in the modern sense of the term was ordered by Joseph II, Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary (1780—90); it was carried out between 1784 and 1787. The Hungarian statistical apparatus, brought into being in 1867, arranged a broad-scale census as early as 1869. The 1960 census, which was fitted into the framework of the so-called world census, was the fourteenth in the country, and the tenth of those conducted by the official statistical organs.

In addition to the questions necessary for comparisons with earlier data, the questionnaire of the 1960 census also included the essential questions proposed by the United Nations. It was the first time that a detailed survey of families and households was made in Hungary. This provided an opportunity for becoming more intimately acquainted

with the housing conditions of the population.

The so-called evaluation plan was prepared with the important objective in view, among others, of securing sufficient basic facts and figures in time for the Second Five Year Plan of the National Economy which was to begin in January, 1961, in other words, of being able to publish the most important data relating to the demographic, occupational and family conditions of the population within one year. This was only possible by selecting a small percentage of the complete census material in such a way that the evaluation of this sample should yield representative figures for the country as a whole.

The evaluation of earlier censuses in Hungary had always been global and the representative method had not been applied up to the present. Experience in other countries had shown that the selection and evaluation of approximately 5 per cent of the total material will already secure national data not essentially different from the results of global treatment. A selection of this scope would have meant the evaluation of data referring to about half a million people. A task of such dimensions, however, would only have delayed the evaluation of the whole census material—a process to take several years in any case—preventing the publication of its results according to schedule. Therefore, the sampling was limited

to 1 per cent of the households in such manner as to make it adequately representative of the population as a whole.

This procedure enabled the establishment of the essential population data within a year, and thus by the autumn of 1960 the necessary material was made available to the planning and directing organs. By the end of the year it was printed and published. Furthermore, the mathematical apparatus reported part of the data to be reliable in reference to the counties (nineteen in number) and the principal towns (five in all).

The permanent Hungarian statistical service is in possession of a great variety of facts concerning the different fields of the national economy and the more important manifestations of cultural life. After comparing the results of the representative sampling, prepared from the census, with these earlier data, it was possible to state that the deviation is in most respects insignificant (for example, the census data deviated by only 0.4 per cent from the population figures as recorded by the continuous demographic evaluation). But about the sectors where exact data had not been available so far (largely in the division of the population according to occupation and, within this, that of the agrarian population), the census indicated important changes during the period of the building of socialism up to the present day, changes which the continuous statistics did not bring out sufficiently.

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According to preliminary data the population of Hungary, on January 1, 1960, was 9,976,530, or 8.4 per cent higher than when the last census was taken on January 1, 1949. Last summer the population of the country passed the ten million mark.

According to the figures of the 1869 census, the population slightly exceeded 5 million in the area of present-day Hungary. The country's population has thus doubled over the last ninety years.

We may now, on the basis of the data yielded by the one per cent representative sampling taken from the complete material of the 1960 census, survey the important changes that have taken place in the composition of Hungary's population during the last eleven years, paying particular attention to the changes that have occurred in the rate of employment and the occupational division of the population. But first a brief analysis of the most important demographical features of the country is necessary.

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As in most European countries, men are outnumbered by women in Hungary too. For every 1000 men there were 1071 women on January 1, 1960. This surplus in the number of women shows a diminishing tendency, however, as in the 1949 census the proportion was still 1081 women to every 1000 men.

The most important change in the age distribution of the population was brought about by increases in the higher age brackets. In 1960 approximately 14 per cent of the population was classified as aged (60 years of age or over). The corresponding percentage in 1949 was 12, while in 1910 it had been only 8. This implies an increase in average age, and as a result the proportion of those capable of work has increased in the higher age groups in comparison to the lower ones. In 1960 two fifths of the able-bodied population was between 40 and 59 years of age. As a further result of the increase in average age, the proportion of those under 15 years of age fell from the 30 per cent recorded in 1910 to 25 per cent.

A significant rise in the cultural level of the population has also manifested itself, due to the gradual increase in school attendance. In 1960 one third of the population aged 15 years and over completed at least the 8 years of primary school. (In 1949 this ratio was hardly more than 20 per

cent as against 15 per cent in 1941.) The number of those who reached this educational level rose by three fourths over the last eleven years. The increase over the same period in the number of university and college graduates is even more significant, amounting as it does to 80 per cent over the previous census. At present approximately 9 per cent of those aged 18 years and over graduated from a secondary school, while the corresponding proportion before the Second World War hardly exceeded 4 per cent.

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There is a striking change, in comparison to past periods, in the rate of employment and in the number of gainfully occupied persons.

According to the January 1, 1960 census, 5.3 million of the country's nearly ten million population were gainfully occupied. Compared with 1949, their number increased proportionately faster than that of the entire population. For the first time in census taking, those occupied exceeded their dependants in number. In 1949 gainfully occupied persons amounted to 48 per cent of the total population, while the corresponding percentage in 1960 was 53. At these two points of time the number of dependants per 100 occupied persons was 109 and 88 respectively.

The number of gainfully occupied males was 3,380,000 and that of females 1,920,000, in other words 64 per cent of all gainfully occupied persons were men and 36 per cent women. The number of gainfully occupied males rose 10 per cent in comparison with 1949, while the number of females rose more than 44 per cent. The percentage of gainfully occupied males compared to the total male population changed during the last decade, generally remaining around 70 per cent. This goes to show that there is no significant male labour reserve. The growing labour requirements of the national

economy were thus mainly met by the employment of women, who previously remained at home. This is also evidenced by the fact that of the increase of some 900,000 in the total of those gainfully occupied, about 600,000 were women; the percentage of gainfully employed women to the total feminine population thus rose from 28 per cent to 37 per cent in the course of a single decade. As 96 per cent of the men capable of work are already gainfully occupied, future labour requirements will have to draw, almost exclusively on women, in addition, of course, to those just entering employment.

In harmony with the nature of the work done by women, the increase in female employment is not uniform over all the sectors of the national economy. The increase is most apparent in the building industry and in agriculture. In these two sectors of the national economy, the growth above 1949 in the proportion of women employed was 43 per cent and 24 per cent respectively, while in all the other sectors taken together the average increase was only 10 per cent.

Not less significant than the increase in the rate of employment were the changes in the distribution of employed persons over the various occupational groups.

As late as 1949 Hungary was still generally known as an agricultural country with more than half of the working population employed in agriculture. Since that time the country's national economy has fundamentally changed, losing its agrarian character and becoming more and more industrialized. This development finds its expression in the significant proportional decline of the agricultural population.

In 1960 the number of those engaged in agriculture was 1,850,000, or 35 per cent of total employment. This is 15 per cent or 331,000 less than in 1949. (In comparison to the 4.5 million of 1949, 3.6 million of the Hungarian population were agrarian in 1960. The workers who

left agriculture mainly contributed to the ranks of industry and the building trades, where employment figures increased by

73 per cent, bringing the total of those employed in this sector to almost one third of all those gainfully employed.

Gainfully Occupied Persons in Various Economic Sectors

Sector	Numbers		Percentage Distribution	
	1949	1960	1949	1960
Agriculture	2,196,185	1,864,800	49.8	35.2
Industry and Building Trade.....	961,025	1,663,600	21.8	31.4
Other sectors	1,252,089	1,767,300	28.4	33.4
Total	4,409,299	5,295,700	100	100

The number of gainfully employed as compared with 1949 grew also in other sectors of the national economy, especially in transportation, commerce and administration. In consequence of the rise in the average age of the population and of the extension of the old-age pension system, the number of pensioners (included among wage earners, though not working) has grown by 72 per cent, or 177,000.

The number of gainfully occupied persons in the different occupation groups underwent even more significant changes if we consider the last thirty years. Compared with 1930, the employment figures for industry and the building trade have doubled, those for the civil service have risen by 150 per cent, while the number of those retired has trebled.

Since 1949 the distribution of gainfully occupied between the socialist and the private sectors of the national economy has also changed fundamentally. On January 1, 1960, 77 per cent of the gainfully occupied, or 4.5 million, worked in the socialist sector, of which the state-owned sector constituted 62 per cent or 3.3 million. The proportion of persons occupied in the private sector, largely in agriculture, was reduced to 23 per cent.

The transition to socialist production can—in consequence of the changed relationship of wage earners to the means of production—best be gauged by analysing the data grouped according to occupational relationships.

In 1949 more than half of all gainfully occupied persons were either self-employed or family members supported by the latter. This proportion was by 1960 reduced to hardly more than one fifth. The corresponding absolute figure was thus lowered from 2.3 million to 1.3 million.

The number of cooperative farm members, which in 1949 was so small that it was not even listed, rose to 648,000 (12.2 per cent of those gainfully occupied) in 1960.

Since 1949 the number of wage earners and employees has increased by 12 million to 59 per cent of all gainfully occupied persons. The increase corresponds to the decrease in the number of self-employed persons and their dependents. The number of intellectual workers in employment has doubled, while the number of physical workers only increased by one half. For every 100 physical workers there were 33 intellectual workers as compared to 25 in 1949.

The increased average age of the population makes itself felt in the age distribution of the gainfully occupied population, *i. e.*,

in the greater proportion of those in the higher age brackets. The number of persons under forty years of age has decreased and that of those above forty increased.

Age Group	Percentage of all Gainfully Occupied Persons	
	1949	1960
14 years	1.3	0.6
15—39 years	52.7	49.9
40—59 years	32.1	32.8
60 years and over	13.9	16.7
Total	100	100

The significant increase in the "60 years and over" group is largely due to the inclusion of pensioned persons under the "gainfully occupied" heading in the statistics.

Examining now the age distribution in the different occupations, an essential difference is revealed between agriculture and the other sectors of the national economy. As a result of the migration of the younger

population from village to town and their corresponding shift in occupation from agriculture to industry, especially to the building trades, the proportion of those aged sixty years and over to all persons occupied is highest in agriculture, namely, 21 per cent, while in other sectors the corresponding percentage is only about 5.

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The data gained from the representative sampling of the 1960 census provided a much greater amount of information about the change which took place in the occupational grouping of the population of Hungary than reported here. Though, after the processing of the entire material, the data may be modified to a small degree within the predetermined limits of error, the conclusions drawn from the figures will not be noticeably altered. The rich store of data which will emerge from the total evaluation of the 1960 census will provide an opportunity for a much wider analysis than has been given in the preceding pages.

