HUNGARY

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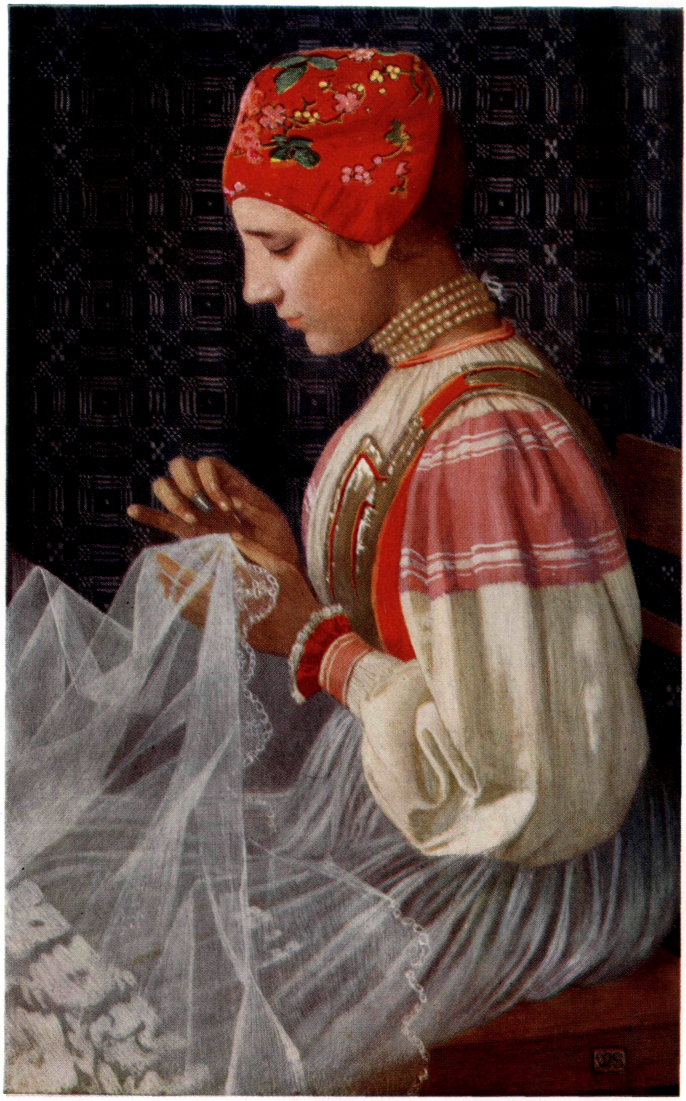

THE BRIDAL VEIL

HUNGARY

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TO

DR. BOROMISZA TIBOR

(BISHOP OF SZATMÁR)

THIS BOOK

WITH APOLOGIES FOR ITS SHORTCOMINGS

IS RESPECTFULLY AND AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

BY THE AUTHORS

INTRODUCTION

HUNGARY is less frequented by foreign visitors than other great countries of Europe; still, it has charms beyond most. In spite of modern development—in many directions—the romantic glamour of bygone times still clings about it, and the fascination of its peoples is peculiar to them.

Various races inhabit the land, but the Magyars—proud, intelligent, and full of vitality—dominate it.

The entire population is about 20 millions, of which, approximately, 9 are Magyars; 5, Slavs; 3, Rumanians; 2, Germans; and 1, various others. Though these races are much interspersed, the richly fertile central plains have become the home of the Magyars; Slavs occupy outlying parts of the country, and Croatia; Rumanians, hills and mountains to the east and south-east; Germans, the lower slopes of the great Carpathians, a large part of Transylvania, and the neighbourhood of

Styria and Lower Austria. Gipsies and Jews are to be met with nearly everywhere.

The landscape is of great variety. Vast plains, bathed in hazy sunlight, where great rivers glide on their way to the East; wooded hills and rushing streams; lovely lakes; sombre forests, from which grim mountains rear their huge grey shoulders in the clear air, are all to be found; and dotted about may be seen figures that recall the illustrations in an old-world Bible.

Hungarians are sensitive regarding the lack of knowledge they believe prevalent in other countries concerning themselves and their civilization, and pleased when a foreigner proves himself to be acquainted with the following facts:

Hungary is now, and has been since the year A.D. 1001, an independent sovereign State and a kingdom.

His Majesty the Emperor Franz Joseph, whose dominions include Upper and Lower Austria, Bohemia, Styria, Carinthia, Tyrol, etc., is not Emperor, but King, of Hungary.

And familiarity with a few salient points in their most interesting history would still more gratify them.

The Magyars, under Arpád, made their first

appearance in Central Europe in the ninth century, about the year A.D. 896.

The cruel rapacity of those fierce horsemen during their incursions in Germany and Italy was so terrible that a new clause was added to the Litany: 'Ab Ungarorum nos defendas jaculis.'

Their power was broken by Otho the Great, German Emperor, in a battle near the River Lech, in Bavaria, in 955.

Christianity was introduced under Prince Geisa (972-995).

In the year 1001 Stephen I., the first King, succeeded his father, and was crowned by solemn sanction of Pope Sylvester II., who conferred on him the title 'Apostolic King,' and sent him the famous crown which has been used at the coronation of all succeeding Kings.

Stephen was canonized in 1083, and is the patron saint of Hungary.

By the end of the eleventh century Croatia and Dalmatia had been added to the dominions of the crown, to which Croatia has ever since belonged.

In the twelfth century colonies of Saxons were introduced into Transylvania and the Zips country by Geisa II. (1141-1162).

The freedoms and liberties of the Magyars were

confirmed by a great charter, the 'Golden Bull' of Andrew II., in 1222, only seven years later than our own Magna Charta.

The dynasty of Arpád became extinct on the death of Andreas III., 1301, and was followed by various elective Kings.

The first of a long series of battles between the Magyars and the Turks took place about the year 1366, on the Danube, near the Iron Gates.

Hollós Mátyás (Mathias Corvinus), son of the great warrior Hunyady János, defeated the Turks, and also the Emperor Frederick, and seized Vienna in 1485.

Louis II., of the House of Anjou, was killed in the great defeat of the Magyars by the Turks at Mohács in 1526, and with him fell the flower of the Hungarian aristocracy.

Ferdinand of Austria, a Habsburg, and brother of the Emperor Charles V., next claimed the crown of what was left of the Hungarian kingdom, as brother-in-law of Louis. A large number of nobles supported him, but another party chose as King, John Zápolya, and a contest divided the country for years.

Zápolya appealed for help to Sultan Soliman, who overran the country.

During the life of John Zápolya's son, Hungary was divided between the Magyars, the Austrians, and the Turks, into three parts.

In 1619 Ferdinand II. became Emperor, inheriting the crowns of Hungary and Bohemia; but, later, many Magyar nobles elected Bethlen Gábor of Transylvania to be their King. Frederick's persecution of the Protestants led Bethlen to unite with the Bohemians against him.

At the battle of the White Mountain, Bohemian independence was lost, and Bethlen was forced to renounce his claim to the throne of Hungary. He was succeeded by the celebrated George Rákoczi, who entered into negotiations with France and Sweden. The Turks, however, invaded Transylvania, and Rákoczi was killed.

The greatest advance of the Turks was marked by their siege of Vienna in 1683, after which, overpowered by the Imperial forces and Magyars combined, they were rapidly driven back beyond the Save and the Danube.

During the times of trouble and confusion covered by the preceding events the Magyars never slackened in their brave struggle for national and religious liberty.

Servians helped in the successful wars against the

Turks, and colonies of them were invited to settle in Hungary.

Transylvania was added to the Austrian crown. An insurrection immediately broke out, led by the popular hero Francis Rákoczi.

In 1707 the Diet of Hungary deposed Joseph I., but though Rákoczi was practically ruler of the country, he was not offered the crown.

Joseph I. was in 1711 acknowledged King, while he agreed to restore the ancient rights of Hungary.

The next King, Charles VI., recognized the electoral rights of the Magyar magnates, but secured the succession of his daughter by Pragmatic Sanction. Nevertheless, the accession of Maria Theresa was opposed by Bavaria, Prussia, and France. She appealed for help to the Magyars, whose loyalty secured her the throne. Her husband became the Emperor Francis II.

Maria Theresa was ever grateful to her Hungarian subjects, and delighted to receive the great Magyar nobles at her Court in Vienna.

Joseph II. (1780 - 1790) introduced reforms which had little success in Hungary. He refused to be crowned with the crown of St. Stephen, and declared that the proper function of the Diet was to

deliberate on matters submitted by him. This led to a great Nationalist revival.

In the Napoleonic wars the Hungarians distinguished themselves wherever engaged, and Napoleon, after his entry into Vienna, tried vainly to seduce them from their allegiance to the Habsburgs, promising them a national King.

The Magyar language was for the first time used in the Hungarian Diet, in 1825, by Count Stephen Széchény. A national academy and theatre were founded at the same date.

Joseph II. had attempted to make German the national language, and employed Austrian Government officers throughout the country; and Francis II. (1792-1835) instituted a system of absolutism without more success.

The national opposition culminated in the revolution of 1848, led by Louis Kossuth. Only with the help of Russia was the republic overthrown in 1849.

In the present reign the unhappy wars of 1859 and 1866 led to better feeling, and a party, headed by Francis Deák, brought about reconciliation with Austria and the famous Ausgleich of 1867, which is the foundation of the present system.

I am indebted for many of the details in the above slight historical sketch to 'The Whirlpool of Europe,' by Archibald Colquhoun and Ethel Colquhoun (Harper and Brothers), — to which admirable and concise work I would refer any readers interested in the origin, history, and politics of the various nationalities comprised in the dual monarchy of Austria-Hungary.

The high tide of Hungarian greatness was reached during the reign of Louis the Great (Nagy Lajos)—1342-1382. His rule extended from the North Sea to the Black Sea, and from the Black Sea to the Adriatic.

It was to this period the poet Petöfi referred when he sang:

'Oh nagy volt hajdan a magyar
Nagy volt hatalma, birtoka;
Magyar tenger vizében húnyt el
Ejszak, kelet a dél hullócs illaga.'

(Oh, great was once the Hungarian,
Great were his power and possessions;
In the waves of Hungarian seas
Sank the stars of North, East, and South.)

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HUNGARY

CHAPTER I

FROM AUSTRIA TO ORSOVA

As our steamer gently throbbed its way down the broad and gleaming reaches of the Danube, it intruded on a vast stillness. For miles and miles there was no sign of human habitation. Low wooded banks, clothed with poplar and willow, lay, fold beyond fold, dusty-grey in the quivering heat. A cormorant, splashing up the bright water as it flapped hastily away, was the only living thing to be seen, save a heron, standing slim and stiff by the entrance to a backwater, or a small white seagull, hovering in the opalescent light of the summer day.

A mellow softness pervaded everything as, sitting in the shade of the awning, in the cool breeze caused by our motion, we approached the borders of Hungary—Hungary, the land we had

dreamed of as a home of romance, where, long ago, mighty horsemen, with glittering arms and fierce moustachios, came in from the East; where the *Fata Morgana* still hung over distant horizons, and herds of wild horses galloped on limitless plains.

Faint lines of distant hills at last appeared, and a rocky promontory crowned with the ruins of an ancient fortress, which, boldly jutting into the middle of the river, seemed to block our way, was Dévény, the frontier.

The landscape then became more varied; the smooth river flowed among tree-covered hills; hundreds of red and white cattle stood in groups in the shallows, and here and there a floating flour-mill was moored near the shore. A fisherman, like the '*Pauvre Pêcheur*' of the Luxembourg, stood motionless by his net.

From the forepart of the vessel, somewhere down below, strains of weird music soon drew us nearer to listen. A Gipsy band had come on board, and market-girls, gaily dressed. They had no awning, the sun was blazing, and the small lower deck was encumbered with teeming baskets of vegetables and fruit; but how the maids were dancing—with wild delight, two small steps to the left, two to the right, round and round, with swaying hips, in and

out among the baskets in the sunlight and the shadow.

The dance was a *Csárdás*, the first we had seen.

They all left before long, at a little landing-stage leading to a village, where a small white church, with pointed spire of grey shingles, and light-coloured cottages, nestled in the shade of acacia-trees; and barelegged children, in red skirts, played on the sandy slopes.

We soon came to Pozsony (Pressburg)—once the capital and coronation-place of the Habsburg Kings of Hungary—which is dominated by the ruins of a square, barrack-like castle, gaunt and ugly. The town looked bright in spite of tall factory chimneys close by. On the coronation hill near the river stands the spirited equestrian statue of Maria Theresa, with a Magyar hero on foot at each side of her, by Fadrusz, an artist who unfortunately died young. It is renowned throughout Hungary as a work of the highest promise.

The great river wound on among hills. Now and again we passed a village or a town—Gönyö, Komárom, Radvány; sometimes a little tower peeped up behind a dyke.

In the warm light of afternoon we saw far away before us the colossal dome of the Basilica of

Esztergom (Gran), and no building that I know, except St. Peter's at Rome, when seen from afar, gives such an impression of size. Even the mountains behind it looked insignificant and out of scale. Standing as it does high above the river, a palace and a line of houses along the base of the rocks on which it is built, it loses little on nearer approach.

Esztergom is the seat of the Prince-Primate of Hungary, lord of many possessions and vast estates.

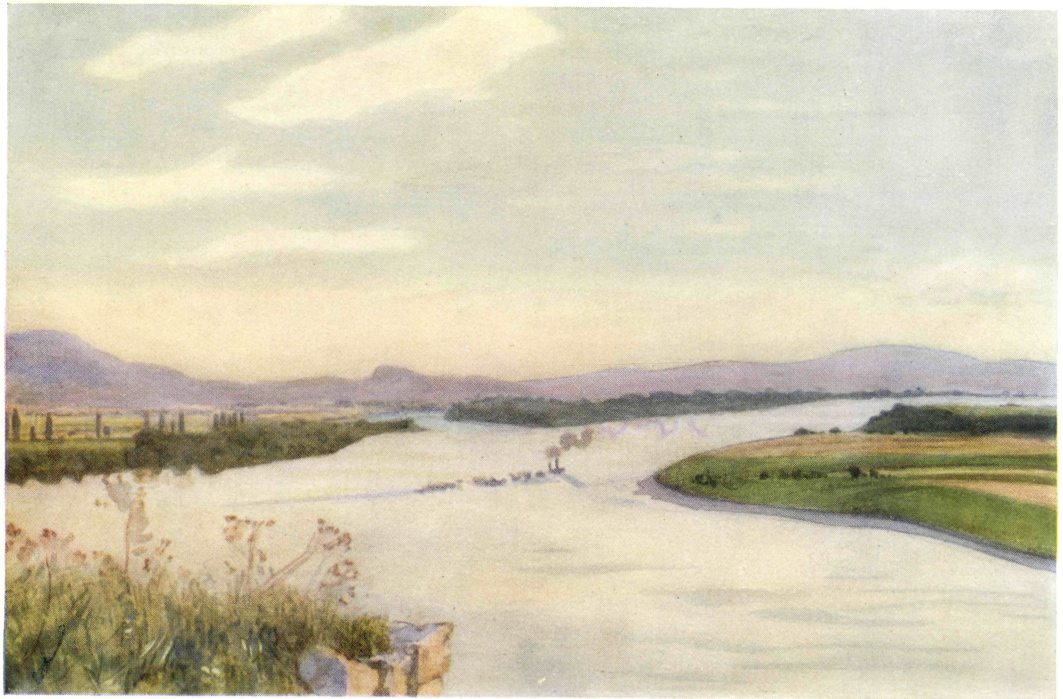
On looking back when we had steamed away, the dome still loomed against the sky, immense, when other buildings had faded out of sight.