EGON SZABADY

DOCUMENTS

IN THE WORKSHOPS OF THE BRITISH PUBLISHING TRADE*

During my stay in England—thanks to the courtesy and organizing work of the British Council—I had the opportunity to become acquainted with a number of British publishing houses in a comparatively short time. Of course, there was no question of my being able to study every line of their very complex activities. But that was not my aim: I wanted to concern myself with several questions which it might be both interesting and useful from our point of view to become acquainted with. Let me begin by saying that I was most warmly received by my English colleagues, who endeavoured to satisfy my curiosity in all respects. Altogether I visited fourteen publishers or book distributors. I talked with the doyen of British book publishing, Sir Stanley Unwin; with R. E. Barker, general secretary of the Publishers Association; with representatives of Cassells, Macmillan, Heinemann, the Oxford University Press, Penguin Books, Sidgwick and Jackson, the Folio Society, Collier's, Lawrence and Wishart, and the Stationary Office; and with the directing staff of the National Book League and the Book Centre. In this manner—and on the basis of a study of the distribution of books—I was able to get a general picture, some outlines of which I would like to sketch here.

* This article was issued in *Élet és Irodalom* (Life and Literature), a weekly published by the Hungarian Writers' Association.

The first thing to emerge was the richness and variety of English book publishing. At present—according to information given by the general secretary of the Publishers Association—there are about 800 publishers in Great Britain, only half of which, however, are members of the Publishers Association; these latter—some 400 in number—account for the bulk of English book production. Most recent figures show that 23,783 different publications were issued in 1960, of which 5,989 were reprints or new editions. The division of these books as to subjects is very interesting. The statistics reveal that there were 4,209 novels, 721 works of poetry and drama, 2,295 children's books, and 2,075 educational publications. In the field of religion and theology 1,247 publications appeared. The largest number among professional books was devoted to medicine: 1,116 in all. Political publications and technical handbooks each numbered around 900. Of the 17,794 new books, about 40 per cent were in the field of belles-lettres, if one includes literature for children and young people.

Here in Hungary, taking into account books alone (that is publications of more than 64 pages), the proportion is about 30 per cent. Of course, the composition of books published in the two countries is essentially different, especially as far as

belles-lettres is concerned. In Britain valuable and interesting books appear alongside a large number of trashy publications that in many respects distort the proportions.

Competition or Anarchy?

This large-scale book publishing conceals within it many anarchistic characteristics. Book production, from the point of view of the number of books issued, has doubled in fifteen years, which naturally represents a big development, but it also means that many books on similar themes have appeared. This parallelism is an advantage in that the competition between publishers stimulates them to produce better books. But often it is not merit that determines the success of a publication, but skilfully chosen means of propaganda or other factors. In this way much energy and many economic resources are wasted or do not achieve their aim. More important than this is the fact that the sale of such a huge quantity of books causes much concern, even though only a part of the books published in Britain find their way onto the home market. In 1959 the entire turnover of books came close to 67 million pounds sterling, which is approximately 4,500 million forints. (1 £=66 Ft.) Bearing in mind that export trade accounted for some 40 to 45 per cent of the total and that Great Britain has a population of 52 million, we can establish that the purchase of books per head of population is not larger, indeed it is smaller than in Hungary. In our country 550 million forints worth of books were sold in 1960. Add to this that our books are lower priced, and it becomes clear that more books are reaching our reading public than is apparent from a comparison of the actual amount of money spent.

10,000 Bookshops, 32,000 Libraries

There are 10,000 bookshops in Great Britain, and the Booksellers' Association has

3,000 members. The publishers either do their own distributing or charge one or the other of the big distributing agencies with wholesale activities. The Book Centre carries on large-scale trading of this sort, distributing for 33 publishers, and would like to extend its operations still further. Smith's Booksellers have a huge distribution apparatus, concerned mainly with the sale of newspapers and magazines. There are some who oppose the formation of monopolies in book distribution, but experience shows that here too the iron laws of capitalist economy prevail: small publishers go out of business and are either compelled to merge, or are absorbed by the larger publishers.

In Great Britain itself libraries play a big role in the book trade. According to one official publication, the number of public libraries in 1958 was 32,755, with a stock of more than 68 million volumes: in one year they loaned 437 million books.

The large number of book clubs is also characteristic of British book distribution. Books or series of books which in general are recommended by well known writers, scientists and public figures, are brought out for book club members. These clubs maintain libraries and permanent club rooms. The National Book League, for example, is one such club; among its principal tasks is that of keeping school libraries informed and supplied. Travelling exhibitions are arranged on different subjects as asked for by the school libraries. Some of the themes are as follows: Background to the Bible, the English novel in the 20th century, the teaching of Geography, History, and Mathematics, the World We Live In, and so on. Experts gather together the material for the exhibitions and it is obvious that the exhibitions themselves influence what is purchased by the libraries.

Export of Books

One of the characteristics of the entire British book publishing and book trade is that great care is devoted to exports, and

here too there is evidence of flexibility. With those countries which do not have suitable amounts of exchange at their disposal, agreements are concluded permitting the books to be bought in the local currency, while the British government refunds to the publishers concerned the sums due in pounds. The most recent agreements of this kind to be concluded are with Yugoslavia, Spain and Israel. Experts try to increase marketing possibilities, particularly in English-speaking regions, but efforts are made with regard to other countries too. Naturally they have to count with their American competitors as well, and this competition has often taken on ruthless forms. In the information bulletin on the work of the Publishers' Association in 1959-1960, there is a complaint, for example, that from November 1959, when restrictions on the import of American books were ended, many very cheap and in some cases pernicious books found their way to Britain. In the most recent period British publishers have endeavoured mainly to get cheap publications to the economically and culturally backward countries, and they even point out that they are thereby endeavouring to promote political and ideological penetration on the part of the Western world. At times alarming statements appear in the press that Soviet foreign-language books are competing with English books in India and other countries.

Average Price: One Guinea

British publishers are deeply concerned over the increase in book prices, which are linked with increases in the cost of printing. In the first half of 1960, the average price of a book was 20/7 (about 70 forints).

This question of price is important from the point of view of internal consumption, but even more so from that of exports. During my discussions with Sir Stanley Unwin he stressed that English books are the cheapest in the Western world, and this is true, but, as we see it, they have to reckon with

competition, and that not only in relation to American books.

The government, incidentally, is also endeavouring to assist British publishers, chiefly with a view to insuring that books for the export market should be cheaper. Very recently a series of university text books has been put together, and attempts are being made to send them to the one-time colonial countries and elsewhere at a cheap price.

*Penguin, Pelican
and other Cheap Series*

One feature of British book publishing is the many comparatively cheap series. Last year Penguin Books celebrated the 25th anniversary of their founding. As is known, the belletristic Penguin series, costing 2/6 or 3/6 a volume, has been put out by this publisher. Puffin Books are issued for children (the puffin is an arctic bird). From our point of view the most interesting series is the Pelican, the volumes of which are concerned with the most varied questions of sociology and natural science, dealing not only with the past, but also with present-day matters. For example books have appeared about the Soviet Union, present-day America, China, the atom, peace and other problems. Penguin Books publishes serially works that have already achieved success, whereas Pelican books are often specially commissioned. Since the founding of Penguins, 3,000 publications have been issued, with an annual number of copies of between 15 and 16 million. The lowest issue is round about 20,000 copies. Of course Penguins are not the only cheap series; there are Pan books, the Collins series, and, indeed, in the most recent period even publishers that have not been concerned with this field before have been issuing paperbacks, as, for example, Allen and Unwin or the Oxford University Press. I would like to stress that this is not just a British characteristic. In France and West Germany too, cheap, paper-back publica-

tions have spread rapidly, among them popular educational series. The demand for them is in fact the result of modern education. The publishers are endeavouring to meet this demand at the level required by our age, and although in general the books are characterized by an idealist philosophy, many works which are progressive in spirit are also to be found among them. This is something which we too must study carefully.

*The Dumping
of Literary Awards*

As we have seen, very many belletristic works appear in Britain but, apart from trash, few reach really large issues. For the most part the method of "boosting" these books is to award some kind of literary prize. It is not only the traditional literary awards that are distributed, but the publishers and booksellers also strive to bestow new awards themselves. Even the scientific publishers are no exception. Last year the William Foyle prize for poetry went to the Collected Poems of Robert Graves; the Carnegie Medal to a children's book, *The Lantern Bearers* by Rosemary Sutcliffe; the Heinemann Publishers award to a novel by Morris West, *The Devil's Advocate*, and to a volume of verse by C. A. Typhanis, *The Cocks of Hades*; the Hawthornden prize to the well-known Alan Sillitoe for *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner*; the J. L. Rhys prize to David Cante for *At Fever Pitch*; and so one could go on. This "dumping" of literary awards may, of course, sooner or later result in watering down their value.

The biggest sensation in English literary life last year, however, was caused not by the work of a contemporary author, but by D. H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, which Penguin published in 200,000 copies and which some held to be "obscene." Finally the case went to court, 35 witnesses were heard, and it was decided that the book could be distributed. This work, to be

frank, is rather dull, but when we visited the Penguin warehouses, there was not a single copy there, and the workers had raised a symbolic gravestone to its "death."

Without "Line"

In connection with this branch of publishing we must also mention that English literary publishers have no clearly defined "line." If we look at the Heinemann spring catalogue for 1961, we can see that novels, short stories, detective novels, biographies, works of poetry and drama appear alongside works of history, philosophy and sociology, sport and children's books. It can be said that almost every literary publishing house also brings out books on social science. This is also characteristic of the books produced by Sidgwick and Jackson, whose kindly, congenial director, J. Knapp-Fischer, puts out books ranging from poetic works to history and every branch of the social sciences.

Translations

We were particularly interested in the translation work of the English literary publishers. Translations do not occupy a particularly large place in British book production as a whole. In 1960, there were altogether 1,148 translations out of a total of 23,783 publications, that is barely 5 per cent. The bulk of these appeared in two fields: one was that of the novel, where 353 foreign works appeared, and the other religion and theology, which followed directly after the novel with 134 works. If we also take into account translations of poetry and drama (59), then altogether 412 literary translations appeared in Britain in 1960. It is worth noting that in Hungary 942 foreign books and brochures appeared in translation in 1959, and of these 374 were literary works.

Although the greatest number of translated works appear in the field of belles-lettres, Hungary can in the first instance place scientific and artistic books in Britain,

for the most part in the form of joint publications. In view of the belles-lettres produced, British publishers are not very keen on bringing out foreign literature, particularly the literature of a small people. An exception to this is perhaps represented by the former colonial countries, where British publishers have developed widespread activity in the past and are continuing to do so today.

Scientific Books

A few words about the publication of scientific and professional books. The publication of scientific and professional books in Britain is extremely wide in range. Old publishers, like the Oxford University Press, list the books which have been published and are now available in a catalogue running to many hundreds of pages. English publishers have great experience in the publication of medical and technical handbooks, but significant results have also been achieved in many branches of the social sciences, particularly in publishing works of a comprehensive nature. This too is well worth our study.

The Art of the Book

Standards of book production in Britain are high. Every year the National Book League organizes an international exhibition of book art, in which we usually take part with a few of our books, but they also hold an exhibition of fine books published in Britain during the year. In the latter case, the books sent in are examined by a committee and a detailed appraisal appears in print. Completely exclusive luxury editions are published, but one must praise the attempts of some publishers, including the Folio Society (with its 20,000 members), to publish books of a bibliophil nature for a wider reading public. Last year this publishing house, whose young directors give evidence of great dynamism, had four books accepted for the exhibition of fine books: selected passages from Herodotus, a

selection of Maupassant's short stories, a book by R. L. Stevenson, and a collection of documents from the trial of Charles I.

Cooperation

I have left to last the question of collaboration. In my opinion there are many possibilities for cooperation with British publishers, and there is a willingness too. Kultura, Corvina and the Publishing House of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences have already cooperated fruitfully with British scientific and technical publishers in particular.

The Pergamon Press is interested in our scientific books, Boosey and Hawkes in musical works, Barrie and Rockliff have shown interest in some of our books about music, Studio and Thames and Hudson in art books, while Collet's have purchased Hungarian works on various subjects in English translation. Our mathematical, medical, art, and music publications—as could be seen from the notices in the British press—were quite successful, and as many as 2—3,000 copies of one or another were ordered. We must extend this common work to the field of belles-lettres too—this is now the most important task. In this sphere it is above all the firm of Collet's which has given us help up till now, but we believe that other publishers would be interested in the works of Hungarian literature, both past and present. I think we cannot reconcile ourselves to the fact that there is no modern English edition of Petöfi, that no English versions of the poetry of Ady or Attila József, or of the novels of Móricz have appeared—to quote only a few examples.

There is one state publishing house in Great Britain, the Stationary Office, which issues the official and educational publications of the various ministries; the rest are private publishers. There are many false conceptions in British publishing circles about the publishing houses of the People's Democracies just because they are state-owned. Typical of this was that, when in

one discussion I brought up the work of the International Publishers' Association, Sir Stanley Unwin, the honorary president of the association found it necessary to stress that the publishing houses of the Peoples Democracies could not become members of the organization because they were not independent. In our opinion, the independence of the capitalist publishers is very restricted indeed and is subordinated to the interests of bourgeois society, in particular of various capitalist groups. *The Times Literary Supplement* in its issue of September 9, 1960, wrote that even the old, comparatively liberal publishers are becoming more and more dependent on the trusts which rule the press and book publishing. As far

as the freedom and independence of our own publishers is concerned, we never deny that our book publishing stands at the service of a socialist society, and we feel that in doing so it serves a noble aim—that of Hungary's and mankind's future.

On freedom, on independence and on many other questions our views differ, but all this need not obstruct our common efforts to make known in Hungary the real cultural values of the British people and in Britain the real cultural values of the Hungarian people. This work has been going on for many years in our country, and we hope that British publishers will also give their support to these aims.

BÉLA KÖPECZI

SIR AUREL STEIN AND HIS LEGACY

In recent months growing interest has been evinced in Hungarian scientific circles as well as on the part of the well-read public in the person and life-work of Sir Aurel Stein, the renowned Hungarian-born orientalist. The printed part of his bequest to the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, sent to Hungary three years ago, is now available for research at the Academy library; a paper surveying his scientific work and his bequest to the Academy* was published recently by this institution; Hungarian scholars are making preparations for the hundredth anniversary of his birth in 1962. In view of the close ties of Sir Aurel Stein to the English world of science, the paper published below—from the pen of a leading authority on the subject—may claim the interest of our readers.—The Editor.

It stands to reason that in Hungary, after a century and a half of Turkish occupation and the subsequent oppression by the Hapsburgs, the cultivation of the sciences, including orientalism, on a European level is of considerably more recent standing than in Great Britain. Still, it has been one of the characteristic features

of this belated and modest Hungarian orientalism that during the short period since the eighteenth century several Hungarian orientalists have been able to do work that has proved to be useful even to remote England, patron of the sciences.

* Rásonyi, L.: *Stein Aurél és hagyatéka* (Sir Aurel Stein and His Legacy) Budapest, 1960, (Publicationes Bibliothecae Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae, No. 18.)

¹ As regards America an Oxonian of Hungarian descent was mentioned as early as in the sixteenth century as Stephanus Parmenius Budaëus who with the aid of Richard Hakluyt became the companion and chronicler of Humphrey Gilbert on his travels.

I wish to refer here to John Uri (1724—1796) who, in addition to other works, published the first comprehensive catalogue of the oriental manuscripts at the Bodleian Library in 1787, a pioneer action of great importance.² Ármin Vámbéry (1832—1913), a leading Turcologist in his day also had a good name in English literature on Central Asia.³ A prominent place must be given in this connection to three Hungarians linked by mutual respect for one another and by their love of India. The first is Sándor Körösi Csoma (1784—1842), member and librarian of the Asiatic Society of Bengal and pioneer of Tibetan philology. Tivadar Duka (1825—1908) is the second.⁴ A persecuted officer after the suppression of the 1848—1849 Hungarian War of Independence, he entered Anglo-Indian army service, where he rose to the rank of a surgeon-colonel; later—after 1877—he took up journalism in London. Sir Aurel Stein is the third. He often mentioned Körösi Csoma⁵ and became the biographer of his old friend Duka.⁶

Aurel Stein (originally Mark Aurel after his uncle Mark Stein) was born on November 26, 1862, in Budapest. He came of a wealthy merchant family. His maternal uncle was an eminent physician, and the son of his brother, Ernest Stein (1891—1945), became professor at the University of Louvain and an excellent historian of the declining age of antiquity. After grammar school years in Dresden and Budapest,

he pursued his studies in Indology and Iranistics—on the basis of an annually renewed state scholarship—at the universities of Vienna, Leipzig and Thübingen, and was awarded his doctor's degree at the latter. In 1884 and 1885 he continued his studies in London, Oxford and Cambridge. It was from Trinity College that he sent home a paper in Hungarian on the religion of ancient Persia. He then returned home for service in the Officers' Training Corps organized at the Budapest Military Academy, which he completed with top qualification. It was here that he acquired the thorough knowledge of topography and mapping which was to enable him later on to become the greatest cartographer of Central-Asia.

1887 was again spent for the greater part in London. The diary-like notes in his calendar (Smith's Post Diary and Almanac, 1887) give an interesting insight into the beginnings of the young scientist's career. To quote but a few sentences: 6 May 1887: Went to B[ritish] M[useum] after lunch, then to R[oyal] A[siatic] S[ociety], where I heard from Miss Gailles that Sir H. Rawlinson had enquired about me.—7 May: Went to see Sir Henry at 12.10 ... Showed greatest kindness and the grace of a true Grand Seigneur towards me. Would be glad if I called occasionally ... Left his house in high spirits ... 19 June: Went [to dine] to Sir H. Rawlinson at 8 [P. M.], was introduced to Lady R., then to Sir Henry Mallet ... lead Miss Bouverie to table ... 3 Aug.: Called on Sir H. Rawl. at 10.45, mentioned to him my Indian plans; he expressed his interest in furthering my objects."

Soon after his arrival in Bombay on December 12, 1887, his appointment as head of the Lahore Oriental College was handed him on December 31. Over a period of more than eleven years Lahore was to be Stein's home (1888 to 1899). He found himself in a milieu where the names of his native town and of several of

² John Uri (The Bodleian Quarterly Record V, 1927, pp. 212—13).

³ Arminius Vámbéry. His Life and Adventures, 9th Ed. London, 1914.

⁴ Theodore Duka, Life and Works of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös. Trübner, London, 1885.

⁵ E. g. "How often, looking down from my favourite Alpine camp (that is Mohand Marg) in Kashmir into the verdant Sind Valley, some 5,000 feet below me, have I thought of the poor Hungarian wanderer as he passed here in 1822, and again a year later, on his way to Leh, the chief place of Western Tibet!"

⁶ M. Aurel Stein, In Memoriam Theodore Duka. Oxford, 1914. (Privately printed.)

his compatriots were not unknown. A honorary diploma dating from the eighties and issued by the Punjab of Anjuman may be quoted here: "... all glory to the town of Budapest and to the Hungarian nation for having given birth" ... to A. Csoma de Kőrös and to Dr. W. G. Leitner, "the most successful educationist and originator and organizer of institutions, such as the Punjab University and the Oriental College." Here in Lahore and in Srinagar, Stein came to know and to win the sympathies of such prominent Pandits as Govind Kaul; and here, too, he acquired his best friends. In 1892 he made the acquaintance of Lionel Charles Dunsterville,⁷ a gallant young officer and writer, through their mutual friend Zsigmond Justh,⁸ then on a visit to India. Dunsterville's book *Stalky's Reminiscences* (London, 1928) was dedicated to Stein with the words, "To Sir Aurel Stein, a friend of 35 years and the instigator of this book." On page 110 of the book he wrote "... a kindly providence furnished me with a lifelong friend. Providence had to bring my Hungarian friend all the way from Buda-Pesth to the Punjab just to perform this task, because normally, professors of universities and disreputable subalterns seldom meet."—In 1897, a new professor of history, Percy Stafford Allen⁹, came to Lahore Government College. First he stayed with the F. H. Andrewses,¹⁰ then with Stein at

Mayo Lodge. "And so started one of the truest friendships," wrote Mary Allen, who in 1939 published the correspondence of her late husband.—"The bulk of the letters," she said in the foreword, "are to Sir Aurel Stein. This correspondence began in 1901 and was carried on with faithful devotion for over thirty years. The weekly letter, written under various conditions, in the train, on the steamer, in the British Museum ... followed Sir Aurel Stein in all his wanderings. More remarkable still, these hurried greetings were kept safely by Sir Aurel amid the difficulties of a life continually on the move ... Most remarkable of all, in spite of long marches ending at midnight, or of dust-laden days of excavation in the desert, these letters were answered with never failing regularity."