We touched at Visegrád, a mountain where Kings of the eleventh century resided, and now ruined walls around its barren peak alone mark the site of what was called an earthly paradise. Villas clustering round its foot looked gay among the trees.

The glow of a golden sunset was behind the purple mountains before we left them to pass again through level plains, and, far away before us, low down on the horizon, a faint dun-coloured haze told of the presence of a great city.

The charm of that approach to Budapest by river late on a summer evening was indescribable. The

THE DANUBE FROM ESZTERGOM (GRAN)



Danube divided into two arms, which, reuniting, formed a long, low island. Again it divided close to the city, flowing round the beautiful Margaret Island — its noble trees, its pleasure-grounds and pavilions. Young men in outriggers skimmed silently by, or landed in the gloom of overhanging foliage. The sky, full of gentle gradations, was charged with the last warm light from the afterglow behind us — an all-pervading light which, softly falling, united all things in one great harmony.

Again out in the broad river—bridges, with long, swinging lines, swept from side to side; lights—the pale bright lights of electricity, mingled with the warmer ones of gas—in rows and in clusters, sparkled, and their reflections streamed towards us. On our left were the chimneys, domes, and pinnacles of Pest; on our right, the hills and palaces of Buda. Busy little steamers, with glowing lamps of various colours, dashed about in all directions on the silver water.

On landing we were met by friends, and taken to their pleasant home in Buda.

We have been many times to Budapest, but the impression made on us by our first arrival can never be effaced.

One other journey to the capital remains clearly

in my memory. We were coming from Berlin, and in the corridor of the sleeping-car I made the acquaintance of a young Magyar gentleman returning after a stay of some years in the United States of America. He first addressed me when the train stopped at a Hungarian station, calling excitedly: 'There is such a beautifully pretty girl serving the crowd at the bar. Do come and look! Is she not lovely? is she not fresh and pretty?'

The ice thus broken, he talked in a long stream of more or less interesting information about himself and America, interrupted here and there by the exclamations, 'I love my little country! How I love my little country!' He was a linguist—could speak seven languages—a journalist—could describe what was passing at the other side of the train—and a violinist.

On meeting him again in the morning, he said: 'Shall we have some music? I will introduce you to my wives;' and we entered his compartment, where he opened a case containing two lovely violins.

At first he played whatever I asked for, but soon I was forgotten, and he played on and on—rapturous things, as one inspired—pouring out his heart to his beloved land.

When it was time to prepare for leaving the train he suddenly stopped playing and said: 'I have a favour to ask of you. Will you grant it?' 'If I can, certainly,' I replied, still under the spell of his art. It was merely a request that I would write a letter to him, for publication in newspapers, saying that if golf-links were established in Hungary, they would form an attraction for English visitors.

Our first visit to Budapest was a short one. The sun blazed down all day long, and we were unaccustomed to the heat. From our windows high up in Buda the outlook over river and town in the early morning was certainly entrancing; but the museums were being rearranged or dismantled, and we longed for the country.

We visited the thirteenth-century church of St. Mátyás—one of the few historical buildings remaining—and the Royal Palace, which—to the great grief of the loyal Magyars who built it—is so seldom occupied. We paused in wonder before sculptured groups, quite new, that seemed inspired by the spirit of a Byron or a Walter Scott.

We ate ices at the shop of a confectioner, reputed in Pest to be the best in the world, and drove, in the fastest cab I can remember, to a restaurant in

a park, kept by the same person—which may be the most expensive. The rigid rules of society include this restaurant in the short list of places where ladies of fashion may appear. 'Of course we can't go here. Of course we can't go there,' are remarks we have sometimes overheard, without being able to find a reason for the unwritten law.

Many ladies were in the garden when we arrived, and how lovely in their delicate summer clothes! Where in the capitals of Europe would you find such pure complexions, such beauty of feature and of hair, such graceful figures, more perfect breeding combined with winning manners, or more consummate taste in dress? The prevailing type was neither brunette nor blonde, but somewhere between the two.

The men were extremely smart and dressed in the latest cosmopolitan fashion.

We were taken to call on a famous sculptor, whose studios in a small park are among several given by the State to artists of distinction; and then we started for the heart of the country.

A year or two before we went to Hungary, while staying at a watering-place in South Tyrol, we, at different times, made the acquaintance—which ripened later into friendship—of two people. One

A HUNGARIAN BABY

was a lady of high aristocratic birth, who shall be known in these pages as 'the Gräfin'; the other, a dignitary of the Roman Catholic Church, shall be called, until he became a Bishop, 'the Prelate.' Both were Hungarians; both were sure we should find much to interest us and to paint in their country; and both invited us to visit them.

Our first visit was to the Gräfin and her daughter in Budapest. We left there one fine hot morning in June in a crowded train, and an uneventful journey of about four hours, across the plains southwards, brought us to Kalocsa.

The Prelate was at the station, and we drove in two ramshackle open cabs for a mile or so, over a paved but very dusty road, to his fine old house hard by the Cathedral—a house of two stories, pale yellow ochre in colour, with a great roof of brown-grey tiles. In a niche over the doorway was a picture of the Madonna, and above that the arms of the archbishopric in stucco.

The main doors were thrown open, and the smiling sister of the Prelate appeared, followed by a bevy of bright handmaidens. While we were receiving the warmest of welcomes the maids made a dash for our luggage, which they handled with con-

summate ease. They were dressed in light, strong colours, and their short skirts, supported by countless petticoats hemmed with red, sloped out wide from their trim waists. Their heads were neat and small, strings of beads encircled their necks, and they were barefooted.

The rooms on the first floor, opening from a hall hung with old portraits, were *en suite.* Ours adjoined the dining-room; beyond that was the main salon leading to the private apartments of the Prelate. Downstairs an archway for carriages divided the house into two parts. On one side lived the Prelate's sister, and on the other were kitchens and the servants' quarters. Everything was large and handsome without being luxurious.

The midday dinner was announced soon after our arrival, and we sat down for the first time to a typically Hungarian table.

Hungarian food is excellent, and so is the cooking. Though I do not remember what we had to eat, I know that some of the dishes must have been flavoured with paprika, for without that no meal is complete; and that by each salt-cellar was another containing paprika—a pretty red note on the white tablecloth. Several decanters stood at the corners of the table, and whenever our

glasses were filled from one it was itself refilled before being put back in its place. I took this to be a hospitable way of hiding from guests how much they had drunk, or an indication that, however much they might drink, more would be forthcoming. Two maidservants waited on us, and it was strange to hear the pat of their bare feet on the polished parquet floor.

Paprika—the red pepper of Hungary—and Gipsy music are two of its chief minor institutions. This pepper is on every table, and is used in the cooking of nearly everything. It is believed by the peasants to be a prophylactic against fever.

In former days, when wide stretches of marshland bordered all the great rivers, fever was prevalent; now it is rare. Drainage and damming, and paprika, have done their work.

But, though paprika and Gipsy music are distinctive institutions, there is another far greater than these—hospitality. The Magyars are renowned for it, and with what justice will be apparent to anyone who follows our fortunes through this book.

Long ago—before the time of railways—when each country house was separated by hours from the next, strangers from the outer world were gladly entertained. Each home produced in abund-

ance all that it needed, so the tax was not great. Now, under altered circumstances, the custom then firmly established remains unshaken.

Kalocsa is situated in a fertile plain a few miles from the Danube, on a slight eminence imperceptible except from a distance. It is an archbishopric—one of the oldest and most important in the country.

An Archbishop of Kalocsa in the year 1001 brought the Hungarian crown from Rome as a present from Pope Sylvester II. to King Stephen.

When we arrived an Archbishop had recently died, and his successor had not yet been appointed. Meanwhile a sale, to which we were taken by the Prelate, was going on in the Palace. Most of the objects of interest had already been disposed of to dealers from Budapest, but we had the pleasure of being introduced to a number of the higher ecclesiastics, who had come to bid for religious pictures by Soldatich, their favourite modern painter. In manner they reminded me of the Dons of an English University—highly cultivated men, with good round incomes, whose happy lot it is to live in refined leisure, surrounded by many of the good things of this world, in the hope of even better ones to come.

A BACKWATER OF THE DANUBE

The Church in Hungary is wealthy. Its Bishops are Princes, with revenues in several cases five times greater than those of Canterbury or York; while the Canons of the Cathedrals cannot be considered poor on from £500 to £5,000 a year, and lodgings found.

We had scarcely returned to our rooms when a parcel arrived. It proved to be a bottle of aged and almost priceless Tokay, from the cellars of the late Archbishop, which a Canon, seeing that the Prelate had guests, sent over for our delectation. No name is more often taken in vain than Tokay. It is on every wine list, though the wine itself is seldom seen but on royal tables. At first it seemed too sweet—more like a syrup than a wine—but closer acquaintance revealed qualities of rare delicacy. I have tasted it on other occasions—each time with increased appreciation—and can agree with Hungarians in considering it to be a king of wines.

Kalocsa resembles most towns of the Alföld, or Great Plain, with ten to twenty thousand inhabitants. It has two or three long, broad streets of low, comfortable-looking houses washed light yellow or grey, with here and there a new bank, or a school, that aspires to a second, or even a third,

story. From these main streets stray off others in irregular fashion, unpaved and uneven. Here the peasants live. Each whitewashed house has its gable end to the road, and reaches far back into its yard, in which is generally a draw-well. Below the eaves is often a blue band, about two feet broad, stencilled with scarlet, orange, and white fruit and flowers, and green leaves. Along the bottom of the walls is a plain blue stripe, somewhat narrower. The stencilling is done by women, and many of the patterns are charming. Some houses have yellow bands instead of blue, indicating that Gipsies live there. The blue denotes that the occupiers are of Slavonic origin.

Magyar peasants honour their womenkind and are proud of them, preferring, as far as possible, to do the heavy field-work themselves, while their wives and daughters keep the home in order, and themselves clean and neat. Another admirable trait is their kindness to animals, with which—horses especially—they live on the best of terms.

The high street of Kalocsa is nearly a mile long. At one end is the Cathedral—an eighteenth-century building with two tall towers—and close to it the Palace; the other end reaches to the open country, and for the last quarter of a mile, on market-days,

peasant women from neighbouring villages sit on the ground before their wares. Geese, fowls, fruit, vegetables, and crockery lie about in the sun on the dusty pavement, combining with the strong colours of the people in a blaze of colour. Often an outer skirt is turned up as drapery over a seated woman's head. Brighter still are the people who come to buy, or the servants who accompany them. Light pink, emerald-green, vermilion, black, canary-yellow, and white shine out in vivid contrast with the cast shadows. Many of the seated market-people are 'Schwabs,' speaking a German dialect sadly deteriorated during the centuries since their people left the land of their origin.

We stayed but two days at Kalocsa. That gay market scene, and a vision of the stately figure of the Prelate reaching up to cull a flower in his rose-garden, are the two pictures remaining most clearly in my mind.

Our plan was, after making a rapid journey down the Danube and through Transylvania, to spend the hot months—July and August—in the High Tátra, and return in the autumn to the place which pleased us best. The Tátra, however, was the great inducement for our summer stay in the

country. We had heard of lakes high up in the mountains, among snowy peaks or dark forests, and had read a prospectus issued by the Sleeping-Car Company—which owns hotels there—declaring that the wild scenery of the great Carpathians far exceeds in beauty that of Switzerland, and is only to be compared with the most stupendous regions of the Himalayas. Naturally, we were anxious to get there.

We skipped that part of the Danube between Kalocsa and Zimony, to save time, and because it was said to be uninteresting. I have seen much of it since, at various times, under many effects. It is all, and always, attractive with that wistful charm peculiar to great rivers.

From noon till ten o'clock at night we journeyed, ever over green plains, by the express on its way to Constantinople, hoping to join the steamer at eleven — but at eleven it had not arrived. In diffused moonlight a soft drizzle was falling, and the water lapped against the piles of the landing-stage. We noticed a sign-board giving four names for the place: Zimony, Semlin, and two others which I have forgotten.

A neighbouring café tempted us out of the rain, and a musical machine, on the penny-in-the-slot

A LITTLE SLOVAK

principle, played to us till, unable to bear it any longer, we about two o'clock faced the weather again. No one could give information concerning the steamer, but at three the lights on its masts appeared, and it soon hove alongside.

We lay off Belgrade, which is close by, until daylight, and before we awoke in the morning had left it far behind. We had not been inclined to land there—it was not very long since tragic events had directed the attention of the whole world to Servia—and, in fact, should not have been allowed to do so without special passports.

Two harmless Germans who landed from the next steamer were submitted to the indignity of being stripped by the police in search for seditious pamphlets, which they were suspected of introducing, though their papers were in perfect order. We saw them afterwards at Orsova, still unable to control their righteous wrath.

Zimony is the last Hungarian town on the right bank of the Danube. A journey of ten hours downstream divides it from Orsova, the last belonging to Hungary on the left.

The River Save, or Sau, which for a long distance separates the southern borders of Hungary

from Bosnia and Servia, enters the Danube between Zimony and Belgrade.

When we went on deck in the morning the river was very broad—more than a mile from shore to shore—but near Báziás, where we arrived towards ten o'clock, it narrowed somewhat before flowing through the South Carpathian Mountains. From there to Orsova, along the base of the mountains, and close to the river, runs the famous Széchenyi road, which was opened in 1837.

We passed below great mountains bored with many caves. The peasant folk believe that from some of these venomous flies emerge, which poison their cattle in the spring-time.

Pointed rocks mid-stream, villages—mainly on the Servian side — and a few ruined forts, here added variety to the scene.

By noon we were threading our way among rapids, the water for several miles breaking over hidden reefs.

Next came the most magnificent reach of the whole great river, the Gorge of Kazán. The Danube had shrunk to the width of two hundred yards, or less, but flowed seventy yards deep. Splendid perpendicular cliffs sprang high on each side up to the forests above.

Until the Széchenyi road was blasted out of solid rock, the gorge had been impassable by land for ages; but there are traces on the Servian side, just above high-water mark, of a road built by Trajan. In places where the rocks were especially steep a covered wooden way was constructed overhanging the river. The holes made for the supports of this are still to be seen.

At the end of the pass, set in the rock and protected by masonry, is a Roman tablet commemorating the first Dacian war and the completion of the road in A.D. 103.

From there on to Orsova the scenery gradually tamed down. The high mountains retired to a distance and gentle hills sloped to the river's edge.