The third among Stein's best friends was Thomas Walker Arnold. The most prominent English Islamologist of his time, the congenial translator of "Little Flowers of St. Francis," he was called by his friends "The Saint." Professor at the College of Aligarh from 1888, he too became a professor at the Lahore Government College in 1898.¹¹ It was about him that P. S. Allen wrote to Stein on June 11, 1930, that his expected return from Istanbul never took place because he succumbed to a heart attack. "Here is Helen's last letter from him, dated 8 May from Cairo, and its last words are about you: 'The General [that was how Allen and Arnold spoke of Stein] has kept me in touch with his movements over the face of the earth, and it is pleasant to think he can embark with such zeal on a new adventure.'"

Stein's most important contribution to Sanskritism—the exemplary critical edition and translation of the *Kālhāna Rājatarangini*, the chronicle of the ancient kings of Kashmir (Bombay, 1892, Westminster,

⁷ L. Ch. Dunsterville (1865—1946) was a school-fellow of Kipling's and the hero of his "Stalky & Co."

The obituary on Sir Aurel Stein in the Royal Central Asian Journal was written by him.

⁸ Sydney Carton, Justh Zsigmond. Napkelet, 1923.

⁹ P. S. Allen (1869—1933), the greatest authority on Erasmus, member of the British Academy and, at the end of his life, President of Corpus Christi College.

¹⁰ J. H. Andrews was at that time Principal of the School of Art in Lahore. He was a well-known art historian. As Stein's friend and collaborator he spent nearly 40 years working up the findings of his expeditions.

¹¹ The British Academy's obituary on Th. W. Arnold was written by Sir Aurel Stein: In Memoriam Thomas Walker Arnold 1864—1930. London, 1932. Proceedings XVIII.

1900)—had been conceived, among a large number of minor studies,¹³ in the brilliant intellectual atmosphere of Lahore. It was from Lahore too that Stein set out on his first voyages to explore the antiquities of Kashmir and later of Bihar, and on his expedition to Buner. These voyages served as excellent preliminary training for the great Central Asian expeditions which he embarked on after a short interim period spent in Calcutta during 1899 as Principal of the Moslem University.

Rich as the first half of the twentieth century was in discoveries of extreme importance in the field of archaeology and cultural history, there were few areas that threw so much light on the dark ages as Chinese Turkestan (Sin Kiang). Sir Aurel Stein did the lion's share in these explorations, devoting to them the most fruitful decades of his active life. It was in the midnineties that his attention was drawn to the Tarim basin, where the rivers rising from glaciers at altitudes of 7,000 metres get lost in the Takla Makan desert, after having supplied with water the oasis cities—at present but a few compared to the great number in ancient times. For thousands of years caravans had touched at these oases on their routes between the Orient and Occident, and the ancient cities had played an important role in the exchange of Eastern and Western cultural treasures. Under the influence of the immigrating Turkish races in the course of the sixth and seventh centuries, the population became Turkish and the territory came to be called Turkestan. At the end of the nineteenth century, fifteen-hundred-year-old Sanskrit manuscript rolls were brought to India from Kucha and Khotan, while in 1896 Sven Hedin discovered the ruins of a city in the south-east of the desert. It was at this time that the idea of conducting regular archaeological expeditions to

the Tarim basin—and principally to the Khotan region—was first discussed by Stein with European experts. In 1898, when the Russian academician Klementz undertook a minor expedition to the Turfan region on the northern margin of the basin, Stein's definite plans were also ready. The Viceroy, Lord Curzon, himself an outstanding scholar of Oriental geography, showed great understanding for the project, and so it was with the backing of the Indian Government that Stein was able to set out from Kashmir on May 29, 1900.

The first expedition, of a year's duration, was concerned primarily with the discovery and exploration of the fields of ruins at Khotan, Niya, Keriya, Endere, Rawak—sand-buried cities deserted in the fourth century (Sand-buried Ruins of Khotan, London, 1903; *Ancient Khotan, I-II*, Oxford, 1907).

On his return to India, Stein for a short time held the post of Inspector of the Schools in the Punjab, but on his second expedition—the expenses of which were covered by the Government of India and the British Museum—he went as Archaeological Surveyor. The voyage, whose principal stages were Loulan, Miran, and Tun-hwang, lasted from April 1906 to January 1909. In Tun-hwang his attention was held by the frescoes in the cave temples known under the collective name of "The Halls of the Thousand Buddhas," and by the discovery of an immensely valuable collection of manuscripts. To Tivadar Duka in London he wrote: "This place has come up to my expectations; I know how pleased Lóczy will be¹³ . . . for he was the first to speak to me about these cave temples and their manuscripts." At this time he identified the westernmost remnants of the Great

¹³ For a bibliography embracing to some extent also the minor papers of the life-work of Sir Aurel Stein, see Rásonyi, L., *op. c.*

¹³ Lajos Lóczy (1849—1920), geographer and professor of geology, member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, director of the Geological Institute. As a member of Count Béla Széchenyi's Central and East Asian expedition he also visited the region of Tun-hwang.

Chinese Wall along the Su-lo-ho River, up to Khara-Nor. In the course of the expeditions—mostly in the hot summer months—he mapped the mountain ranges of Kuenlun and Nan Shan with their numerous precipices and glaciers. While on his way back to India, towards the end of his journey, his frozen toes had to be amputated at Leh. (Ruins of Desert Cathay, I-II, London, Macmillan, 1912; *Serindia. Detailed Report, I-V*, Oxford, 1921). For his third expedition he was able to secure the support of the Secretary of State for India on the condition that the finds would be lodged at a museum to be established in New Delhi. The most important stages of this voyage, which lasted from July, 1913 to March, 1916, were Domoko, Niya, Miran, Loulan, Tun-hwang, Karakhoto. To recover from the injuries suffered in a grave and nearly fatal accident, he was compelled to take a rest at Kanchow. Then, still half crippled, he continued his way to explore first the oases of Turfan and Murtuk and afterwards, having crossed the Pamirs, the ruins of Kuh-i-Kwadja in the East-Persian province of Sistan, and finally the line of the "Parthian Limes" of antiquity. (Innermost Asia. Detailed Report of Explorations in Central Asia, Kan-su and Eastern Iran, I-IV. Oxford, 1928. "To the Memory of General Sir Henry Rawlinson".)

In the course of his three expeditions¹⁴ Stein covered a route of approximately 25,000 miles. His self-sacrificing exertions and the quality and quantity of his achievements as a geographer and a cartographer,

earned him membership in various distinguished geographical societies and their most complimentary awards, such as the Founder's Medal of the Royal Geographical Society (received in 1909) and the Lóczy Medal of the Hungarian Geographical Society.

His merits are, however, still greater in the domains of archaeology and cultural history. The significance of his discoveries is reflected in such distinctions as the Drexel Medal of Pennsylvania University, the Julien Prize of the Académie des Inscriptions, the conferment of the Knight Commandership of the Order of the Indian Empire, the election to membership of the British Academy (1921) and the Russian Academy of Sciences (1925). As early as 1919, Vincent A. Smith declared that "the mass of material brought home from all the three expeditions is so enormous that it may be said that work on it will never be finished . . . Scores of experts may work at the hundreds of cases for generations without exhausting the subject." (YRAS, 1919, p. 60.)

The third phase of Stein's work was yet to come in the next two decades. As shown above, the first phase centered around the problems of the archaeology and the historical geography of Northern India. The investigations of the second phase were concerned with the routes and the cultural ties between India and China as expressed by the term "Serindia." The central problems of the third phase, the ancient links between India (Mohenjo Daro) and Asia Minor (especially Mesopotamia), are closely connected with those of the second phase.

Having, in the course of his "happiest wanderings" (1926) in the territory of the upper reaches of the rivers Swat and Indus, and in the region of the Pir-sar mountain ridges, cleared the circumstances of Alexander the Great's Indian campaign and the location—till then still unknown—of the rock fortress of Aornos (On Alexander's

¹⁴ A summary of the events and results of the three great expeditions was given by Sir Aurel Stein himself in his lectures delivered at the invitation of Harvard University. On *Ancient Central Asian Tracks. Brief Narrative of Three Expeditions*. London, Macmillan, 1933.—For a shorter survey see: *Archaeological Explorations in Central Asia* in the volume "A Revealing of India's Past," 1939, pp. 172—198. A still more concise presentation, but giving the bibliography on the subject, may be found in Rásonyi, op. c.

Track to the Indus, London, 1929, *etc.*), he proceeded to explore still more ancient links between the Orient and the Occident. With the assistance of the British Museum, Harvard University, the British School of Iraq, the Persian Government and others, Stein in the years between 1915 and 1931 led seven expeditions to more or less unexplored and archaeologically unknown territories in Baluchistan, Southern and Western Iran, Iraq and Syria. The bulky volumes of his great works based on the results of these journeys (Archaeological Reconnaissances in North-Western India and South-Eastern Iran. London, Macmillan, 1937; furthermore: Old Routes of Western Iran, London, Macmillan, 1940), together with innumerable smaller papers are an important contribution to our knowledge regarding the routes of the wanderings and cultures of ancient peoples, up to the Roman Limes losing itself in the sands of the desert. From the Chinese Wall to the Roman Wall!

Sir Aurel Stein spent his last years in his beloved India. In 1940 he searched for the bed of the Sarasvati, the great river of the Vedas; the years 1941 and 1942 he spent in tracing the route of Hsien-tchang and Fa-hien, two Chinese pilgrims of the sixth and fifth centuries, into India over the wild ravines at the upper reaches of the Indus, where no European had ever set foot before, along "the route of the hanging chains," and through mountain passes at an altitude of five thousand metres. He was eighty years old at the time. "The scrambles along precipitous mountain sides are a bit fatiguing," he wrote during his journey. At last, while exploring the ruins of ancient Gedrosia situated between the rivers Hab and Porali, he elucidated the geographical circumstances of Alexander the Great's retreat. On October 15, 1943, he still wrote to his friend C. E. W. Oldham a letter full of plans for a minor expedition to Afghanistan, and remarked that he was feeling "very fit." Eleven days later, at the zenith of his

fame and in full possession of his faculties, he died in Kabul on October 26, and was laid to rest there.

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To write a monograph on the life and work of Sir Aurel Stein constitutes an attractive but difficult task, and he who undertakes it will have to follow Stein's tracks not only in Britain but in Hungary and in India as well. For sixty years he was a philologist, and for fifty years an explorer in the fields of archaeology and geography. The world opened up before him, and he presented the world with keys to the mysteries of thousands of years, of ancient cultures vanished long ago. The vast material he collected is housed in the museums of London, Delhi, Calcutta, Lahore, at the Harvard University and in Iran. No disease, no grave accident or amputation, nothing was able to deter him from carrying out the projects he had set his heart on. To quote from the obituary written by his old friend C. E. W. Oldham:

"Stein was exceptionally endowed by study and character for work on exploration. Rare linguistic attainments; familiarity, aided by a remarkable retentive memory, with all previous relevant records; careful planning in every detail; economy of time, labour and expenditure; an almost uncanny flair for grasping topographical features influencing human movement and settlement: tenacity of purpose; instinctive tact in dealing with men of all races; a wiry physique and indefatigable energy of body and brain; accuracy of observation and discernment in inference, and meticulous attention to accuracy of detail in recording results—all contributed to his pre-eminent success.

"Sir Aurel Stein will be mourned by a host of friends in many lands, and by none more deeply than by those hardy, brave, and devoted Indian and Pathan surveyors who were his *sole* assistants in his journeys." (Journal of the Royal Asian Society, 1944:86).

A survey of his bequest also reveals Sir Aurel Stein's high appreciation for the beauties of poetry and nature. Suffice it to point out that among his books there were, for instance, three different editions of Horace. In one of them the following note was found: "In ripis Hydaspis ... gravi vulnere aegrotantis Solatium fuit iste libellus in montibus Sericis Nan-shan." Similarly, his libraries both in London and India, and also the books that accompanied him on his travels, included "The Little Flowers of St. Francis." His favourite poets were János Arany, Goethe, and Kipling.

As evidenced also by his bequest, his was a grateful disposition, the unconditional bequest of his books gave emphatic expression to his devotion.

At the session of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences on January 30, 1922, where Count Pál Teleki, the eminent geographer—later Prime Minister—read a paper on the concept of *Serindia*, a recently received letter from Sir Aurel Stein was read out by the head-librarian, Kálmán Szily: "To think of the fine library of the Academy brings back many a cherished souvenir of my youth. In the few years spent in my native town as a grammar-school student, I often visited its reading-room. Outside my paternal home the most pleasant hours were spent there; it witnessed my first steps in the study of Orientalism, my first efforts to grasp Sanskrit grammar, etc.; as the years went by, I often received useful advice and encouragement from my benevolent old friend, the late Pál Hunfalvy.

"Thus the bequest of my books to the library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in the will I made several years ago does not require any particular motivation. They form a rather modest collection of about two-thousand volumes, mainly on Indian and Central Asian philology and archaeology. I wonder whether they will be of much use to the library. However, I have taken measures to ensure that—when

the time comes—the books should reach Budapest free of any expense, and that no stipulation whatever should hinder the Academy in disposing for its own benefit of the books it does not wish to retain." (Bulletin of the Academy 1922:38.)

The pertinent clause of his will published in 1944 (cf. Times, March 29, 1944: Wills and Bequests) reads as follows "I give all my books (other than those selected as hereinafter provided) to the Hungarian Academy of Sciences at Budapest, to be added to its library in token of my grateful remembrance of the help I received from the latter as student and of the encouragement which the Academy accorded me as one of its members."

The smaller part of this legacy arrived in Budapest as early as 1924, while the bulk—thanks to the generous aid of the competent British authorities—reached Budapest in 1957. It contains about 3,600 books and off-prints, four fifths of which have been incorporated in the Oriental Department of the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Most of the material has since been worked up.

Sir Aurel Stein's method of collecting books was not that of the bibliophile who acquires a book for its own sake and who, seeking completeness, will buy books without any intention of reading them only to see them on his shelf. Sir Aurel Stein was the greatest wanderer our century has known—beside Sven Hedin—and for many decades he spent the whole of each year, or the greater part of it, on travels. His time "at home" was itself divided among several homes (Mohand Marg, Srinagar, London, Oxford). Obviously he only acquired the works he needed for studies connected with his expeditions—at least, when he did not receive them "with the author's compliments." As his fame and prestige grew, the number of the latter rapidly increased, especially, of course, from authors with whom he had most in common as regards problems and field of exploration.

Thus it is easy to understand that in his library many works of several volumes were incomplete. A case in point is the nine-volume work "Southern Tibet," giving an account of the results of Sven Hedin's expeditions, only the eighth volume of which can be found, for the obvious reason of its extreme importance from the point of view of Central Asian historical geography. Or take "The Cambridge History of India": the collection includes only the first of the six volumes, because the others do not deal with problems that interested Stein. The more comprehensive, on the other hand, is the material covering his special field of interest, dating predominantly from the period between 1910 and 1940. Among the authors of the books and off-prints dedicated to Stein, the authorities of the above-mentioned period on Central Asia, Iranistics and Indology are represented almost without exception: Hedin, Filippi, Nansen, Trinkler, Chavannes, Pelliot, Sylvain Lévi, Konow, Kozlov, Oldenburg, V. Thomsen, Le Coq, Grünwedel, Bang, Markwart, A. Herrmann, Giles, Thomas, Grierson, Herzfeld, Francke, *etc.* A great part of the material has therefore found its way to the present-day Oriental Department of the Library

of the Hungarian Academy and even to the bookcases of the reference library. This is the most decisive criterion for determining the importance of the material. These books are badly needed in consequence of the widening scope of Hungarian Orientalism in the course of the last decades. Since the Lahore years of Stein there have been other Hungarians working in India. For instance, Gyula Germanus, an eminent scholar of Islamic cultural history, or Ervin Baktay, author of "The Art of India" (Budapest, 1958). Meanwhile, the East Asian Museum—housing also Indian material—was founded in Budapest, thanks to the generosity of Ferenc Hopp and to the work of Zoltán F. Takáts. Finally, teams of Hungarian researchers, composed of former pupils of Lajos Ligeti and of Gyula Németh, are beginning to participate in the study of Central Asia and its relations with the East and the West. So Sir Aurel Stein's bequest—both the books and the moral and spiritual legacy—is all the more welcome to Hungarian orientalists, providing as it does the means and guidance for students to pursue their activities in the spirit characteristic of Stein's entire life-work.

LÁSZLÓ RÁSONY

POLYTECHNICAL TRAINING IN THE BUDAPEST GRAMMAR SCHOOLS

I

In recent years the Hungarian school system has had to face important tasks, among others also in the field of practical education. To the British reader the related problems may not be unknown, as in British public schools and, for that matter, in a number of French secondary schools experiments in this line are of long standing. In fact, in most British educational insti-

tutions as well as in the college system this work has already important traditions.

In Hungary both past neglect and present exigencies give the solution of the problem an urgent actuality. The aims are identical with those propounded in the debate launched by C. P. Snow, though on a higher level. What is meant here is a synthesis in the practical domain of the two types of education, the humanistic and the technical.

Two of the many reasons which, apart from past backwardness, make this problem so fundamentally important may perhaps be mentioned here.

First: At the UNESCO conference at Sèvres it was stated that "humanity has entered upon a stage of tremendous scientific and technical progress." In our age the understanding of automation, of supersonic flight and of the spaceship forms part of the education of mankind. It was the intention of their inventors too that the greater part of the community should be able to grasp their substance. The notion of general culture has, as a consequence of the unparalleled progress in technology and science, undergone a fundamental change. He who does not understand the principles of the radio and of colour television has no claim anymore to be termed a man of culture, though he may speak two languages, be well-read in Vergil, Dickens or Petőfi, and may know Gay-Lussac's law,

The second aspect is also of world-wide significance. With school no more than a kind of glass-house, the young people brought up at its desks will remain ignorant of the means by which mankind lives; they will not get to know how and by whom the goods are produced which serve the purposes of human society. This point of view was up to now missing from secondary school education, and the reforms needed to acquaint the students with the experiences of work and production have been long overdue.

The first experiments started a few years ago. Two hours of practical technical training were inserted in the curriculum of a number of Budapest grammar schools. In addition, visits to industrial plants were envisaged and organized to acquaint the students with technological processes. These visits had much in common with the school excursions of earlier periods. The difference, if any, consisted in the fact that it was now a new type of industrial worker, able to think and willing to learn, an up-to-date machinery, and a planned production the

students came in contact with, even if only as spectators. The two hours of physical work were, in fact, no more than an agreeable pastime, a pottering, with no plan and little profit.

Later on, with the lack of practical education making itself felt more and more in practice, the Ministry of Education allotted to the individual schools the task of finding the best methods by way of experiment. This was how it began all over the country. One Szeged grammar school found it best to occupy the students in the school's own workshops. Another grammar school of the same town sent even the first-form students to work in industrial plants. A third school, in Szentes, finally worked out the method which was to prove the most practicable. Its experiments led to the conclusion that the weekly two hours were insufficient. It set aside a whole day each week for the purpose, condensing the theoretical studies, with some modifications and omissions, into five days. This initiative has by now become known throughout the country as the 5 + 1 system. Its essential feature is that the students spend five days at school and one day partly in the school workshops, partly in industrial or agricultural enterprises. To give an adequate theoretical foundation to this practical work, two of the total of five hours a week are devoted to the discussion of theoretical questions connected with the practical work.

About a year ago, in September 1960, the report of the governmental commission in charge of working out the proposals for school reform was published. It made unmistakably clear that in the commission's view the first and fundamental principle of reform ought to be to establish a closer relation between the schools on the one hand and the realities of life, of daily practical work on the other. All over the country hundreds of thousands took part in the public discussion on school reform, and these discussions proved, among other things, that the majority of the population approved of

the introduction of the $5 + 1$ system in the grammar schools.

Let us now get a closer view of this technical training, as put into practice in the long-established Budapest grammar school bearing the name of István I.

2

For nearly half a century the old building of the "István I" Grammar School has been a stronghold of humanist culture. Year by year B. A. s to-be, students well versed in Latin and in calculus, had left its walls.

To this day Latin, mathematics and such branches of the Humanities as are required in a grammar school, are still being taught here. However, it is certainly not by accident that the principal, Gyula Konoroth, whose subjects are history and geography, is to be seen more frequently in the workshops than in his own office. Just now we find him there, in the metal workshop.

This morning it is occupied by the first-form students. Two boys are busy at coating a metal stand; it is intended for the physics laboratory. Two other young men in smocks are working at the grinding machine; one of them, squatting on his heels, controls the revolutions of the machine, while the other directs the working process.

Continuing our walk through the school, we avoid this time the classrooms where the teaching of literature, history or Latin, though certainly full of novel and interesting aspects, essentially follows its traditional course. Let us rather keep to the workrooms.