In the long hours on the steamer there was time to consider early impressions. Some of them were these. There is room in Hungary; everything is spacious, the houses are unusually far apart, low, and cover much ground; and immense cultivated plains, without fences, stretch away to the horizon like the sea; the summer atmosphere is hazy, full of diffused light, and the sky only becomes blue high up towards the zenith. The Danube—the 'Blue Danube' of our dancing days—is not blue; pale *café-au-lait* colour, streaked with silver,

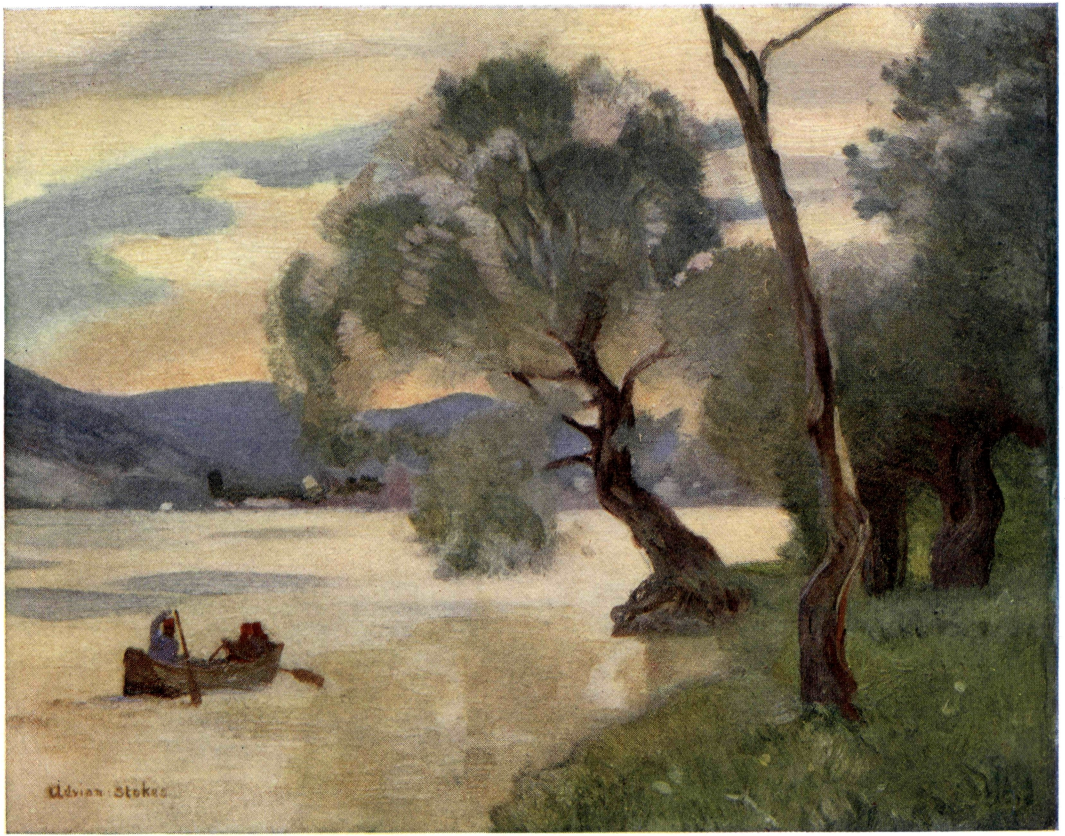
describes it better; the colouring in general is soft and harmonious, except that of the maize, which at this season is a hard green with metallic reflections.

And then, the pleasant feeling that to be English is to be liked! Those who have lived in many European countries will appreciate this rare experience. Throughout the whole country, as we found later, we are esteemed and admired; and, I hope, not only because we are so seldom seen.

We were already struck by the natural good manners of people of all kinds, and had noted their pride of race, and their fear that, owing to misrepresentation, they are considered by foreigners to be barbarians. There is nothing whatever barbaric about them, except, perhaps, a love of splendour, which is seldom uncurbed but on great occasions. The taste of the commercial classes may run to jewellery and showy clothes; but so it does elsewhere.

In that year—it was 1905—there was intense dissatisfaction because the German word of command was used in the Hungarian Army, and stories flew about which, if true, were enough to irritate any people. We were advised in Budapest not to inquire our way in German, as most likely we should not be answered—rather in English, which

THE DANUBE AT ORSOVA


Adrian Stokes

comparatively few understood. We even heard of ladies who, on entering shops, were greeted—in the Austrian fashion—with the words '*Ich Küss die Hand*,' and immediately turned and left.

What we found most remarkable about Orsova (pronounced Orshova) was the striking mixture of races there—Gipsies, dark as niggers, a bloom as that of the grape on them, their long locks curling to their shoulders, and the rags they wore, always like draperies, never clothes; olive-complexioned Rumanians, in the neat costume of their country; swarthy red-capped Turks, big-framed and muscular; and Magyars, for the most part fair and handsome. Several officers and their families dined at the hotel, and my wife observed—not without surprise—that the ladies in this remote corner were so dressed in the very latest fashions that they might have entered a fashionable London drawing-room without differing in any detail from other ladies there.

The caviare of Orsova is renowned, is considered the best to be obtained in Hungary, and generally costs twice as much as the Russian. We had ordered some, with lemon and a little chopped onion—as is our custom—when a waiter whispered in my ear begging me to forgo the onion, because

when that was eaten with his caviare, the landlord always left the room in dudgeon.

By the inn door and hanging about on the quays were wily Turks, whose one object was to persuade strangers to visit Ada-Kaleh, a Turkish island about four miles down-stream. We struck a bargain with them—so much for the journey there, and back to Orsova—and started early in the afternoon. On landing, we found ourselves in a busy street of open shops, where tobacco, Turkish delight, etc., were sold. Red-fezzed Turks sat cross-legged on benches before them. One fine old fellow with a long white beard was the guide who led Kossuth to safety over the frontier, after the unsuccessful revolution in 1849. Pretty little girls in gaily-coloured loose trousers and slippers trotted about, their hair done up in many little plaits. The houses were small and dainty, with windows screened in the Oriental fashion.

A Hungarian young couple had arrived shortly before us, and the lady asked my wife if she would accompany her on a visit to one of the houses: men not being admitted. While they were away, I chatted with the husband, who bought a considerable quantity of tobacco and cigarettes. 'You are going to the Tátra, *bitte schön.* I know it, *bitte schön.* It

is beautiful, magnificent, *bitte schön*—the grandest country in Europe without doubt, *bitte schön.*'

My wife found the Turkish house scrupulously clean, and harmoniously coloured. There were divans round the walls, and the hangings and rugs, though inexpensive, were tasteful. The women, with charming politeness, offered bunches of roses. The whole island at that time looked like a garden of roses. We went for a walk across it to the ruins of a fortress, whose red-brick walls rose out of stagnant pools, and then started on our return journey.

The young Hungarians left at the same time, both boats being rowed to the mainland to be overhauled at a small Custom-house by revenue officers; and there we parted company, my friend's tobacco causing trouble; *bitte schön.*

There were two stalwart men to row and a third stood in the stern, with a paddle, to steer; but the current was rapid, and they made but small headway — though they certainly pulled like Turks. We therefore went to the shore, and a towline was produced. With many bumpings and much frantic shouting we covered but half a mile before it was dark, and we then had reached a high quay, along which several steamers were moored. The agility with which the man with the line boarded them and

skipped round their masts and funnels could not be excelled. However, the quay passed, our Turks decided to spare further efforts, and advised us to go home on foot, 'only a mile or two by road,' they said. I paid them the sum agreed upon, as they had worked hard, though I believe they had never expected to be able to take us back to Orsova. The young couple were abandoned at the Custom-house, on the plea of darkness.

Our walk back led through gloomy avenues of tall Lombardy poplars, of which there were several converging to the point, where, in 1849, the Hungarian crown was buried, and remained concealed, until the coronation of Franz Joseph as King of Hungary in 1867.

During our stay at Orsova a gunboat and two torpedo-boats arrived. What interested me most in them was their colour—a warm dark grey—which to an astonishing extent rendered them almost invisible when looked at from some distance, against the opposite coast.

Five or six miles below Orsova are the Iron Gates, where the Danube was unnavigable until 1896, when engineering operations cleared a passage.

Also near Orsova, among the mountains, is a popular watering-place, 'The Baths of Hercules,' or 'Herkules-fürdö,' but we did not visit it.

A YOUNG SLOVAK

CHAPTER II

FROM ORSOVA TO THE TÁTRA

FROM Orsova to Transylvania our way led by several valleys, closed in by moderately high mountains, past Herkules-fürdö, Mehádia, over the pass Porta Orientalis, by Karánsebes—the seat of an Oriental Greek Bishop—to Lugos, the seat of a Bishop of the Greek Catholic faith. Very few dwellings of any kind were to be seen on the whole countryside.

Lugos is a surprisingly modern town, where all looked new—buildings, streets, and the bridges over the Temes which unite its two parts, German Lugos and Rumanian Lugos—and proved uninteresting. There were peasants from neighbouring villages strolling in the streets—men in long green mantles, of a colour between that of emeralds and young grass, which were striking.

The journey onwards lay among broad valleys,

by wide, sluggish rivers, where the lines of distant hills were long and graceful, and the colours pale. We had to change at Maros Illye, and little thought, as we sat in the small open-air restaurant, trying to while away a wait of several hours, that later on we should pay a visit to a charming country-house close by.

There was a gentleman in the train that day before we reached Nagyszeben—as the Magyars name it, though the town has been called Hermannstadt, for the last seven hundred years—who was polite to us in several trifling matters, but boiled over in anger on the mere mention of the word Austria. He told us that it would be quite impossible for us to live at various charming vilagles we passed, and recommended us an hotel at Hermannstadt, and to order *Holzteller-fleisch* there—a speciality of Transylvania. The inn proved good enough, and the *Holzteller-fleisch* to be excellent beefsteak, served on a circular slab of wood about eight inches in diameter and an inch thick.

Hermannstadt is an old German town, modified by Hungarian innovations. In former days it was sometimes the capital of Transylvania, and was the home of one of the earliest Saxon colonies. It stands on a hill by the small River Zibin, and the

ruins of its ancient walls and towers still exist. Of interest are its Rathaus, built in 1558, and the Protestant church, with a roof of many-coloured tiles, dating from the fifteenth century. Inside are a bronze baptismal font in the form of a chalice, dated 1438, and on the wall of the choir a painting by Johann von Rosenau of the Crucifixion, 1445. In a modern part of the church have been gathered together the carved tombstones of Saxon Counts and Burgermeisters.

The Brukenthal Palace contains a collection of 1,250 paintings, formed by a Baron Brukenthal, who was Governor of Transylvania for ten years from 1777. For the most part, though they bear the usual great names, they are but poor things. In striking contrast to the rest are three small paintings—a Jan van Eyck and two Memlings, gems of the purest water.

The inhabitants of Hermannstadt appeared to be ordinary Germans, such as are to be seen in any German town. Certainly, in the streets we saw some picturesque peasants, but on inquiry were told they came from the villages where we had been persuaded it was quite impossible for us to live. This town is one that was especially recommended to us—not by the Prelate or the Gräfin, but

by other Hungarian friends, whose enthusiasm over Transylvania knew no bounds. Still, the unwelcome question would sometimes present itself: Why come so far for a German town, when many, more quaint and historically interesting, are to be found nearer home?

We saw what was to be seen in the morning, and spent the afternoon, in low spirits, resting in the shade of willow-trees, whence we could watch some nearly naked sunlit soldiers wash their horses in a muddy stream.

Our next journey was to Kolosvár, now the capital of the country which we call Transylvania, after its Latin name. Hungarians call it Erdély; Germans, Siebenbürgen.

In the earliest times of which there are records Transylvania formed part of the kingdom of Dacia. Next it was a Roman province (A.D. 105–274). From that date it appears to have been a sort of no-man's-land—until the end of the eleventh century—where Magyars, Huns, Goths, etc., wandered and strove. It was conquered by King Ladislas I. (1078–1095), and united to Hungary.

King Geisa II. (1141–1162), to populate the land, invited settlers from Central Germany, who have ever since been called Saxons. They founded

THE LAKE OF CSORBA IN JUNE

Adrian Stokes

many towns which still flourish—Hermannstadt, Bistritz, Schässburg, etc.—and King Andreas II. (1204–1235) conferred on them the rights they still enjoy.

Mongols and Turks ravaged the country at intervals from 1240 till 1420.

Hunyadi János, who died in 1465, was successful in uniting the various nationalities in a spirit of common patriotism.

After the great defeat of the Hungarians by the Turks at Mohács, 1526, Transylvania became an autonomous State, under the sovereignty of Turkey. Among its elected Princes Bethlen Gábor was the most conspicuous.

At the peace of Karlowitz, 1699, the Turks resigned their sovereign rights, and the Emperor Leopold I. established religious equality. The Saxons were for the most part Lutherans; the Magyars and Szeklers, Catholics, Unitarians, or Calvinists.

Rákóczy led a rebellion (1704–1710), which was unsuccessful, and Maria Theresa made the country into an Archduchy.

In 1867 Transylvania was finally united to Hungary. It forms the south-east portion of that country. Its population is about two and

a half millions, composed of Magyars, Szeklers, Saxons, and Rumanians, the latter numbering a million and a half. There are also many Armenians, Ruthenians, Jews, Gipsies, Slovaks, Bulgarians, Servians, and Greeks.

Kolosvár (German, Klausenburg), by the River Szamos, contains some 50,000 inhabitants, of whom but 2,000 are Saxons; thus there is more excuse for its Magyarized name than is the case with several other towns. It is a pleasant, friendly place, with many good houses, the aristocracy of the province assembling there, in the winter months, rather than in Budapest. Most of the people one meets are dressed like those in London or Paris, and quite in the latest mode. In contrast to these, are to be seen surprising groups of peasants and Gipsies, who appear to have been left by the Middle Ages, or to have stepped out of pictures by Breughel. There are the usual public buildings and a University, also a charming little museum—in the birthplace of Matthias Corvinus—containing Hungarian wood-carvings, embroideries, pottery, etc. In the centre of a very large square is the fine fourteenth-century Church of St. Michael, and on the south side of this a modern bronze equestrian statue of Matthias Corvinus, with four

warriors grouped around the pedestal, by Fadrusz. It is in every respect finer than the statue of Maria Theresa at Poszony (Pressburg), which looks well from the river, but seen from any other point is unsatisfactory.

We called at an office for the information of strangers, to ask advice as to our future travels. I have forgotten all that was given except that the most amiable manager strongly recommended us to go to sup that evening at a fashionable open-air restaurant just outside the town, and see the fire-works. He would 'allow himself the pleasure' of joining us, after our meal. The road to the restaurant led through fine avenues, perhaps a mile long, near the small river. We supped as we were bid, and our new acquaintance joined us afterwards. He was supremely pleased with every-thing; had been an army officer, but now devoted his life to helping visitors to appreciate his country in a proper spirit. I recall but one of his remarks. A few Catherine-wheels, a rocket or two, and some Roman candles had gone off successfully, and then, unable to contain himself any longer, he exclaimed: '*Nicht wahr, es ist grossstädtisch?*'

We were furnished with an introduction to an old Bohemian painter and his English wife, who

long ago settled in Kolosvár. I found in Mr. Melka a landscape painter for whom it was still natural to paint in a style in vogue about the middle of the last century, or earlier, still observing traditions elsewhere generally lost. The pictures he showed were well composed, well drawn, low-toned, without charm of colour, but correct in values, and painted with considerable sense of style. To me they gave real pleasure, recalling as they did the work of the last of an old band of landscape painters practising when first I went to France.

In the happy days of Prince Rudolf, Crown Prince of Austria-Hungary, Mr. Melka used to accompany his shooting-parties in the Transylvanian mountains and make drawings—sometimes of the company, sometimes of their bag. He showed reproductions of many of these. One was of five bears, lying side by side, which had all been shot on the same day. He described the scenery up in those high places as magnificent, and told of lakes which had been without fish until he and his friends introduced trout. These have thriven exceedingly, and take the fly on the rare occasions when it is offered to them. As for living there, it was out of the question unless one was provided with servants, horses, tents, provisions, etc., all brought up from the lowlands, a day or two's journey away.

IN CHURCH AT VAZSECZ

He told us that it was impossible to persuade the peasants in or about Kolosvár to pose as models, and that if one began painting Gipsies, they were so unreliable they probably would not reappear after the first sitting.

Thus discouraged by Mr. Melka, we decided to give up Transylvania, at least for that year, and away to the renowned Tátra, to the mighty Himalayan heights, the pellucid lakes and wondrous Niagarian falls, and the scented air of the pine-forests of the Tátra. So had our imagination been worked upon that this hardly exaggerates our state of expectation.

Hungarians, more than any other people with whom I am acquainted, may be divided into two classes; those who have travelled abroad and seen little of their own country, and, the majority, who have seen a little of their own country and nothing else. Hence the comparisons of their own with other lands, so frequently heard, are generally misleading, though made in the most perfect good faith.

It was a long and tedious railway journey, lasting all one night and half the next day. I remember moonlit rivers and little whitewashed cots with tall thatched roofs, dark as sealskin, and here and there

an orange light in a window, and, behind all, deep-toned mountains and the stars.

A friendly fellow-passenger told us when we at last entered the Tátra, winding our way among hills richly wooded with beech and oak. We had passed Kassa and its beautiful Gothic church, and went on to Tátra Lomnicz, changing at Poprád, whence one can drive to the wondrous ice-caves of Dobschauer; but, unfortunately, we did not do so.

It was near Poprád that we had our first view of the mighty central range of Carpathians, rising grim and grey from a level plain. They stretch from east to west for about thirty miles, and lesser chains continue, or run parallel with them.

The chief summer resorts of the Tátra lie in clearings in the pine-forest which clothes the lower southern slopes of the great mountains for their whole extent. A carriage road unites most of them from Barlangliget to the east, by Tátra Lomnicz, Tátra Füred, and several smaller places, to the Lake of Csorba on the west.

When we arrived at Tátra Lomnicz—some time in June—the season had not begun, and yet there was in the air, besides the odour of the pines, something that scented of rank and fashion, and

seemed to convey a hint that only the rich were welcome there.

It began to rain, and rained incessantly for days. The Gräfin and her family, whom we expected to meet, were detained elsewhere, and her charming villa remained closed.

We wandered in the wet woods among pine-trees of ordinary dimensions, in no way resembling the primeval forests of our fancy, and up and down the central clearing. Round about this are villas —for the most part belonging to families with famous names—a bathing establishment with a shop or two attached, and a large hotel and its dependencies. Near the middle, are a small artificial pond, surrounded by rockery, and a band-stand. On a bare bluff some hundred yards removed, and overlooking all, a new Grand Hotel was receiving its final touches. Most of the decorations and all the furniture we saw there were in the most refined modern taste, and everything in it had been made in Hungary.

To the North, beyond the encircling forest, great crags, in colour slaty-grey, patched with green below and snow above, soared up to the sad sky.

A thin sprinkling of guests accentuated the emptiness of our hotel, but an excellent Czigány

band had already arrived, and we keenly appreciated our first experience of good Gipsy music. The leader soon discovered that we were interested, and—as often happens—drew nearer and nearer, fiddling the while, his snakelike eye fixed on us as though to fascinate before the plate went round.

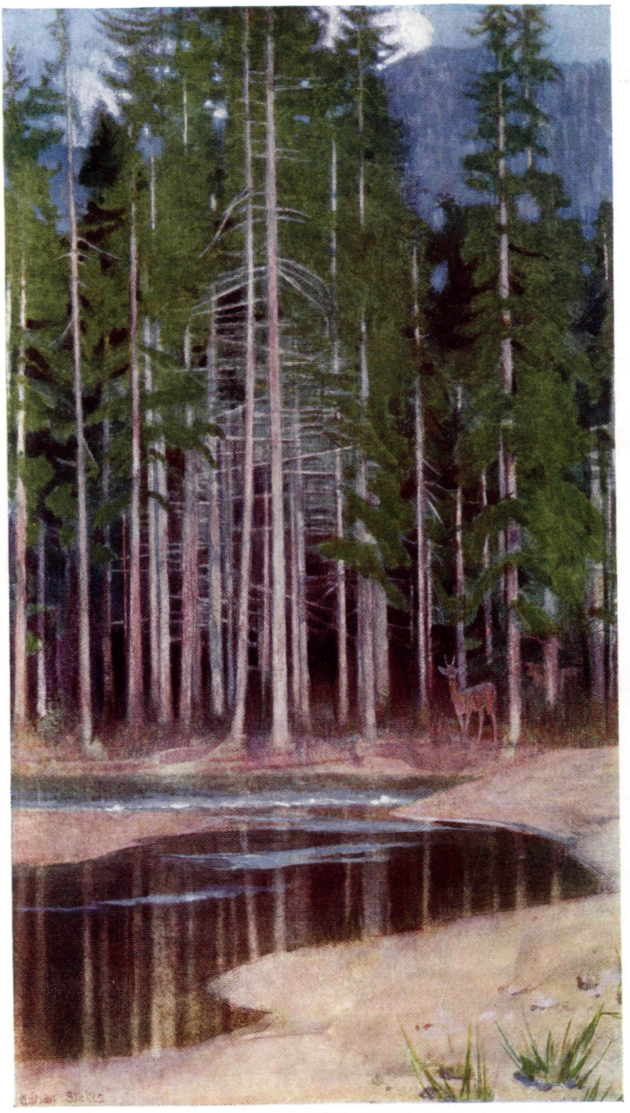
There is no village near Tátra Lomnicz; no cottages or peasants are there to delight the painter; but there is a racecourse, and golf-links have been opened since we left.

We waited for a long, useless week, going for walks into the mountains when the weather cleared, but found nothing resembling what we had learnt of the magnificence of the Himalayas. The clear lakes lying in stony valleys were of a peculiar beauty.

At Tátra Füred there are three settlements, known in German as Neu Smecks, Alt Smecks, and Unter Smecks. Each—as far as I remember—was composed of a group of villas and a hotel or two. These were reported to be very expensive and mainly frequented in the season by Grand-Dukes and financiers.

We saw a famous waterfall in the neighbourhood—a very pretty waterfall, but not unlike other

PINES IN THE TÁTRA



pretty waterfalls in many another land, as it seemed to me.

We also went to Barlangliget, and visited the curious caves there, winding for an hour or two up and down wet wooden steps, among stalactite formations weird in the extreme. The dripping from the trees outside was repeated from the rocks within. There are grand trees at Barlangliget. The place itself consists of a group of villas surrounding a large restaurant in the forest. It is considerably higher than Tátra Lomnicz; its season is shorter, and it lies on the road leading to Poland, round the eastern shoulder of the last great mountain.

In the rain we went down to Késmárk on a market-day. The towns-people are of German origin, but the place was then flooded with Slovak peasants, the most picturesque we had yet seen. We anxiously inquired where they lived, only to be told 'Not here: they come from far away. *Hier sind nur intelligente Leute*' (Here are only intelligent folk). As usual in Hungarian towns, we found modernity to be the ambition and the pride of the people, and could not persuade them that we were really interested in peasants who seemed to them so far behind the times.

Many Jew dealers were also there, wearing wet black coats and locks, sadly out of curl, before their ears.

There is a quaint wooden church, with spiral columns, at Késmárk, dating from the beginning of the eighteenth century, which is well worth seeing.

As it seemed useless to stay on longer under these cheerless conditions, and the date of the Gräfin's arrival was still uncertain, we decided, with revived but not excessive hope, to move on to Csorba-to (the Lake of Csorba), some 4,500 feet above the level of the sea. Our way took us again to Poprád, thence past a few little stations to Csorba, where we changed to a small funicular railway leading up to our destination. During the journey the views of the stately mountains were magnificent, but what interested us even more were the gaily dressed Slovak peasants who scrambled in and out of the train at every halt.

Csorba-to is a romantic lake, magnificently situated among forests and mountains. Lines and patches of snow still flecked the heights, and were mirrored in the still waters. Against the sunset, the mountains became a warm plum colour, and, with the dark forests, plane behind plane of purply green, were all perfectly reflected in the glowing

water, save where the evening breeze cut level silver lines.

At one end of the lake stands a large hotel, and close by it are the café and several villas, under the same management, where rooms may be taken. The year of our visit was the last of a popular landlord, and the hotel was being greatly enlarged, having been taken over—as well as everything else near the lake—by the Sleeping-Car Company, whose chief office is, I have heard, in Brussels, not in Hungary. In the glowing prospectus issued by it, which I have already mentioned, trout-fishing was held out as one of the great attractions of the lake; but notice-boards forbidding fishing stood about, and I failed in my efforts to obtain a licence at any cost. There were trout enough in the lake; I saw a number that might have weighed from two to three pounds. I remember one distinctly, which I observed concealed among the rocks. He was following a pale blue dragon-fly, and as it dipped from time to time to the surface of the water, he rose from the depths towards it in long graceful curves—and this was continued for some little time.

A footpath led round the lake, up and down, according to the nature of the ground, sometimes

over groups of large rocks, sometimes among trees slightly removed from the water, and, again, close by the water's edge. An army of workmen—employed, I presume, by the Sleeping-Car Company—were busily engaged, blasting rocks, felling trees, and making a broad way as level and uneventful as that which encircles the round pond in Kensington.

The deep lake is only separated by a neck of land about a hundred yards wide from the brow of the hill which descends far down to the plain below. There is a great outlook thence over plains, patterned with forest, stretching away to distant mountains, which, tier beyond tier, fade into the western light. A few grey villages stud the plain, each with a white church-tower, or two.

From these villages came the work-people to build the new parts of the hotel, and our amiable landlord—who kissed my wife's hand before every meal, murmuring the while as if it was too good—promised that any one of them she chose should sit for her. A Slovak boy of fifteen was selected, and sent to our rooms for the afternoon. The next day he failed to appear at the time appointed, but was found hiding in the woods, and brought to his uncongenial task an hour late. He promised

CHILD WITH FOWL, TÁTRA

to come the following morning for a third and last sitting, but did not. The landlord, appealed to, felt his honour involved, with the result that two hours afterwards a loud knocking at our door announced the arrival of a gendarme, in uniform, who was discovered holding the truant model firmly by his collar.

Models being so difficult to obtain in Csorba-to, we determined to explore the villages down below —useless, everyone said, as it was quite impossible for civilized beings to stay there. However, we had tried the highly recommended places, from Lomnicz, 'Pearl of the Tátra,' onwards, without finding what we sought, and felt inclined to take the bit in our teeth and break away from convention on our own account.

On learning our intention, the landlord most kindly gave us an introduction to three ladies living in the village of Vázsecz, and there we went on the Feast of SS. Peter and Paul. We arrived during service in the Calvinist church, and waited about to see the people leave. When they did we could hardly believe our eyes, so strange and charming were they. Had we been in China or Tibet, nothing more surprising could have appeared. The women and girls, tall and slim,

wore short, clinging, many-pleated skirts—generally of indigo colour, with a pale yellow pattern on them—which reached just below their knees; top boots, black or white; bright bodices; and hugely puffed-out white linen sleeves. Their pretty caps were hidden under gaily coloured handkerchiefs, round their necks were multitudes of beads, and each carried a large prayer-book with metal clasps and a little nosegay of scented herbs. They stood in groups, amused that we should look at them, and then, like timid animals, ran away. The men wore white felt short jackets and trousers and enormous brown leather belts studded with brass. These were doubled in front, forming a pocket for prayer-books, tobacco, etc. Their hats were of black felt, low and broad-brimmed.

We next presented our introduction to the three ladies—quiet, gentle persons Could we stay at Vázsecz? we asked them. "Why not? We do," was the simple rejoinder. They mentioned some of the drawbacks of the place, and told how they had tried to grow fruit and vegetables, but every scrap was stolen long before it was ripe. The youngest of them volunteered to take us to the inn to interview the landlady, and see what we thought of her accommodation.

The inn, kept by Frau Deutsch, stood in the main street. It was built of bare logs, had a high-pitched roof, and was larger and uglier than the neighbouring houses, which were light and dainty, and each had two little windows, surrounded by stripes of bright colour, towards the street.

We entered through a rough bar, where men stood drinking spirits. Next came an eating-room for peasants, rudely furnished, and beyond that the parlour, with two beds in it, and a table covered with a soiled white tablecloth. Skirts and other garments hung from nails in the walls, and untidiness reigned supreme. We then thought that this room and a kitchen opening from it completed the establishment.

Having ordered lunch, and still accompanied by our amiable guide, we strolled about the village, and more and more were we tempted to stay and paint there. But our meal was execrable! Thin soup, followed by ragout of hard mutton, with a strong taste of sheep's wool, and coarse bread, were all that was provided, and the spoons and forks were far from clean, until we had ourselves attended to them. The young Jewess, a niece of our hostess, who waited on us, allowed us to feel that we were rather in the way.

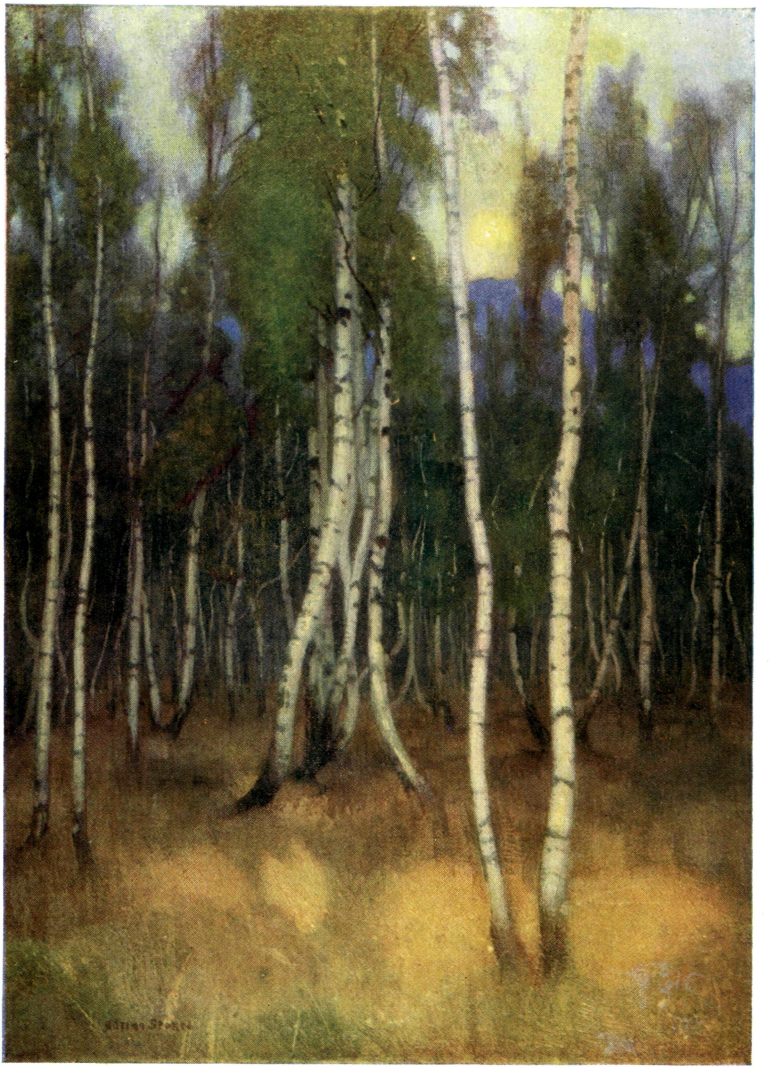
Before leaving, however, Frau Deutsch assured my wife that if she came to stay for a few days, she would do her best to make her comfortable; and then we returned to Csorba-to.

We had been there a fortnight. At first the hotel was nearly empty, but as the weather improved more guests arrived to stay, and when it was fine noisy crowds swarmed up by the funicular railway for the day. They overran the woods, and screamed and splashed, in vermilion iron boats, about the beautiful lake. There was no longer any peace. When working out of doors I was invariably discovered and watched. In the crowded restaurant overworked waiters flung food before us, and could not stay for orders, and the Gipsy band was loud and bad.