When we arrive in the chemistry class, experimenting is in full swing, with sixteen to eighteen first-form boys participating. This is only one half of the form, the rest work here in the afternoon. The boys are given the task of performing—through the application of methods previously learned about in theory—the qualitative analysis of the various liquids poured into their test tubes by their teacher. With locks falling over the eyes in excitement, some are consulting their notes to find

an answer to the great question: What does the test tube contain? There is bound to be some disappointment, for—as Professor Eötvös informs us discreetly—one or two of the test tubes contain nothing more than distilled water. We wonder whether the young men will be able to detect this educational *pia fraus*.

Next to the laboratory the walls of a smaller room are covered with photographs in colour as well as in black and white. On the table: chemicals, photographic utensils, magnifiers in great disorder. This is the room of the photographic study circle, consisting of twenty-five young amateur photographers who come here regularly to develop and to copy their films. This study circle too is headed by Professor Eötvös, a passionate photographer himself. It is here that he spends his leisure moments, developing and enlarging his photographs, and a number of successful pictures bear testimony to his good eye, his skill—and his three excellent cameras.

In the electric laboratory a multitude of instruments awaits us: signal and sound generators, a number of precision micrometers, four valuable oscilloscopes. One of the latter was prepared by the factory on a special order from the school. Another pride of this laboratory is their precision lathe, carefully concealed under its covering. A cupboard houses about a dozen radio sets—no superhet receivers, true, mere $2 + 1$ valve ones, but all of them have been assembled here by the boys themselves.

The principal, a pedagogue of characteristically humanistic erudition, shows us the instruments:

"This instrument panel is entirely the work of our boys, and they are about to make seven more."

In addition, they have an engine fitting shop, with a discarded motorcar, most suitable for study purposes, a motor-cycle, and an outworn old tractor. Another workshop—the most important one, though it has no spectacular machines, nor sparkling

instruments, nor translucent chemicals, only a few work-benches and hand tools—is the joiner's shop. This is where the most valuable things are fabricated by the students. There is a monumental double-bass case on the table; wooden music stands are on top of the cupboard.

"Our boys have made forty-five of them," the principal informs us.

"To what purpose? To be sold?"

"Oh, no! For our own orchestra."

Now I remember the poster which caught my eye when I entered the door. It was an invitation to a concert of the school orchestra. Their program contained Bartók's *Four Slovak Folk-songs*, variations on Kodály's *Fölszállott a páva* (The Peacock has Flown) and Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. Outdoor concerts are also being organized for the industrial works and the other schools of the district.

3

What we saw in the "István I" Grammar School has been christened "polytechnization." The choice of our visit fell on this particular school because here the tasks we are striving to realize have already been tackled, and that in the most characteristic form. This does not mean that this school is being used for window-dressing; similar solutions may be found in many other Budapest grammar schools. As a matter of fact, polytechnization in some way or other has already been introduced in all of our secondary schools, particularly in the lower forms. But the "István I" Grammar School was the first to start the experiment five years ago.

To continue our survey, the workshops described above afford a preliminary practice to technical training. The first-formers acquire here a basic skill and an elementary knowledge of technique—a thing that could be done in a factory only with some difficulty, owing to the continuous and planned character of the productive process. In most cases the factories would be unable to take

charge of this type of training, which must be the task of the school workshop or—where available—of the plant's training or apprentice shop. (Incidentally the pupils are given the opportunity to acquire some basic knowledge of technology already at the primary school level, where in the four upper forms two hours weekly are devoted to practical training.) Of course not every school has as yet been equipped with workshops, if only for lack of space. Besides, not all branches of production require preliminary training at school. Not to speak of the fact that to this day there are pedagogues who hold the view that the school workshop should be by-passed and training start directly at the factory. In the textile industry, e. g., even the most elementary training calls for at least one loom, but to equip every school with one would be asking too much. Likewise, printing could hardly be demonstrated at school. The first steps must in such cases be made at the plants themselves, and the latter must take upon themselves the handicap that in the first months the students are more of a liability than an asset to production.

The teaching staff of the "István I" Grammar School has, however, made its choice from those branches which lend themselves to preliminary school training. The system is already well established. There are five parallel first forms. Form A specializes in the wood industry, with training at the joinery. Form B's interest is directed towards the chemical industry, and its territory, in the first year, is the school laboratory. Form C is allotted the domain of electronics; its training takes place in the electronic laboratory, while Form D works in the electrician's shop and receives a three-year training in the profession of electrician. Finally, Form E is assigned to the engine fitting shop, where a basic knowledge of the engine is acquired. The choice of branch is, of course, made by the boys and their parents, in the first year.

Last year's first-formers are now going

to work in factories, one day a week. The first-formers of the current year will go to the same factories next year. In accordance with their preliminary training, the pupils of Form A go to the Duna furniture Works, those of Form B to a fine chemicals factory, those of C to the Factory of Electronic Measuring Instruments, of D to the Telephone Works, and of E to a motorcar repair shop. In these up-to-date plants the boys are given the opportunity to get acquainted with a highly developed large-scale technology and become part of a planned productive process. This is also significant from the pedagogic point of view. The students, once familiar with modern technology, can put their knowledge of the natural sciences to practical advantage, while at the same time performing socially useful work. In this way they come to see simultaneously the sense and the result of their activities.

The school and the factory enter into a contract, according to which the latter undertakes the expert training of the students in manual work as well as the two-hours' theoretical instruction; it also assumes the responsibility of protecting the students against accidents. In some cases overalls are also provided for by the factory, and even a certain amount of wages is paid.

The teaching staff of the grammar school is already in a position to assess some of the results of this system. The students are not only gaining in dexterity, their intelligence is also developing in the process of tending complicated machinery, of learning to master the tricks of the trade. Their discipline too is improving at the plant, where they quickly realize that any breach of discipline may result not in simple admonition but in an accident. Their sense of responsibility is bound to be enhanced when they are made to feel that they are personally responsible for some engine or some piece of furniture. It would take long, indeed, to enumerate all the good qualities which, at least in their germs, are generated and de-

veloped in the students through their contacts with the factory, the engineers, the skilled workers—qualities which the school must try to make use of. If a number of students working in one group assume the responsibility for the performance of a certain common task, the same sense of mutual responsibility may reasonably be expected to evolve in their regular school work too. Or, if it paid at the factory to rack one's brains for some more rational solution in a working process, the students will be quick to realize that in studying mathematics or foreign languages there is also ample occasion for thought and that here too it may pay to find some new approach. They will acquire the courage to overcome difficulties in learning just as they did at the factory.

But the reverse also holds true. Those students who have systematically sharpened their wits in the grammar of foreign languages, in the application of the laws of physics, in the logic of mathematical processes, will generally prove more skilful at the factory. This dual influence, in its innumerable aspects, is now the subject of experimentation at the "István I" Grammar School and at the other schools. It will be some years, however, before a full evaluation of the results and effects becomes possible.

At this juncture the question may arise as to what will be the future of these boys? Are they all to become chemists, mechanics, joiners or engine fitters? This will certainly not be the case. The purpose of modern polytechnization is to give the grammar-school student a training in some special line, based on a broad polytechnical basis, and to devote one day each week entirely to this task. The professional lines selected at the "István I" Grammar School are eminently suited to achieving this. Besides, there is another advantage: the training received at the factory puts the student in a position to qualify as a skilled worker within but a few months, if he chooses to enter that particular trade upon graduation.

However, it is up to each student to de-

cide for himself what to do after graduation. Some will grow fond of the factory and will find a job there, while others will regard their training in manual work as the base for further studies, for instance in the technical field. But even those will profit who intend to study at a university faculty relatively far removed from manual work. The effects on their human attitude and on their dexterity of this combined training at school and in the factory will accompany them to the end of their lives.

4

The grammar-school system of technical training as outlined above is now in the process of being developed and is not only meeting with general interest and approval, but also receiving much assistance from the community. It now has the approval even of the majority of those parents who at first were reluctant to let their children work in the factory, as a result, perhaps, of some aristocratic prejudice from the past.

The cooperation of the factories is very active indeed, prompted as they are not only by their understanding of the exigencies of the time but also by the wish to secure a large part of their supply of qualified workers from the ranks of young people graduating from grammar school.

A similar interest in the problem of polytechnical training manifests itself on the part of agricultural plants and tractor stations, cooperative and state farms. In the wake of mechanization the need for highly qualified specialists is steadily growing in agriculture. Several schools even on the outskirts of Budapest have responded by turning their interest not towards the factories but towards agriculture. Their students are working in the fields and on tractors, and the aim is to give them a good preliminary knowledge of agriculture.

Of course nothing like all the problems of polytechnization are resolved as yet. The polytechnical training of girls, for instance, still needs a lot of hard thinking, though

there are some interesting initiatives in this direction too. The schools are intent on seeking out the more suitable, more feminine lines. For example, at the co-educational Madách Grammar School in Budapest, one group of girls is working at a big hospital, where they are being prepared for the nurse's profession. Another group is getting acquainted with the pharmaceutical industry. A girls' grammar school in the centre of Budapest has established friendly contacts with an up-to-date printing office in the neighbourhood, where the girls perform useful work in various interesting sectors of typography. Again in some girls' grammar schools the training is commercial rather than industrial, and the practical work is done in various stores.

A further problem is that of instructors. The schools are, of course, anxious to secure the cooperation of the best skilled workers, but this is no easy task, since being skilled at their trade does not necessarily make them good teachers. To remedy these shortcomings, a study group of Budapest pedagogues is organizing educational courses for the workers in charge of the students' technical training. The schools, on the other hand, invite these same workers to take part in the activities of the teaching staff. In school conferences these workers are thus in a position to give their opinion on the progress and behaviour of the students at work.

Just as the workshops at the "István I" Grammar School, notwithstanding their success and interest, are actually still in the stage of experimentation, so the term "experimentation" can be applied to polytechnical training as a whole. The experiences gained so far go a long way, nevertheless, towards proving that the essential, the basic idea is sound and up-to-date. The appropriate modern methods are at present beginning to take shape in the Hungarian secondary schools.