About two hours from Csorba-to by an easy mountain path is another lake, on about the same level. It lies beautifully situated among the mountains, its steep rocky shores clothed with pines. A small restaurant is there, from which may be seen many trout in the clear water; but fishing is forbidden.

Besides following marked paths through the forest, we sometimes ventured to make a bee-line for some peak that attracted us. This invariably

BIRCHES AT LUCSIVNA-FÜRDŐ



led us among *krumholz*, or creeping fir, which proved an insuperable barrier, for to get through it is one of the most fatiguing things imaginable. On several occasions during these excursions we came across roe-deer, and game-birds resembling our black game, but somewhat larger.

In the Tátra the air is fresh and invigorating. Clearly defined clouds move across blue skies by day, and at sunset the great mountain formations stand sharply silhouetted against an intense light. The scent of pines is everywhere.

To many of us pine-forests, with their long serrated edges, and individual trees, each very much resembling the rest, are at first unsympathetic, but by the dwellers in Central and Southern Europe they are beloved. For them they mean health and holidays. As the seaside and salt sea-breezes have from childhood been to us, so for them are pine-clad slopes and the delicious air of mountain regions.

In the hot Hungarian summer crowds come up to the Tátra from the sultry towns. What wonder if, refreshed and happy, they think it the finest place in the world!

CHAPTER III

VÁZSECZ (A SLOVAK VILLAGE) AND A PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION

Two women came up the mountain-side from Vázsecz, several times a week, with eggs, and my wife arranged to return with them, they carrying her painting materials and other effects sufficient for a short stay. I enviously watched them from the brow of a hill as they descended a tiny path winding through woods and across clearings. A thunderstorm came on with drenching showers, but still they persevered, small dots far below me, until they were finally lost among dark trees.

When next the egg-sellers came they brought word that my wife was far more comfortable than she had anticipated, and that if I wished to come with the luggage everything could be arranged for a stay of some duration.

This was good news indeed. A few days later

I packed up with feelings of glee rare during that oft-repeated operation, and went down in gladness to the Slovak nest.

Vázsecz was one of the last resorts of the Carpathian brigands, and many stories are still told about them. We heard from an old gentleman, whose country-house is some ten miles away, how in his youth carriages were often held up and robbed on the highway, and how he himself on one occasion owed his escape to the fleetness of his horses. But all that belongs to the past. Throughout Hungary the traveller is now as safe as in any country in the world, though wandering Gipsies have an evil reputation.

The Gräfin, regarding all the peoples of Hungary, except Magyars, as apt to be dangerous, had strongly urged me to carry a revolver on our travels, and the Prelate also thought this advisable on the *pusztas* on account of dogs, which are often large and very savage. I did not procure one, and during the greater part of four years spent in many parts of Hungary—even the most outlandish —never needed one.

The village for which I was bound was reputed the most lawless in those parts, and it was said that when flocks were driven by night along the

highroad which passes through it, they never emerged at the other side complete in number. Be this as it may, nothing was ever stolen from us; nor did we suffer from any intended rudeness during the whole of our stay there.

Half a mile away is the railway-station called Vágfalva—the Magyarized name of Vázsecz—meaning 'village by the Vág,' which is one of the great tributaries of the Danube, though but a trout stream here, near its source.

I was met at the station by my wife, accompanied by a sturdy handmaiden from the inn, who usually acted as postman, taking letters to and from the trains. She folded a large white cloth around half of our luggage, and bringing the corners over her shoulders and across her chest, hoisted on to her back a load sufficient to try the strength of a mule, and lightly accompanied us to our quarters. There was a large room there whose existence we had not suspected on our first visit. It was clean and well furnished; the beds were excellent, and finer linen I have never felt. Seldom occupied, save when a Parliamentary candidate came to canvass or an envoy of the Government to take notes, it had become a store-room for the treasures of Frau Deutsch. Our

SLOVAK WOMEN AT PRAYER, VAZSECZ

first struggle—recalling many a similar scene in English lodgings — was to obtain room in the wardrobes for our own effects. In this we were at length victorious, and a simple meal, surprisingly well cooked, was served—for our landlady could cook well enough when anything was at hand worthy of her art.

Now, amid delightfully dressed peasants in their quaint village, and with pleasant country backed by blue mountains close at hand, we seemed at last to be in a fair way to start work in earnest. To add to my happiness, the wife of the Notary—a mighty hunter and a man of means, who rented the shooting and fishing of the district, but was then absent electioneering—gave me permission to fish in the river until his return, when she said he would doubtless be able to procure me a regular licence.

But all was not to go quite smoothly. The language difficulty was the first to present itself, and had it not been that the village inns of Hungary, and nearly all the village shops, are kept by Jews, who speak German among themselves, we could neither have remained in Vázsecz nor in several places where we subsequently stayed. Had the Hungarian language been sufficient for our purpose, we should have made an effort to learn it, even though—having

no relationship with, or likeness to, other European languages—every word of it must be acquired by sheer effort of unaided memory ; but to communicate directly with all the people who interested us knowledge of many strange tongues—almost useless on leaving the country—was necessary, and to learn them seemed an insuperable task.

As the Slovaks of Vázsecz speak a Slavonic language, it was necessary to find an interpreter. No Jew with spare time could be found, but fortunately a young schoolmistress was discovered who could speak German, and agreed, during the summer holidays, to help my wife to secure and talk to her sitters. These, when found, were wild and restless. Of discipline they had no notion, and in art their highest flights of imagination were bounded by photography. They could not understand, and resented, having to stay still so long.

My own troubles began out of doors, for hardly had I sat down when a crowd collected. It is difficult, surrounded by a circle of human beings three deep, many of whom inspect from the front, to concentrate attention, or even to see the view ! I feel sure they had no wish to disturb me, but they did. For the women and children I was the latest sensation, and one whose novelty never wore off.

The men kept away, perhaps thinking my occupation effeminate and unworthy of their notice. Often forced to retreat, I had to abandon many a subject which I should have loved to paint.

Then Frau Deutsch came to the rescue—only to make matters worse. She sent round the *Heiduck*, or village bailiff, with his drum, to make a public announcement somewhat to this effect: 'That the English painter was employed by the State, and must not be approached or interfered with when at work, subject to the gravest pains and penalties.' Evidently no one believed this, and the only result was that the *Heiduck* got tipsy, and remained so until his fees were exhausted. He never so far lost himself that he could not find me out, lurch into my little crowd, seize on someone, generally a poor and defenceless girl, and, to my great regret, push her rudely to the other side of the road. He would then, by signs, demand further payment for his annoying attentions.

Partly to escape, partly because it is my favourite sport, I sometimes went fishing. Solitude by murmuring water has often brought peace to a fisherman, and, after my hustling, it was a very keen delight to explore an unknown stream—just the right size for casting—testing the gravelly runs and

deep, still pools. The river wound through grassy flats, where Gipsy children tended geese, on among groves of trees—poplar and willow—near a secluded farm, and then far down a narrow valley. I never returned empty-handed, and sometimes brought a fair basket of trout and grayling, running up to a pound in weight, which made a welcome addition to our scanty fare. A few four and five pounders were said to be in the water, but they never rose to my fly, and I saw no sign of them. If they ever existed, they must have offered irresistible temptation to the Gipsies, who could have sold them in the watering-places for a high price.

Meanwhile my wife—as we could find nothing in the nature of a studio—was painting in a small Catholic church, where service was held but once a fortnight by a visiting priest. He had most kindly placed it at her disposition. Children collected and remained all day peering through each keyhole and crevice, but fled when the door was opened, and did no harm.

I either painted from our windows or went far afield—till harvesting called all but Gipsies to the land—and so things gradually settled down.

But an election was at hand, and stirring times were coming. The first symptom of them arrived

A ROAD IN THE CARPATHIANS

Peasant woman carrying her baby in the basket on her back.

Adrian Stokes

early one morning, in the form of a telegram from an agent: 'Prepare dinner for ten to-morrow, noon.' Only at ten o'clock did our landlady discover that this had been despatched the previous day. No time was to be lost; in two hours the guests would be there, and next to nothing was in the house!

Frau Deutsch was a clever woman, a woman of resource, who rose to the occasion with the spirit of her race. It was hay-time, and every able-bodied Slovak, man, woman, and child, had left the village. She started at once, with a maidservant, on a raiding expedition to her neighbours' yards, and ere long had wrung the necks of a dozen of their plumpest fowls. The astutest poacher among the Gipsies was summoned, and the order given, 'Trout for ten within an hour.'

At twelve o'clock the company assembled; dinner was ready, and Frau Deutsch came up smiling, as if nothing unusual had happened.

The following Sunday we drove to Vychodna, a neighbouring village, in a springless cart, the seat of which, slung from the sides by leather straps, swung perilously from side to side when the horse changed its pace or the road was uneven.

The costumed villagers turned out to see us start, forming rows, in which red, black, and white

predominated; for the dark dresses they wear at church are carefully removed on their return home, and the under-skirts are red. We had become 'carriage folk,' and had evidently risen in popular estimation!

Our driver was a tall, handsome Pole—the only one in Vázsecz—and could speak a little French, of which he was inordinately proud, as, indeed, he appeared to be of all things connected with himself. On overtaking two huge peasants clad in white felt and short sheepskin jackets, he stopped and invited them to jump in; but they, better mannered, first referred to us for permission —which was readily given—and then mounted beside the Pole on the front seat. One of them was the *Richter*, or magistrate, of Vychodna, whither we were bent, the other his friend; and before long my wife was engaged in animated conversation with them, undeterred by the fact that literally neither side understood a word of what the other said. Their simple politeness and natural good-breeding were such as we have sometimes met with elsewhere among genuine self-respecting peasants.

Our road led over low, bare hills, then through pine-woods watered by sparkling streams. The

village consisted of one long main street of neat little houses, with a few short straggling branches. It had a church in the middle and an inn at each end. Our Pole drove through it, skilfully avoiding groups of peasants who seemed to be the worse for drink, and pulled up before a low whitewashed inn, the last building before the open country was reached.

Had we known that canvassing and treating, in connection with the coming election, were in full swing, we should doubtless have chosen another occasion for our visit. Being there, we thought it wise to stroll into the country and view Vychodna from a distance.

A waggonette with a canvas cover passed us at a rapid pace, and the six men occupying it stared at us curiously.

On returning to the village we were accosted by an excited peasant, who, shouting 'Miklós! Miklós!' (the name of the county town), and pointing to a group of gentlemen higher up the village street, seemed anxious to lead us to them. When we approached we recognized the people who had lately passed us in the carriage, and one of them advanced to meet us, asking somewhat curtly, first in Hungarian, then in French, if he

might venture to inquire the nature of the business which brought us there. Resenting this, though fully conscious that we were in a foreign country with whose customs we were unacquainted, I was still hesitating what to reply when he introduced himself by name, and then presented a friend, the brother of a statesman whose name I knew. This gentleman spoke English perfectly, and we were soon on the best of terms. The whole party seemed relieved on learning what we were, as, seeing strangers in the place, they had supposed we were there in the interest of their political opponents. Indeed, they all became most friendly, saying, 'You have been in the Tátra. You are seeing our country. Good! good!'

We had hardly left them, with the intention of making an early start for home, when another excited peasant pounced upon us, and insisted on conducting us to the inn where we had left our cart. Presumably he noticed that we had no business with the gentlemen we had just left, and therefore concluded we must be searching for the headquarters of the opposite party. He ushered us into a small, dimly lighted room and then retired, pleased with his own acumen.

DESCENDED FROM A BRIGAND CHIEF

Seating ourselves at a table, we ordered bread and wine from the landlord, an intelligent young Jew, who appeared surprised to find us where we were. Near to us, at another table, sat two men in the uniform of foresters, and these were soon joined by a young gentleman in a shooting suit with a gun, when whispered conversation took place, accompanied by glances in our direction. One of the foresters then left, but returned immediately, ushering in a large peasant in white, who respectfully held his broad black hat in his hand, and whose furtive demeanour suggested that he disliked being seen. As he filled up nearly half the apartment, however, we could not help being conscious of his presence. The whole scene suggested conspiracy, and we were becoming keenly curious. More whispers! The peasant received a handful of cigars and some small coins and then sidled out, but only to return with another white giant, whose stolid appearance was relieved by small beadlike black eyes, which seemed able to see in all directions at once. Again whispers! Money and cigars were handed to the new-comer, and he left. Entered another conspirator, a really stagy one! He posed in dramatic attitudes—feet wide apart, knees bent, head screwed over shoulder,

eyes strained, and brows contracted — then he changed feet, turned his head over the other shoulder and frowned, peering at nothing. I noticed that he received less money and fewer cigars than the others. Before long all left the room except one of the foresters, and, finding he could speak German, I presently asked him what was going on. Were they bribing electors? 'Oh yes,' said he, with perfect *sans gêne*; 'it is done everywhere.' 'Quite so,' I replied; 'directly or indirectly it undoubtedly is.'

When our Polish driver appeared his manner was excited and his eyes were inflamed, but he managed to drive us rapidly and without accident through the village, though certainly taking many risks. Men in need of support were leaning against everything available; women—in no distinctive costume—were out in crowds; and sitting in the dust were scores of half-naked children, laughing, crying, or throwing stones at one another. A tribe of urchins followed us far on our way, begging for farthings and cheering the candidate whose partisans they thought we were.

The drink the Pole had consumed had a curious effect on him. Pointing with his whip, he first indicated the boundary dividing the parishes of Vychodna and Vázsecz, then explained that Vázsecz reached

much farther into the mountains than we could see, and finally announced that nearly the whole of it belonged to him. When the large potato-fields near our village were reached, he tapped his chest, repeating in a tone of sad self-satisfaction the words 'All mine—all mine.' A small black three-months-old foal, with a bell at its neck, had accompanied us all the time, sometimes cantering by its mother in the shafts, sometimes lagging behind, and then overtaking us at a gallop. The Pole demanded payment very largely in excess of the sum agreed upon for his services, and we last saw him still disputing with our landlady, in whose hands we left the matter. Frau Deutsch was true to us, and in the end paid what was just.

About this time the Notary, whose acquaintance I had not yet made, sent word that he was too busy to come to see me; that he was delighted that I fished in his river, and hoped I should be able to join his shooting-parties when the election was over. Not taking the latter part of this message very seriously, however, I neglected to send for my gun, which was lying with other baggage in Vienna.

Next came a letter announcing the arrival of the Gräfin at Tátra Lomnicz, inviting us to spend a

day with her, and promising a drive to a place which she believed would prove of great interest. We went, and what a change we found from the dreary Lomnicz of our first visit! The season was at its height; exquisitely dressed and well-bred people were everywhere to be seen; the band played, and all looked bright and happy.

The drive took us to Zsdjar, a straggling village near the frontier of Poland; but as we stayed there the following year, I will not describe it now.

It was night when we again reached Vázsecz. The full moon, an orange disc, was half-way up a deep blue sky, and its soft light fell on the dusty road and the double line of little houses with high-peaked roofs. It was reflected from a shallow stream running down one side of the street, and from the brass instruments of musicians who were sitting on our inn steps. Before the door young men and maidens were dancing. Now and again a youth took two of the trim, close-skirted, bare-legged girls by the waist, and whirled round and round with them, first in one direction, then the other, until they could turn no more. Inside, where free drinks were being served to all comers, the bar and neighbouring room were filled with a surging crowd. How should we get

VIEW FROM OUR WINDOWS IN VAZSECZ

Adrian Stokes

in? The house, of only one story towards the street, reached down at the back to a waste ground with a shallow stream running through it. Immediately below our bedroom was the cowhouse, as I had learned the first day, when awakened by the sounds of early-morning milking. Help came in form of the sturdy maidservant, who, taking us round to the back of the inn, introduced us to the cowhouse, reared an ordinary ladder in one corner of it, and pushed open a small trap-door opening into our room. During the rest of the time preceding the election we frequently came and went that way.

At last the great day arrived. Polling was to take place at St. Miklós (St. Michael), chief town of Liptó county, a place with about five thousand inhabitants, known in Hungarian style as Liptó Szt. Miklós.

Two hundred men from remote villages had slept at Vázsecz, to be ready for an early train. They were fine, well-grown, clean-shaven fellows, wearing armless sheepskin jackets, with the wool inside—the outside leather being richly embroidered in beautiful patterns of many colours. The sleeves and collars of their linen shirts were more simply embroidered in red. Each man, besides free

quarters and food and drink at discretion, was—so I was told—to receive ten kronen (about eight shillings) for his day. 'Who pays for all this?' I asked Frau Deutsch. 'Oh, the State,' said she; and though this answer seemed to me absurd, I never could get more definite information.

Each party ran special trains for its supporters, and the two sides were kept severely apart all day. The ordinary trains, however, were not interfered with, so, accompanied by the wife of the Notary and Frau Rosa Deutsch in festal attire, we went to St. Miklós too.

Carriages of all kinds were clattering each way, and streams of people flowed towards the town—a prosperous modern-looking place, without any distinctive features that I can remember. On approaching it, we were surprised by the great number of soldiers and policemen we saw. There were also many young men with red or green bands—the colours of the respective candidates—on their arms. It was necessary to procure a pass in order to enter the town. This was politely refused us, but the influence of our landlady worked wonders on a cordon of soldiers, which opened and let us through, and we made our way unmolested to the town-hall, which stood in a large square. Across the

square was drawn a double line of soldiers dividing the two parties. Gipsy or brass bands, in close proximity, were playing everywhere different tunes, while peasants, waving banners, danced. After a time we tried to cross to the opposition, but were stopped by soldiers, until a gentleman, on learning who we were, passed us through them. We found that a number of smartly dressed gentlemen, officers and civilians, were standing in a group on the other side, so, to escape further interrogation, we soon returned whence we had come. Already many peasants, 'half-seas over,' were dancing, embracing, and romping, and the ladies preferred to retire, leaving me alone in the crowd. A tall grim man, nearly drunk, who spoke only a Slav language, wished to know why I was there, and, not understanding me, seemed anxious to pick a quarrel, when exciting events near us attracted his attention. On the shoulders of the crowd a man in a grey suit and round hat was borne along to an accompaniment of frantic cheering. 'What has he done?' I asked the nearest Jew. 'Why, a big Russian has been trying to shake the loyalty of one of X.'s supporters, and the grey man has slapped his face.' I saw the 'big Russian'—a giant in a white yachting-cap—being seriously mobbed;

then soldiers and policemen closed around. Infuriated gentlemen rushed up, gesticulating and shouting: 'Arrest him! He is Panslav! He has no right to be here!' Then a gentleman spoke to me, advising me to keep wideawake, as at any moment the soldiers might have to clear the square.

The shops were, of course, all closed, but the hotels were crowded, and at the door of each played a band, while crowds of peasants crushed in and out, or strained for bundles of cigars, held aloft by half-suffocated agents.

A peasant, white with fury and wet with perspiration, struggled in the clutches of two canvassers. 'What has he done?' I again asked a Jew. 'He is drunk and wants to go over to the other party. He has been paid for his vote,' was the reply.

Towards noon the heat became intense. Noise and dancing continued unabated, and the smell of drink became sickening. I joined the ladies at a place appointed, when Frau Deutsch — whose scheme, it appeared afterwards, had been to obtain a free meal—led us to the best hotel.

From a balcony, overlooking a courtyard full of peasants devouring a generous dinner served on many deal tables, we observed the proceedings.

MISKO

Men only, as voters, were seated, but they gave the food with which they were served to their wives standing by, who secreted it, and then they called for more. This was repeated over and over again, and only excited our amusement; but when we saw some women coolly adding knives, forks, and even plates, to their hidden store, I felt obliged to tell a head-waiter what was going on. 'Oh,' said he, 'it does not matter. We are always paid a liberal allowance for theft.'

The Notary's wife had left us early in the day and I found it hard to convince our remaining companion that, even on election-day, we objected to obtain food under false pretences. To her—quite honest generally—all seemed fair at such a time, and she would have obtained orders for us to dine as helpers in the great fight.

Having eaten, we said good-bye to our landlady, and hoped to be able to explore the town, but found that every street was barred by soldiers, with orders to let no one by without a pass. The object of this was to prevent the fights which would surely have ensued if members of the rival parties had met. We appealed to an officer, who most courteously enabled us to leave the town,

telling us at the same time on no account to try to return.

We went for a walk by the Vág—here already a considerable river—where beautiful trees of various kinds and undulating hills clothed with ripening corn combined with the water and distant mountains in forming landscape of a very charming kind.

I draw a veil over the scenes awaiting us at and near the railway-station.

On the line, about half-way between St. Miklós and Vázsecz, lies Király-Lehota, where the White Vág and the Black Vág meet, and here lives in summer the famous sculptor whose acquaintance we had made in Budapest. It was his birthplace, and a grateful King has presented him with the land on which he was born, as a token of esteem. They do these things well in Hungary! We had already visited him, and been pressed to come again, so, having a free afternoon before us, we left the train and walked up towards his house. Around the grounds were tall spiked wooden palings, and we were surprised to find the door in them bolted and barred. Another door farther on was also fastened, but, again farther, a pathway led round the garden to the back of the house. We found the sculptor,

his wife, and their fair little daughter at home, and the English flag was immediately hoisted in our honour.

We loitered about the grounds, and had tea under the trees, when Mr. S——, as usual, full of life and humour, told how in the morning he had chaffed a trainload of his political adversaries through his speaking-trumpet as they were about to start, and how they had sent threatening messages in return.

Shortly after this I went with a half-brother of the sculptor's, who lived hard by, to see his trout-flies, and hear about the great trout he had killed—not with flies, but with a small soft fish as bait, the name of which I do not know. One trout, taken where the two Vágs meet, had weighed over twelve pounds.

On my return to Mr. S—— I found that the ladies had left him. They had, indeed, been sent away, and he was sitting with a repeating rifle across his knees and an axe beside him. A train from St. Miklós had just arrived, and a yelling crowd was coming up the road towards us. For a time things looked nasty, as the drunken mob charged the stout palings; but they were too far gone for any sort of organized attack, and tumbled

over one another in confusion. Then a band came up, and they seemed to forget their evil intentions, and, cheering and singing, soon staggered away.

We reached Vázsecz by an evening train without misadventure, and only on the following day learnt that our Notary had been attacked at St. Miklós, his carriage overturned, and he himself stabbed in the hand with which he successfully endeavoured to protect his head.

KRIVAN, SEEN FROM NEAR VÁZSECZ

CHAPTER IV

VÁZSECZ, LUCSIVNA-FÜRDÖ, AND A LITTLE SPORT

THE Notary of Vázsecz, in Liptó county, Upper Hungary, was King there. A strong man, he ruled the wild people of that place. The magistrates bowed before him and the lawless trembled. It was not yet forgotten how, on his arrival twenty-six years before, he had laid hold of two powerful thieves, one with each hand, and knocked their heads together. They had broken into a farm, killed an ox, and then, finding it too heavy to remove whole, were caught in the act of cutting it in two. The Notary was a Magyar. In appearance he somewhat resembled Cecil Rhodes, in spite of a suddenly retreating forehead, which sometimes reminded one of a tiger.

Not long after the election—in which his side was successful—I received a note from him, inviting me to join a shooting-party on the following day.

If I could come, a carriage would call for me at dawn and take me to Kriván—the most westerly of the great Carpathians—where the other shooters would have assembled. I replied that my gun was not with me, that I had no cartridges, but that otherwise I should have accepted his invitation with the greatest pleasure. A short answer to this was at once returned—'Gun and cartridges will be provided; carriage will call.'

It was a wild and stormy morning, and low clouds flew rapidly along, dropping occasional showers, when, well wrapped up, I settled myself in a long, low cart on some sheaves of straw, among great hampers of good things. Two peasants, in thick white clothes and the usual broad-brimmed hats and broad brown leather belts with clasps of brass, accompanied me. We drove for two hours over moorland or through outlying parts of the gloomy pine-forest, and then saw before us a glowing bonfire, with flames leaping six feet high, and, grouped around it, a dozen men, with about as many black-and-tan hounds.

The Notary received me cordially, and each member of the party came forward in turn to shake hands and tell me his name and what he was. One of them was the son-in-law of the successful Parliamentary candidate, and the shoot

had been arranged in his honour. They all spoke German as well as Hungarian, so when, after saying my name, I had repeated '*Maler, aus London,*' the ceremony of introduction was complete. We were eight guns, with six or seven attendants, whose duties were various.

One drive had taken place before my arrival, with no result except a wetting, and we soon moved on for the next.

The Notary placed us from one to two hundred yards apart, my stand being some fifty yards from a tall dark pine-wood and near a clump of young trees. These afforded little cover, and when I noticed, in the line close by, a small natural pit among rocks, where I could conceal myself, mother-wit prompted me to go down into it. I found later that the guns often remained in the open, quite motionless of course, trusting that the hunted animals, in their fright, would not see them.

A horn was blown half a mile away at the other side of the wood, two couple of hounds were unleashed and soon gave tongue, and then the excitement began.

Ere long I was attracted by something moving in the wood a hundred yards above me. Quietly it came a few paces, and then remained stock-still;

another pace or two, again a pause; and so on, until I saw against the intense darkness between the tree-trunks, without apparent modelling, and looking as flat as though cut out of cardboard, a fine roe-buck in his light red summer coat. Nearer, ever nearer, came the hounds. The buck stepped down the edge of the wood till opposite my place of concealment, then suddenly broke away, and, leaping over the stones and undergrowth between us, came on to his fate.

The guest of the day, a rubicund and jovial Judge, was on my left. Presently I heard him shoot twice, and then a second buck, going like the wind, flashed between me and the wood. My first barrel had no effect, but the second, aimed well in front, bowled him head over heels, and he lay dead. The Judge rushed up with out-stretched hand to clasp mine, and thank me for having stopped his quarry, and ask if it was still going when I fired! As a matter of fact, it had seen him when about to shoot, doubled back, and only offered a long shot from behind, which could have had no effect but to accelerate its pace. However, some shot were found near its hind-quarters, and at the end of the day he carried it off in triumph to Budapest.

SLOVAK GIRL IN SUNDAY ATTIRE

The drive was over. Beaters and hounds drew near, the guns assembled round a fire, and hearty compliments were paid to me. Then a hamper was opened, wine and mineral waters were handed round, cigars lit, and one or other of the company started snatches of old Hungarian hunting songs, the rest forming a chorus.

After each drive, and whenever we stopped for a short rest or consultation, a fire was at once made by the beaters. They all smoked pipes with small clay bowls closed with metal lids and stuffed with strong tobacco, which they had previously moistened with saliva and rolled up tight in the palms of their hands. The heads of the pipes were then thrust among the glowing embers of the fire to roast, and afterwards the tobacco was lit in the usual way. This method was said to make it burn more slowly and taste stronger than any other known.

Several outlying parts of the forest were driven, and a few hares fell before we arrived at the shed where luncheon was prepared, but not yet cooked. A village schoolmaster was appointed cook, and soon had a large iron pot suspended over a wood fire. We began our feast with many kinds of cold dainties; wine and waters circulated freely,

and at length the iron pot disgorged a tasty gulyás, red with paprika.

Then speech-making began, in Hungarian. The Notary spoke first, the late election and patriotism in general being, I was told, his theme. He waxed most eloquent and warm, and what he said was evidently moving, for a tear stood in every eye but mine. Several spoke, and the Judge spoke last, returning thanks, I take it.

Attention was next turned to me. The Angolur (Englishman) must be initiated, said one, and another asked me, 'Have you ever shot roe-deer before?' 'Yes,' said I. 'Where?' 'In Scotland,' I replied. 'You have never shot roe-deer, red-deer, wild-boar, or bear, in Hungary?' 'No.' 'Then, Scotland does not count,' they all cried together. 'We shall have to initiate you.' 'Anything to oblige,' said I, knowing by this time that they were all good fellows. For ages in Hungary, when a novice scored his first success in the chase, it was the custom for his companions to give him three cuts each across the back with their ramrods. In these days ramrods, being no longer used, are replaced by anything that comes to hand.

My first buck was laid out on the grass, and I

was instructed to lie down on my front and place my head upon it. This I did, but becoming aware that the Notary was standing over me, leaning on an axe with a long, thick shaft, I jumped up, objecting to the use of an implement with which he could easily have broken my spine. However, I read in his face that he had no such intention, and resumed my ignominious position on his begging me to trust him. Speaking in German, he proclaimed me a hunter worthy to be one of themselves, then tapped me three times gently with the handle of his axe. No one else touched me, except the florid young Judge, who—perhaps accustomed to inflict punishment, or maybe deriving some secret satisfaction in chastising me for having 'wiped his eye'—gave me one sharp stroke with a stick. The whole company then formed a ring and fired a salute over my prostrate body. I was then invited to arise, and we all drank bumpers to future good-fortune.

The day had greatly improved, and the rain-clouds, dispersing, disclosed a bright blue sky, flecked here and there with white. We had been gradually working upwards since the morning, and in the afternoon were far up the mountain-side. The air was delicious; the long dead grass, already

dry, made walking easy; below were great views over forest and wide-spreading plain, and above, high peaks, with changing blue shadows cast by the clouds. The horns and the hounds made music, and music also was the signal passed down the long line when a drive was over. Four descending notes, clearly whistled, I heard it first faint and far away above me, then ever clearer as it approached.

There was no more luck in store for me that day. Many roe-deer were found, but only does—whose lives had to be spared—came within range. It was hard to distinguish them from bucks, and a keen disappointment, after waiting long, to discover what they were. On a slope covered with wild raspberries traces of a bear were found, and red-deer were said to have also passed that way. Near the summits were many chamois, but that was beyond our march.

When evening came, and we were still far higher up the mountain than at luncheon-time, I was told that the Judge had already gone with his booty, and that no one else dreamed of returning home until the following day, or perhaps the day after that. It was taken for granted that I would remain till the shooting was over. 'But,' I said, 'my wife will be anxious; and I have brought

AT VÁZSECZ

nothing with me, not even a toothbrush!' The first objection was understood, the second only raised a smile. A Jew had come up all the way from Vázsecz to make a bargain with the Notary about his hay, and was still persistently hanging about in the hope of concluding it. He was able to take a note back to my wife that night, and did so for a consideration.

All day we had seen no dwelling-place of any kind, save far away on the plain below, and I wondered how we should pass the night. At length we came to a large hut built to store hay after the mowing until it was needed in the farms below. In the centre a log-fire was burning merrily, and round the sides the tips of pine-branches were thickly strewn. One end of it was open to the sky. To add to my surprise, a spruce gentleman in a black frock-coat, looking as if he had just come from the City of London, was in possession. He was accompanied by a Slovak peasant with a bag of tools. They were prospecting, and though I accidentally discovered the object of their search—which proved successful—it would be indiscreet to reveal it.