ISTVÁN GÁBOR

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

ERDEI, Ferenc (b. 1910). Agrarian economist. Kossuth Prize Academician, General Secretary of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences since 1958. In 1934 he joined the incipient sociographic movement for village research. Erdi was a leader of the left wing of the National Peasant Party, formed in 1939. In 1945 he became its vice president and then its general secretary. He was Minister for Internal Affairs of the Provisional National Government formed on the already liberated territory of Hungary on December 20, 1944, then Minister of State in 1948, Minister of Agriculture from 1949 to 1953, Minister of Justice in 1953 and 1954, and Deputy Prime Minister in 1955 and 1956. He is a Member of Parliament. His chief works are: *Parasztok* ("Peasants," 1938); *Magyar város* ("The Hungarian City," 1939); *Magyar falu* ("The Hungarian Village," 1940); *Futóhomok* ("Drift Sand," 1941); *A magyar paraszttársadalom* ("Hungarian Peasant Society," 1942); *Magyar tanyák* ("Hungarian Farmsteads," 1942); *A szövetkezeti úton* ("On the Cooperative Road," 1956); *Mezőgazdaság és szövetkezet* ("Agricultural Cooperative," 1959); *A termelőszövetkezeti üzemszervezés gyakorlati kézikönyve* ("A Practical Handbook of Production Organization on Cooperative Farms," 1960).

KRESZ, Mária (b. 1919). Studied ethnography at the Budapest University. Her first interest was the traditional methods of education. Later she turned to the study of folk art and published a book on Hungarian peasant costumes of the early 19th century with contemporary etchings and drawings. This work appeared also in German. As custodian at the Ethnographical Museum of Budapest, she is in charge of the collection of pottery containing over 14,000 specimens.

NAGY, Péter (b. 1920). Literary historian and critic. Has published a number of

works on modern Hungarian literature, and especially on the question of the Hungarian novel. His more important works are: *A klasszikus francia dráma fogadtatása Magyarországon* ("The Reception of the Classical French Drama in Hungary," 1943), *Móricz Zsigmond* (essay on the outstanding Hungarian prose writer of the period between the two world wars, 1953), *Mérlegen* ("In the Balance," critical essays, 1956), *Szabó Dezső indulása* ("Dezső Szabó's Start," 1958), *Szabó Dezső az ellenforradalomban* ("Dezső Szabó in the Counter-revolution," 1960). See his "Modern Hungarian Novels" in *The New Hungarian Quarterly*, Volume II, Number 1.

GEREVICH, László (b. 1911). Art historian and archaeologist, General Director of the Budapest Museum of History, head of the Archaeological Research Group of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Was awarded the Kossuth Prize for directing the excavation work in the Castle of Buda and for establishing the Castle Museum. Has written a number of treatises on Hungarian medieval art.

SOMFAI, László (b. 1934). After studying piano graduated in 1958 from the musical faculty of the Budapest Academy of Music (as the pupil of B. Bartha, B. Szabolcsi, etc.). His works include "Mozart's Haydn Quartets" (Musicological Studies, Budapest 1957, V); "The Birth of Classical Quartet Sound in Haydn's String Quartets" (Musicological Studies, Budapest, 1960, VIII); "Unknown Haydn Manuscripts in the Opera Repertoire of the Eszterháza Theatre"; "Haydn as Opera Conductor" (in collaboration with D. Bartha, Budapest, 1960); "The Problems of the Erkel Manuscripts" (Musicological Studies, Budapest, 1961, IX); "Albrechtsberger's Manuscripts at the National Széchényi Library, Buda-

pest" (*Studia Musicologica*, Budapest, 1961). Collaborator of the Musicohistorical Collection at the National Széchenyi Library.

RÉZ, Pál (b. 1930). Critic, literary historian and translator; finished his studies at the Budapest University of Science, as teacher of Hungarian language and literature; at present lector at Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó (Fiction and Poetry Publishers), Budapest. Has translated French, Rumanian and German novels and written studies in the history of literature, mainly Hungarian and French. His most recent work is a monography on Marcel Proust.

DARVAS, József (b. 1912). Began his literary career during the middle 1930's and belonged to the left-wing group of the so-called populist writers. In his sociographic writings he depicted the conditions of the Hungarian peasantry in those times: *A legnagyobb magyar falu* ("The Greatest Hungarian Village"), *Egy parasztesalád története* ("The Story of a Peasant Family"). His novels portray chiefly the historical past of the peasantry, the struggles and life of the agrarian proletariat: *A törökverő* ("The Defeater of the Turks"), *Harangoskút* ("The Ringing Well"), *Máról holnapra* ("From One Day to the Next"), *Vízkeresztől Szilveszterig* ("From Twelfth Night till Sylvester"). Coming, as he did, from a family of poor peasants, he wrote about the struggling years of his childhood in his novel *Elindult szeptemberben* ("It Started in September"). *Város az ingoványon* ("A City on Quicksand"), portrays the final days of the "Hungary of the gentry." His drama, *Kormos ég* ("Sooty Sky"), deals with the counter-revolution of 1956. József Darvas was one of the leaders of the National Peasant Party after 1945. From 1947 to 1950 he was Minister of Building, from 1950 to 1953 Minister of Education and from 1953 to 1956 Minister of Culture. He is a Member of Parliament

and of the World Peace Council, and President of the Hungarian Writers' Association.

VAJDA, Imre (b. 1900). Economist. 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, etc. Vajda was appointed a professor of economics at the Karl Marx 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. See his "The Progress of Hungary's Economic Consolidation from 1957 to 1960" in *The New Hungarian Quarterly*, Volume I, Number 1.

ILLÉS, Endre (b. 1902). Took a degree in medicine, but never practised, becoming a writer instead. Literary director of the Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó (Fiction and Poetry Publishers) in Budapest. At our request, Endre Illés has written the following about himself:

"I was a young medical student when my first writings were published. One of our daily papers quickly made a contract with me for four short stories a month. For years I wrote short stories, and meanwhile I experimented, with constantly recurring excitement, in this literary form. I sought its secrets—and I sought my voice. I wrote more and more, and grew more and more dissatisfied with my writings. This dissatisfaction turned me into a critic. I criticized myself so much that I took a fancy to criticizing others too.

"The short story is a strict literary form. It records and passes judgement at one and the same time. I had no taste for those short stories, whoever their authors were, which finished up as a nicely rounded episode. I

did not like striking endings, cheap allegories, mysticism instead of clarification. I sought reality and the genuine. But reality is not easily arrived at. In my medical student years I was very familiar with that disheartening feeling when during our anatomy classes sometimes in the deep plexus of a dissected body we were unable to find the muscle, artery or nerve we sought, however hard we tried, and so gradually cut everything to pieces with our keen instruments. This was the moment of failure. The same happened to me with this literary form too.

"I was on the verge of giving up the short story when I wrote my first play. And listening to the stage rehearsal I realized: I had to write a drama in order to arrive at the short story, the literary form of omissions and condensations. For the short story, there is no need of material for three acts, of course. A single point of crystallization is sufficient. We live, and meanwhile there is a decisive word, emotion or injury that deflects our life a few degrees from its previous course—and I discovered that the short story, my short story, is the drama of these decisive, flashing moments. This is how I have to write."

DEVECSERI, Gábor (b. 1917). Poet and literary translator. Made his name with his polished verses published in the periodicals *Nyugat* and *Szép Szó* in the 1930's. After 1945 he chose as the theme of his poetry the great problems of our time. His translations are chiefly of the Greek and Roman poets (*The Complete Poems of Catullus*, 1942; *Homeric Hymns*, 1948). For his translations of Homer (*Iliad*, *Odyssey*), Devecseri has been awarded the Kossuth Prize. His essays on literary history, *Workshop and Magic*, appeared in 1959.

PASSUTH, László (b. 1900). The author is in the main a writer of historical novels. The title of his first novel was *Esz isten siratja Mexikót* (The Rain God Weeps for Mexico),

a work which, besides appearing in several Hungarian editions, has been translated into English, French, German, Spanish, Dutch and Portuguese. His *Nápolyi Johanna* (Johanna of Naples), dealing with a *trecento* subject, has also been published in several languages (Hungarian, Italian and Spanish). Another of his novels, *A bíborban született* (Porphyrogenitus), presents a picture of the last Byzantine renaissance. However, Passuth is mainly interested in the sixteenth century. The age of Philip II is conjured up in *Fekete bársonyban* (Black Velvet) which was published also in German in 1960. His novel about Monteverdi depicts the early baroque period in Italy. This work has also been translated into German. *Négy szél Erdélyben* (Four Winds in Transylvania) is the story of István Báthory who became King of Poland, while his most recent novel, a two-volume work entitled *Sárkányfog* (Dragon's Teeth) evokes the chequered fate of Zsigmond Báthory. In several of his books the author has turned to art; *Lombard kastély* (Castle in Lombardy—published also in Italian), and *Lagunák* (The Lagoons) revive the Venice of Giorgione's time. He is a member of the Presidium of the Hungarian PEN Club, and member for Hungary of the recently founded Community of European Writers. The preceding issue of *The New Hungarian Quarterly* (Vol II, Number 2) contains a review of his ("Identities Established") on the new acquisitions on show at the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts.

SZENCZI, Miklós M. A., Ph. D. (b. 1904). Professor of English at the Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest. For several years he was Lecturer in Hungarian at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University of London, and is the author of the articles on Hungarian language and literature in Chambers' Encyclopedia. His main lines of research are English Renaissance drama and the theory of literature. He has recently edited a three-volume collection of

English Renaissance plays in Hungarian translation.

TÓTH, Béla (b. 1913). Psychologist. Completed his university studies in Szeged. Worked for two years on a fellowship at the Institute of Psychology of the University of Arts and Sciences in Vienna (under Professors H. Rohrer and Fr. Kainz). Has been teaching in teacher-training institutions since 1945 and is an associate of the Institute of Child Psychology. Associate of the Faculty of Psychology of the Budapest Pedagogical Seminary since 1959. His books published so far are: *A félelem jelenségeinek lélektana és pedagógiája* ("The Psychology and Pedagogy of the Phenomena of Fear"), 1939; *Beszéd, jellem, személyiség* ("Speech, Character, Personality"), 1948; *A gyermek és az irodalom* ("The Child and Literature"), 1955; *Gyermekek és ifjúsági könyvtárak* ("The Child and Youth Libraries"), 1956; *Olvasó gyermekeink* ("Our Reading Children"), 1957 (with co-authors); *Az irodalmi érdeklődés a gyermekkorban* ("Literary Interests in Childhood"), 1961 (in preparation).

KERESZTURY, Dezső (b. 1904). Literary historian and aesthetician, our regular theatre reviewer (see our previous issues).