The spoils of the chase, six or seven roe-buck and a few hares, were laid in a row before our shelter,

and after supper rugs were spread over the pine-branches, when each with his feet towards the fire, we lay down to sleep with that pleasant feeling of fatigue which only comes from exercise in the open air. In the middle of the night I awoke. It was bitterly cold. Through the open gable I saw stars sparkling in a clear dark sky, and crouching on the floor in the glowing firelight a peasant boy, whose duty it was to pile on logs throughout the night. Thirteen people lay asleep, like the spokes of a wheel, with the fire as the hub. In the morning, when I again awoke, a woman was sitting by the head of each peasant. I never knew how they got there or why they came. The following day and night in many respects very much resembled the first, and on the third day we returned to Vázsecz, unwashed, but in high good spirits.

The Hungarian word *fürdő*—meaning bath—seems to occur here of itself. It is usually affixed to the names of watering-places, as in Lucsivna-fürdő, a place near birch-woods, which we had seen from the train and decided to visit. We went one morning, and liked it so well that we made arrangements to stay there on leaving Vázsecz. But that was not yet to be.

We had called on the Lutheran clergyman at

Vázsecz, and sat on the sofa of state in his best parlour while his wife, with the usual hospitality, offered cigars and wine.

One day he came to tell us that some of his old parishioners—peasants who had emigrated—had sent from America a sum of money to pay for the erection of a painted crucifix by the highroad near the cemetery. The wooden cross, with its screen and its railings, would cost half the money; the remainder was to pay for the figure and the skull and crossbones, which were to be cut out of thin iron plates. With polite diffidence, the clergyman asked if we would associate ourselves with the good work by designing and painting the iron shapes for the small sum available—a request we readily complied with.

We thought it would be easy to find a print of some good picture of the Crucifixion by an Old Master, and to copy it, with variations of our own. But we were at a Jewish inn in a Slovak village, where Old Masters were unknown. Though it proved far more difficult than we had anticipated to draw the Sacred Figure in such a manner as to inspire reverence, we eventually produced a cartoon —cut out of sheets of brown paper pinned together —with which the good little clergyman professed

himself to be highly pleased. He rolled it up and went off with it, intending to take it to an iron-worker in the county town. But, alas! when he left the train at St. Miklós he forgot it, and it was never heard of more. Our work all had to be begun over again.

When the iron plates at length arrived, we found them to have been admirably cut by a most intelligent workman, and the painting was at once begun.

We gave the figure several coats of oil paint, the first one being light grey, hardly varied. Even at the earliest stage Frau Deutsch expressed lively admiration. 'Such beautiful work! How different from other crosses on the countryside!' But when the last painting, with anatomical markings, etc., was complete, I believe her enthusiasm was genuine. She was evidently bitterly hurt—as I was myself—when afterwards my wife smeared the work all over with horrible streaky varnish, procured from the village shop, and said to be necessary for its protection from the weather.

The skull and crossbones, which we painted in tempera, to avoid delay caused by the slow drying of oil colours, were also heavily varnished. It is devoutly to be hoped that they have not,

AN ENGAGED COUPLE

'Misko and Maruska,' at Menguszfalva.

as I suspect, long since slipped off their iron ground.

We stayed on for seven weeks at Vázsecz, and if I dwell on that visit it is because it was our first in unconventional surroundings, and the details of it remain more clearly impressed on my memory than much that came later. The food was almost tolerable, the beds were good, and we had brought indiarubber baths with us. What mattered it if there was glass in the door between our room and that of our landlady through which she spied to see if we were up, or allowed her Slovak friends to watch us paint, their long, thin noses flattened the while against the panes and their greasy black hair falling on their sallow faces? Still, before long we did insist on having a curtain, and though this was ragged and old when it came, Frau Deutsch considered it to be clean. On the point of cleanliness I could never bring myself to trust her. She too often appeared with tousled hair and dribbled apron. How pleasingly different was the spotless appearance of the Slovak girl who burst into our room each morning without knocking, her feet bare, her neck glistening with beads, and in her hands wooden pails full of sparkling water! Every day

it seemed a fresh surprise for her that we could not speak the language with which she was familiar, and she would show two rows of exquisitely white teeth in smiles which seemed to express pity combined with wonder.

Among my wife's models was a boy named Misko—a dear little fellow nine or ten years old. Babyhood seemed still to linger about his eyes and mouth, but in spirit he was a labourer and a politician, as the red feather in his hat proclaimed him. Misko was amiable when not asked to sit. He underwent the martyrdom of posing twice, but nothing would induce him to come again. He willingly consented, however, to be our guide for four or five miles over the hills to the Black Vág, where we were going for a day's fishing, and a gallant little cavalier he was! He spread branches and leaves in wet places for my wife to walk over, and offered his help at every difficulty on her path. At lunch, when we had given him a share of our cold chicken, he remained quietly at a little distance until he had unwrapped his own food, consisting of bread and a thick piece of bacon. He then cut the best part out of the middle of the bacon and came to offer it to us. My wife found it a joy to be with him, and I

was able to proceed with my fishing without feeling that she was neglected.

Many more things do I remember about Vázsecz —how, for instance, we went to fish for crayfish in a small stream, with liver for bait stuck in cleft sticks, and caught forty on one afternoon; how Frau Deutsch cleaned them and put them alive into boiling water, and how good they were; how, when I was working at home, children, nearly naked, played and screamed all through the sultry days in and about the stream below our windows, and made mud balls, which they threw at one another; how mothers carried babies on their backs in baskets, enveloped in white cloths, and left them in corners of fields in the shade of umbrellas while they were at work.

Slovak children are early left to shift for themselves. At the age of one a Slovak baby may find itself roughly plumped down on a stone before the house, and left alone, with nothing on but a tiny shirt. I observed from our windows an infant who was thus treated, and wondered what would happen next. Very soon he thought it was time to try his legs, but found it by no means easy to get on to them. After several ineffectual attempts his perseverance was rewarded, and then a spirit of

adventure took possession of the little man. Off he started with uncertain steps from stone to stone, until at length he reached the streamlet—source of joy to ducks and urchins—where women sometimes washed their crockery, sometimes threw whatever refuse they had to dispose of. When his little bare feet touched the water, an expression of joy spread over his face, and then he suddenly sat down in it. How enchanting were his next discoveries! Here came a cork bobbing up and down in the ripples; there gleamed a bit of tin through the semi-opaque water. Next he found half a broken bottle, and, clutching it with his tender fingers, played long with the dangerous toy, without cutting himself. Then, losing interest in it, he dropped it, struggled out of the water, and made for home as best he could. Was it a feeling of relief on passing safely through so many strange adventures that made him cry, or was it the cold discomfort of his wet shirt? On meeting his mother, he flung his arms round her knees and sobbed aloud, as though a prodigal had returned.

Sometimes we saw babies playing in the dust, quite naked save for gorgeous caps, which glittered with silver and gold and ribbons of many colours.

Before leaving Vázsecz, I will add that no

MENGUSZFALVA

Adrien Stokes

Magyars lived there, except the Notary, his family and his clerk, and perhaps the three ladies to whom we went on the first day; but they lived in such complete retirement that we saw no more of them. The Slovaks appeared to us to be finely grown and naturally intelligent people, sadly damaged in some instances by the execrable spirits they bought from the Jews. The costume they all wore was peculiar to their village, and one of the most remarkable, and at the same time becoming, that we have ever seen.

The remaining inhabitants were a few untidy Jews, entirely devoted to money-making, and a few Gipsies, who also did little honest work, but lived in poverty and squalor. These last would disappoint anyone inclined to associate romance with their race.

From Vázsecz—or Vágfalva, as the station is called in Hungarian—to Lucsivna-fürdö is but a short journey by rail, but how different were the two places! The one, a dusty village, lying bare to the sun, with hardly a tree for a mile around it, was inhabited by people in the costume of the Middle Ages. The other consisted of a number of small villas, embowered among trees, and set here and there in the green grass of an undulating park. It

was frequented chiefly by Magyars of the professional class, with their wives and families.

Already the short holiday season was drawing to a close. A few dainty young ladies in white, attended by young gentlemen in flannels, were still to be seen in groups, while children with nets chased butterflies ; but many of the happy-looking families we had noticed on the occasion of our flying visit had left.

Everything at Lucsivna-fürdö—and much of the country round it—belonged to a fine old gentleman named Szakmáry, whose family has resided for centuries in a large house some two miles away, near Lucsivna village. In his youth Mr. Szakmáry derived so much benefit from water-cures that he determined to set up, as soon as he was able, an establishment on his own estate for the benefit of others. And, accordingly, about five-and-twenty years ago Lucsivna-fürdö was built, with baths of many kinds, and specialist doctors diagnosed and prescribed there. I believe for some years it flourished exceedingly, but the opening of many similar places in Hungary, embodying the latest discoveries and developments, led to its partial decline.

When we went there, there were no doctors, and

only the simplest kind of baths remained in use. Invalids no longer came, but people who were fond of the place returned year after year, forming together a friendly and informal society.

We were given rooms in a little villa about a quarter of a mile from the central house, which contained the general dining-rooms and the verandas where people used to take coffee and smoke.

I sometimes saw an old gentleman go past our windows with his gun. He lived in a villa by the formal fish-pond, and had rented it every year since the place was started.

Of course, no shooting was allowed for some distance from the villas, with the result that the woods near them had become a sort of sanctuary known to the deer, which we frequently saw browsing in the open or galloping across the glades.

Old Mr. Szakmáry lived and presided at the Fürdö during the season when guests were there, but spent the remainder of the year at the old family mansion. Shady drives united the two places. A son named Adoryan (Adrian) managed the estates and occupied some of the rooms in the old house, the walls of which were closely covered with weapons and trophies of the chase.

When after a time we had made the acquaintance

of some of the guests, as well as of the ruling family, and it became known that I was fond of fishing and shooting, the old gentleman most kindly invited me to go fishing in the small river which flowed through his estates. This caused some surprise, as he had been known frequently to refuse permission, never to offer it before. I understood it to be a kindness shown to me as an Englishman in Hungary, and was glad to be able to bring plenty of trout for the table d'hôte. Then Mr. Adoryan invited me to shoot. There was to be a party in a few days, and my own gun had long since arrived.

The appointed day came; the guests assembled. One, who had come from a distance, was a Colonel, in a smart green shooting-suit and green hat with a sprightly tuft at the back of it; another, a young Captain in dark green, who rode a white charger and was attended by an orderly. He was recovering from a wound, and wore the bullet which had recently passed through his body attached to his watch-chain. Then there was the old gentleman I had seen pottering about with his gun. He and two or three relatives of the Szakmáry family completed our number.

A long farmer's cart of curious construction awaited us. It had rows of spokes sloping out

YOUNG GIRL OF MENGUSZFALVA
GOING TO CHURCH

from a narrow bottom, covered with straw, to the top rails. These spokes were just wide enough apart for one of us to sit between each pair of them. We took our places in two lines, back to back; the horses started, their bells jingled, and away we rattled. We passed the Szakmáry house, a large low stone building, surrounded with well-kept gardens and grounds, and made on for steep hills thickly wooded with beech and oak trees about a mile beyond it; and there we met the beaters and hounds. The head-keeper did not much resemble the important person who occupies a similar position at home! He was a wild man, dressed in thick white felt. His boots, each made of one piece, turned up and laced across the instep and around the ankle, were sharply pointed at the toes. The hat, turned down, came also to a point in front, and his nose was long and pointed. With it he could smell game—especially wild-boar—on entering a wood. His small grey eyes sparkled like jewels, and the way he got over the ground was wonderful. Around his shoulders was slung a large cow's horn, with which he frequently played, 'Too-hoo, hoo-hoo, too-hoo.'

There were half a dozen hounds, of a breed unknown to me. In colour black and tan, they

were small, but they worked admirably, as did also the eight or ten beaters, some of whom were Gipsies.

We were given our stands round about a small wood ; the wild man disappeared with his followers, and for a long time stillness reigned. Then from the distance came the sound of the horn, ' Too-hoo, hoo-hoo, too-hoo,' and soon a hound gave tongue. Immediately after that there was a shot, followed by a long silence. When the shooters were called together at the end of the drive, we found that a wild-sow of medium size had fallen to the Colonel's gun, and that nothing else had been seen by anyone.

In that part of the country shooting is only good in winter, when the cold has driven game down from higher places, so this success was hailed with much joy, coming as it did at the first attempt.

At another drive I stood in the shadow of a large oak, near some huge grey rocks handsomely patterned with dark moss. Forty yards before me was a steep slope covered with young beech-trees, interspersed with tall dark firs. The midday sun blazed down, and not a sound was to be heard save when a fir-cone dropped with a light thud on the dry ground, until presently I heard the music of

the hounds and the horn over the hill before me, and then—nearer, coming ever nearer—a gentle rustling of leaves. A splendid roe-buck sprang into the open, and galloped in leisurely fashion towards the far side of the rocks near which I was standing. Aiming well forward, I shot him full in the neck, near the head, and he fell, lying on his back, his feet moving more and more feebly, until in a few moments he expired.

I confess to a feeling of compunction whenever I have killed roe, for though in the instances noted here the shooting was well done, in some others it unfortunately was not. There is a pathetic appeal in the eyes of wounded or dying roe-deer, which haunts one for long, and makes one loath to slay such graceful and defenceless animals.

The shoots at Lucsivna were planned for but half the day. At that first one nothing more fell except a few hares, but several times roe-deer sped rapidly through the trees near us, and vanished before we could see if a buck was among them.

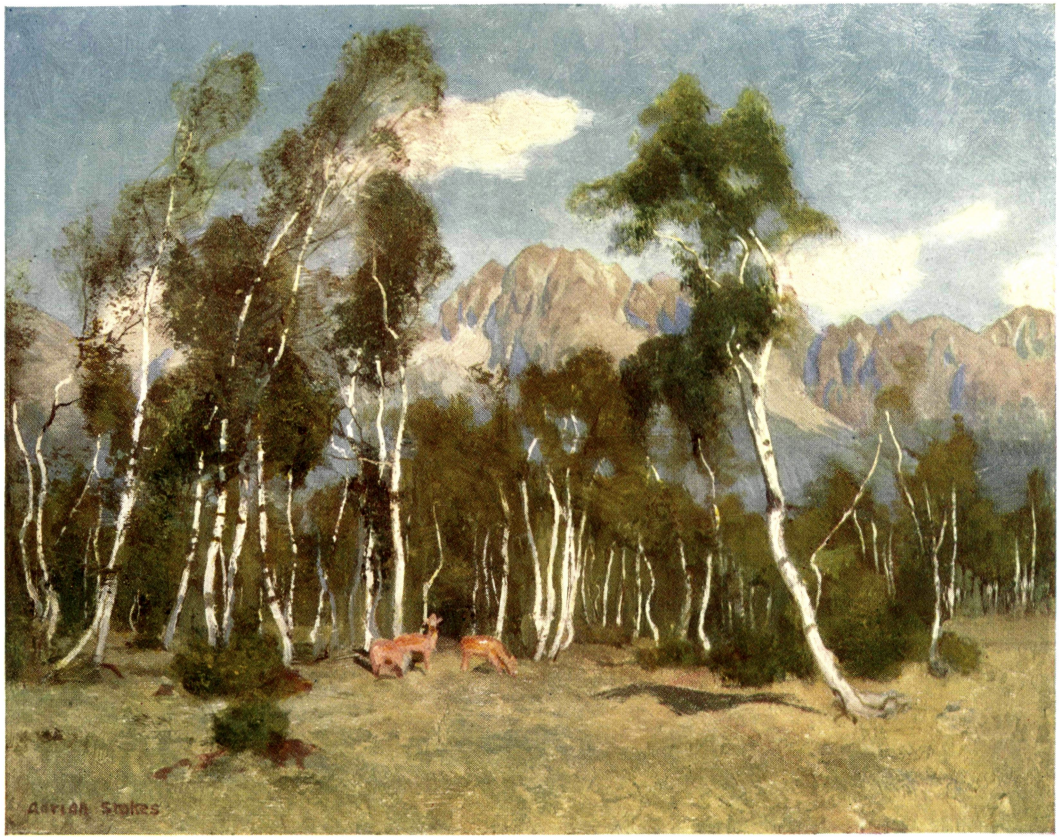
When our cart came, we mounted it as before, and the officer on the white horse trotted by us through the beech-woods to the inn at Lucsivna village, where we consumed bottled ale and cigars in honour of our successful morning, and many

stories were told, which I did not understand. On nearing home, with the game piled up before us in the cart, a shot was fired to announce our happy return, and, to conclude the entertainment, we were all photographed, with the wild sow, the buck, and the hares laid out before us.