TÖRÖK, Tamás (b. 1925). Writer, dramatist and stage-manager. His works; *Az elűszentett birodalom* (King has Sneezed—a fairy tale), 1953; *Esperanza* (a play), 1957; *Egy éj az Arany Bögárban* (A Night at the Golden Beetle—a comedy), 1959; *Szeretve mind a vérpadig* (Beloved unto the Scaffold—a romantic drama, based on the novel of Mór Jókai), 1959.

GYERTYÁN, Ervin (b. 1925). Film aesthetician; member of the editorial staff of *Filmvilág* (Film World). See his "New Trends in Hungarian Film Comedy" in *The New Hungarian Quarterly*, Vol. II, Number 1.

MÁTYÁS, Antal (b. 1923), Economist and university lecturer. Obtained a degree at the Karl Marx University of Economics, where he now teaches history. His principal work is entitled "Main Trends in Bourgeois Economics after the Appearance of Marxism."

HARDI, Robert (b. 1914). Economist, lecturer in commercial techniques and organization at the Karl Marx University of Economics in Budapest and deputy manager of KONSUMEX Commodity Trading Enterprise. Since 1945 he organized and headed a number of home- and foreign-trade organs and enterprises. Several of his articles and papers on subjects of home and foreign trade were published, among others one treating the Hungarian cooperative movement, in the Yearbook of Agricultural Cooperation.

DR. SZABADY, Egon (b. 1917). Graduate of the Karl Marx University of Economics, department head at the Hungarian Central Statistical Office, secretary of the Presidential Commission on Demography of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences; editor of *Demográfia*, the Hungarian journal dealing with demography. Dr. Szabady directed the 1960 census in Hungary, and is a member of the International Demographical Union.

KÖPECZI, Béla (b. 1921). Historian. Took his teaching degree and his Ph. D. in the French and Rumanian languages at the Faculty of Arts of the Budapest University of Arts and Sciences. Studied at the Sorbonne in Paris, was a member of the École Normale Supérieure, and became doctor of the University of Paris. Since 1949 he has been working in the field of book publishing and at present heads the General Publishing Board of the Ministry of Culture. He has published essays on French and Rumanian literature and literary history, as well as on the Hungarian independence struggle of the early 18th century.

THE NEW HUNGARIAN QUARTERLY

RÁSONYI, László (b. 1899). Began his career as the librarian of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. In this capacity he had the fortune of making the personal acquaintance of Sir Aurel Stein. His research in Turkic studies led him in turn to Berlin, Helsinki and Istanbul. Professor at the Ankara University from 1935 and of the University of Cluj (Romania) from 1941, he now heads the Oriental Section of the

Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

GÁBOR, István (b. 1928). Journalist on the staff of the national daily Magyar Nemzet. Was for some time schoolmaster in a secondary schol. His experiences in the teaching profession form the subject of a series of articles, which won for him a prize at the Warsaw Youth Festival in 1955; see also Vol. II. No. 1. of NHQ.

A SHORT ENCYCLOPEDIA

*of some places, historical events, personalities
and institutions mentioned in this number*

ADY, ENDRE (1877—1919). The life and work of the greatest Hungarian lyrical poet of the 20th century was inseparably bound up with the fight for the complete social and cultural revival of Hungary. Ady came from an impoverished family of gentlefolk. At the outset of his career he went in for journalism as well as writing poetry; several visits to Paris widened his intellectual outlook and poetical power of expression. Up till his death he took an active part in the great political struggles of his age and devoted himself to the cause of a democratic Hungary, independent of the Hapsburgs and reborn through revolutionary changes. The message of his lyrical poems, describing the decay of contemporary Hungarian society and urging social reform, was expressed in a form and in ways that initiated a new epoch in the history of Hungarian verse. His symbolic mode of expression afforded immense possibilities for depicting the intricacy of the Hungarian world of his time, reflecting with consummate art all the phenomena of human life—love, death, faith in God. His verse broke away from the traditional forms of Western Europe and enriched our poetry with the original forms of ancient Hungarian versification.

ANJOU, House of. After the struggles for the crown of Hungary that followed the extinction of the House of Árpád, the reigning family from the foundation of the Hungarian state till 1301, the throne of Hungary was occupied by a member of the Naples Anjous, Charles Robert (1308—1342), who was followed by his son, Lajos I (1342—1382). The reign of the Anjous saw the stabilization of the central power of the king, based on a feudal system. It was a period of economic prosperity, with the beginnings of urbanization and a lively cultural life. Several valuable monuments of Gothic architecture and sculpture date from this time. Under the Anjous Hungary played a significant part in the political life of Central Europe and the Balkans.

BALATON. Hungary's biggest lake (50 miles in length and varying between 1 and 9 miles in width, with an area of 229 sq. miles), situated at the foot of the Bakony Mountains in Transdanubia. The country-side on its northern shores is extremely picturesque, with mountains of captivating shape crowned by the ruins of ancient castles. On the slopes of basaltic Mount Badacsony—an

extinct volcano—one of the best wines in Hungary is grown. The Tihany Peninsula projecting far into the lake, with its vegetation of rare interest and its strange rock formations, is a nature conservation area. The most popular summer resorts in Hungary are to be found on the shores of Lake Balaton.

BÁTHORY, GÁBOR (1589—1613). Reigning Prince of Transylvania from 1608. A luckless man of vacillating character, who by his arbitrary government and immoral private life alienated the ruling classes of Transylvania, while rousing the anger of both the Hapsburgs and the Turks, he was finally murdered.

BETHLEN, GÁBOR (1580—1629), from 1613 the Reigning Prince of Transylvania, was one of the most outstanding representatives of those striving against the Hapsburgs to establish Hungarian independence and liberty. He created a flourishing economy and culture in the eastern regions of the country, which had been divided into three parts by the Turkish occupation. In the Thirty Years' War he aided with the protestants, winning important victories which, however, the international situation, prevented him from turning to the best advantage. The reign of Bethlen brought a "Golden Age" to Transylvania, as Mór Jókai, the illustrious Hungarian novelist, put it in the title of his novel about that period. Gábor Bethlen is the hero of Zsigmond Móricz's chief work, *Erdély* (Transylvania), a trilogy written between the two world wars.

CSOKONAI VITÉZ, MIHÁLY (1773—1805). The greatest Hungarian poet of the Age of Enlightenment. He was born in Debrecen, where his father had been a barber's apprentice, later to become the surgeon of the college. Csokonai himself began his studies in this college and became the founder of the first literary study circle there. Owing to his unruly behaviour and his progressive views he was expelled

from college in 1795. After reading law for a short while he edited a journal in verse at the Diet in Pozsony. He travelled all over the country, trying to interest the landed aristocracy and noblemen in the publication of his poetry. At the young age of thirty-two, in Debrecen, he fell victim to an inflammation of the lungs. As regards both form and contents, his verses have the natural charm and spontaneity of folk poetry and make him the most significant forerunner of the populist literary tendencies of the nineteenth century. Perceptibly influenced in his enlightened lyrics by Rousseau, he took a stand against old superstitions and bigotry, not concealing his sympathies with the serfs and heralding the triumph of reason. His narrative poem bearing the title *Béka-egérbarc* ("The War of Frogs and Mice") is a travesty, in the most satirical vein, of Hungary in the period of the Napoleonic wars. The comic epic *Dorottya* ("Dorothea") contains a realistic satirical portrayal of noble society in the framework of a playful carnival story. The most significant verses of Csokonai's *oeuvre* beside the political and philosophical poems are the so-called Lilla songs reflecting his disappointment in love.

FARMERS' COOPERATIVE GROUP of type I.—The farmers' cooperative groups of the first and second types represent the initial, lowest stage in the development of the agricultural cooperative movement in Hungary. In the groups of the first type the system called *plot farming* prevails, with the members carrying out jointly all agricultural work up to and inclusive of sowing. Harvesting is already done individually. The groups of the second type, called *average distribution groups* are in many respects similar to the former ones. However, here harvesting is also carried out jointly and the distribution of earnings takes place in proportion to the land contributions of the individual members. At present the most highly developed form of cooperation,

that of the *cooperative farms* (type III) is already dominant in Hungary. Here the distribution of the cooperative's income is in proportion to the work-units of the members who, in addition, receive rent for the land contributed by them. By the spring of 1961 over 90 per cent of all arable land in Hungary already belonged to the collectivized sector. Of this area the proportion of state farms was 14 per cent, that of cooperative farms 72 per cent, and that of lower-grade cooperative groups and associations 4 per cent.

GREAT CUMANIA. A perfectly plain, almost treeless district in Eastern Hungary, beyond the Tisza and north of the two rivers Körös, the monotony of which is only broken by suddenly emerging hillocks of a few metres in height, the so-called Cuman mounds. Popular belief has it that these ancient landmarks cover the graves of thirteenth-century Cumanian soldiers. It was in this district as well as in that of Little Cumania situated in the region between Danube and Tisza, that the Cumans, a people of Turkic origin, took refuge from the Tartars and within a few centuries settled down to become entirely assimilated by the Magyar population.

GYÖRFFY, ISTVÁN (1884—1939), professor of ethnography. His ethnographical works dealt chiefly with the types of settlement of the Hungarian peasantry, the traditional methods of agriculture, and the craft of peasant fur-dressers. Outstanding works: *The House-and-garden Towns in the Great Hungarian Plain*, 1926; *Decorated Peasant Felt Coats*, 1930; *Wild-shepherds*, 1938.

KÖRÖSI CSOMA, SÁNDOR (1784—1842). A Hungarian explorer and philologist, who set out originally to find the ancient home of the Magyars. Passing through Iran and Kashmir he reached Tibet, suffering serious privations during most of his travels for lack of funds. His chief work was the first Tibetan dictionary and grammar. The British Asiatic Society raised a commemorative column over his grave at Darjiling.

SZACSVAY, IMRE (1854—1939). Dramatic artist, member of the Budapest National Theatre, one of the last representatives of the grand style in declamation.

TEMPEFŐI, WISTFUL (A méla Tempefői). A play of Mihály Csokonai Vitéz, written in 1793 and exposing the rudeness, backwardness and cultural sterility of the ruling classes.

TEMPLE OF ISIS. A few years ago one of the greatest temples of Isis in Europe was unearthed in Szombathely, a town in Western Hungary built on the site of the Roman township of Sabaria.

TRADE-UNION Social Insurance. The number of beneficiaries under the trade-union social insurance system in Hungary was 4.4 million in 1960 and has reached the 9-million mark (inclusive of family members) by the present day. (The total population of the country is 10 million. In 1938 1.4 million people were covered by social insurance.)

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