Several pleasant mornings, similar to that one, were passed at Lucsivna during our stay, which generally ended round a fire in some glade among the woods, when we toasted bacon and mushrooms and the beaters their pipes.

Strange as it may seem, the charm of that kind of shooting is largely to be found in the long waits which occur after one has been placed and before any game is likely to be seen. Alone in lovely surroundings in complete stillness, and forced to remain almost motionless, one observes. It may be the exquisite edge of a mountain, or the exact relation of its distant purple to a turquoise sky, or the clouds, or the trees, or any of a thousand things, on which the mind, undirected, will dwell. It may be but a twig in the foreground, which compels admiration by the beauty of its growth, the delicate attachment of its leaves, or the subtle variety of its colours ; but something there always is to study and enjoy—a pod bursts open in the

THE CARPATHIAN MOUNTAINS FROM
LUCSIVNA-FÜRDŐ


ADRIAN STOKES

sun; far above, an eagle with outstretched wings sweeps in wide circles out of sight.

The sound of distant horn and hound having called to attention, the faintest cracking of branch or rustle of leaves is keenly noticed, and then perhaps there is a shot, far off, to excite curiosity, followed soon after by others. If nothing has come one's way one hopes for better luck next time, and—when the signal is given—in a spirit of good-fellowship joins the assembled guns near an already crackling fire.

For us the chief attractions in the neighbourhood of Lucsivna-fürdö were the pretty village of Menguszfalva and its most amiable people, the silver-birch woods, and the towering mountains beyond them.

One morning we received the pleasant news that the Prelate proposed to pay a short visit to Lucsivna for a day or two, and great was our joy when he stepped from the train and walked up with us through the woods to the rooms prepared for him.

The dignity of his presence was such that in general other people appeared to be of comparative unimportance; but when the Prelate met Mr. Szakmáry, there were present two splendid types of Magyar manhood—the Churchman and

the man of the world. They were soon interested in one another, and frequently engaged in animated conversation. It amused us to remember that each of them had previously told us that it was characteristic of Hungarian politeness that Magyars never converse in their own tongue in the company of guests who do not understand it; nor do they consciously, but so intense is their love of race and country that when questions affecting these are discussed, all else is forgotten by the most scrupulously polite, and they lapse naturally into their own tongue.

It was a delight to us to stroll among the beautiful woods with the Prelate and listen to his words. A man of vast experience, who had travelled much, he was tolerant of the opinions of others and lenient in his judgments.

Soon after his departure we, too, packed up and set off, via Budapest, for Kalocsa, where we were to spend the autumn.

CHAPTER V

HUNGARIAN GIPSIES

THE word 'Gipsy' (in Hungarian, *Czigány*) is associated in the minds of most of us with romance and mystery; and mysterious the Gipsies of Hungary still remain, though to a great extent the romance of their existence has faded away.

They may no more wander at their own sweet will where the long arm of the law cannot reach them; their musicians seem now as well pleased to play the last waltz from Vienna as the entrancing music they have long made their own. Beggary and squalor describes the condition of far too many, who—instead of the free life in the woods we imagine for them—live in mud hovels, even in holes in banks, and eke out a miserable existence by begging or petty theft.

Some combine a special kind of handicraft, such as cutting out wooden troughs or other farm

utensils, with wandering; few do ordinary work on the land; many are poachers, and most are said to be thieves—but their thieving is of an ignominious kind. The brave days of horse-stealing, and of mad gallops across whole counties, are gone for ever. All of them, except the men sometimes, are picturesque. The women and girls, whose carriage is often magnificent, are generally handsome, and have an instinctive knack of so wearing the most commonplace garments that when seen from a distance these appear to be, not clothes, but Oriental draperies. This peculiarity must have been handed down through countless generations. It is believed by some authorities that Gipsies are descended from the Pariahs of India, a conquered race who were persecuted and ill-used for ages, were allowed to worship no gods, and believed in none, as none helped them.

Nowadays they change their nominal religion on crossing a frontier, being naturally anxious to avoid religious persecution in any form, and quite indifferent as to what sect—Christian or heathen—they conform to, so long as their liberty is otherwise unrestrained. Except the musicians, no Gipsies seem anxious to leave the lower rungs of the social ladder. Their children, like all others, are obliged

SLOVAK WOMAN SINGING A HYMN

by law to go to school, but parents would avoid sending them if they dared.

While walking with a schoolmaster we once came upon three boys with violins who, under the shade of a large tree, were playing quite charmingly. Our companion told us they were his pupils, and when asked if they learned readily, replied: 'Gipsy children learn *nothing at all* at school; they *will* not learn, and do not.' I cannot tell if this is a general experience, but incline to the belief that they could learn anything—if they would.

In the holidays, especially near any piece of water, youngsters are to be seen playing about, nearly or quite naked. Their swarthy bodies are remarkably well formed and well nourished, their black eyes sparkle, their white teeth shine. I have a vivid recollection of one little fellow, with nothing on but a black pot-hat, who forded a wide and rapid stream, which reached in the middle up to his armpits, and then watched me painting. When he dried, there was a bloom on his coppery skin like that of a grape. He was the best-dressed male Gipsy I ever saw!

The ordinary wandering Gipsies resemble those to be found in other countries, both in their own

appearance and that of their belongings. Here are to be seen the same dilapidated caravans, the same patched tents, the same dark-eyed, active-looking men and women and swarm of children of all ages; the same aged horses and knowing dogs; and—in the gloaming—the same fires, with simmering black pots suspended over them in the smoke, which so excited us when we were young.

Hungarian Gipsies are remarkably hardy. They can endure more intense heat and bitterer cold than any other race in the country; can go for days without food, and—when occasion offers—eat more than anyone else. I have heard in many parts of Hungary that when fowls die of sickness in the farms Gipsies beg for them and eat them without ill-effect, and also that they are frequently suspected of having previously poisoned them. On quite good authority I was also informed that cases are known when pigs which have died of tuberculosis, and been buried as unfit for food, have been dug up by these people and made the occasion of a gala feast, with no evil consequences.

A Magyar friend, who preserves pheasants in Central Hungary, told me that, being much plagued by foxes, and there being no hounds in the neighbourhood, he instructed his keepers to shoot crows,

put strychnine in them, and leave them about for the foxes to eat. Shortly after this was done a keeper going his rounds came upon a Gipsy encampment, where the crows, which had been gathered, were being cooked for supper. His remonstrances were of no avail, and only when he brought his master, and both, armed with guns, had threatened to shoot, were the birds given up. My friend said that, though he approved of his keeper's conduct, on the ground that it was better to be on the safe side, he did not himself think the crows would have done the Gipsies any harm!

As beggars their insistence exceeds that of any others, except, perhaps, the Irish on much-frequented tourist routes. A troupe of half-naked children with unkempt hair hanging on their bare chests and draggled rags pinned anyhow about them will follow a stranger who passes by their settlement, continually repeating the same whining prayer for alms, for any distance, until at last—threats being of no avail—in desperation he pays them to go away.

There are many villages where Gipsies are not allowed to live on account of their habits of picking and stealing and dirtiness, but hard by them they often form squalid colonies. The adults do odd

jobs, and seem to have no dislike for regular work in brickfields if any are near, and the children—when they can escape from school—tend geese or waylay strangers, as described above.

Attempts have frequently been made to improve their lot—according to our ideas—notably by the Archduke Joseph in the latter part of the last century; but they were almost invariably followed by disappointment. A gentleman, who was much at Court at that time, told me that the Archduke once went to visit a Gipsy family for whom he had built a house, and found them living in a cabin which they had erected on the floor of the principal room! The Archduke also built a model village exclusively for Gipsies, and did all he could to make their life pleasant there; but they would not stay. Family after family stole away, and it was soon deserted.

Gipsy musicians are now famous throughout the world. Every town, almost every village, in Hungary has at least one Czigány band. In the large towns they are regularly engaged to play in hotels and restaurants; in smaller ones they are sent for on all festal occasions, and, when not otherwise engaged, are to be seen hanging about inn-doors or gliding silently, snake-like,

A MILL NEAR VÁZSECZ

Adrian Stokes

through dining-rooms, to spy if enough guests are present to make playing remunerative. In villages they know the birthdays and feast-days in every family prosperous enough to pay them, and regularly appear on such occasions.

Sometimes a guest at a country inn sends for the Gipsy band to entertain him. The leader with his violin will then approach quite near to his patron, and, with subtle servility, follow all his moods. The guest will stop him ruthlessly when he is tired of a certain piece, and direct him what to play, often humming a tune, which is immediately taken up by the Gipsy and his companions with the most perfect ease.

Nearly everything seems to depend on the leader. On returning once to the Hôtel Métropole at Budapest we were annoyed to find the band inferior to what we remembered it to have been on former visits. It was playing operetta tunes in a very ordinary way, and was noisy. All at once—as if by magic—it entirely changed; the touching strains of old Hungarian melodies wailed and throbbed through the hall, and people at the dining-tables stayed their conversation to listen. The explanation was that the veteran Banda Márszа—a famous Czigány player of the old

school—had come in, taken his place at the head of his band, and infused it with his own spirit.

I have already referred to a habit of the leading player of singling out someone present—frequently a lady—and playing especially to her. He will mark every change of her expression, with extraordinary delicacy of perception, playing accordingly all things, from grave to gay.

At the conclusion of a piece there is no applause; the plate, however, is handed round two or three times in the course of an evening, by one or other of the musicians, and an opportunity is thus given of marking one's appreciation in a practical manner. The Gipsy who receives contributions is too proud to thank.

There are many stories of rich young men—and others—showering gold on musicians who have understood how to work upon their feelings and excite their generosity, but we never witnessed anything of the kind. Such loose gold—or most of it—has, I suspect, by now passed into hands that know better how to guard it.

Even in villages, when the Czigány musicians come to play, they are smartly, even foppishly, dressed. Neat dinner jackets and black ties are much in favour, and a lavish display of white cuffs

and high collars is never lacking; their shoes are shiny and pointed, and they also affect rings and chains, and cigarettes. All this is wonderful when it is remembered that most of these gifted people live and feed in the same quarters as others of their race.

They always play without notes, and generally do not know them.

Somewhere about the year 1850—while they were still enveloped in a halo of romance, so readily accorded at that period—the Abbé Franz Liszt wrote a book *Des Bohémiens et de leur Musique en Hongrie*, from which I have translated the following extracts:

'Gipsies arrived in Europe in the fourteenth century—no one knows whence—so quietly, so imperceptibly, that they seemed to come out of the earth. They had no Saga, no Bible. Music was the expression of the genius of this people, distributed over many lands, mixing with no other race, without record of the past or hope of future glory. With astonishing obstinacy they refused to participate in the happy lot of favoured nations, or to receive among them one drop of foreign blood. This last trait is proved by the purity of their type, which, according to contemporary

descriptions of the first to arrive, was then exactly what it remains to-day.

'In the midst of spoliation, of sufferings without name, they never produced illustrious renegades or happy apostates. Among them have never been found those who deny their own people, who, having abdicated their shame, disavowed them, and fled from their hunger to enjoy a prosperity thus bought.' (This appears to refer to the Jews, with whom Liszt compares Gipsies at great length.)

'The Gipsy race rejects the despotism of every law, asks nothing from the earth but life, and maintains its individuality by constant intercourse with Nature. Its indifference for all men is profound, except in so far as they procure the means of its subsistence. It laughs at the superiority of civilized man as might a fox at the farmer whose poultry-yard it had devastated. Its needs satisfied, it is inoffensive; at least, it has no premeditated design to do injury *en masse aux masses.*

'A Gipsy needs liberty like that of the wild horse. He cannot understand how a roof, however beautiful, can be preferred to forest vaults. Authority, law, rule, precept, principle, obligation, duty, are to him notions and things insupportable. Possessing neither Bible nor Testament of any sort,

MOTHER AND CHILD AT MENGUSZFALVA

he sees no necessity to bend his intelligence to the comprehension of abstract ideas, and lets it rust in the circle of instinct.

'He is contented to live in the sun, which enchants him, giving way to a small number of primitive and elementary passions, and allowing no conventional virtue to trouble this liberty of soul, this freedom of morals, which he places above all the advantages which the slightest repression of his appetites might obtain.

'To command and to obey are to him equally odious. To possess and to owe are two verbs non-existent in his language. Effect, consequence, forethought, the tie of the past to the future, are not only repugnant to him, but incomprehensible. As the only aim he has is constantly to delight his organs with all the enjoyments they find in Nature, he arrives at the absolute liberty of *to be* through absolute indifference for *to have.*

'If one would analyze Czigány music, decompose it, dissect it, dismember it, in order to judge its composition and compare it with ours, it would be necessary first to mention what distinguishes it from our own music. In the first place should be put its system of modulation, based on a sort of total negation of all system in this respect.

'Gipsies no more admit dogmas, laws, rules, discipline, in their music than elsewhere. All is good, all is permitted, provided that it pleases them.

'Their art being for them neither a science to be learnt, nor a trade to practise, nor an agility (as that of the conjurer), nor a sorcery for which one can receive the formula as a receipt; art being for them an elevated language, a mystical song clear to the initiated, they use it according to their needs, and allow themselves to be influenced in their mode of expression by no external considerations.

'They have invented their music, invented it for their own use, in order to speak to themselves; to sing themselves, to themselves; to hold with themselves the most intimate, the most touching, monologues. How could they have introduced principles and conventions, they who admit them nowhere? They have a primitive *gamme* and language, and have never shown a sincere, a religious respect, but for the preservation of one and the other.

'They submit music to no precept—above all, to none concerning the relations of tones. Intermediate modulations are so little obligatory that one can even call them extremely rare, and consider them, when they do occur, as a modern

corruption—as an effacement, an obliteration, of the original type. Chords of transition are, with few exceptions, completely omitted in the brusque attack of one tone after another, when it is the genuine Czigány music that one hears.

'Before these *salto mortale* the spirit of our ordinary musicians is bewildered and aghast. Sometimes intimidated, always impressed and embarrassed, they are tempted to cry: "It would be very beautiful if it was good!"

'Perhaps some Hungarian experts, learned in these matters, will be inclined to ask why we attribute so especially to Gipsies this music, which they—the Magyars—take pride in as a national possession; why we adjudge the honour of invention exclusively to those who are generally considered to be merely its executants, more than we would honour declaimers of poetry of which they were not the authors.

'A profound, a conclusive dissertation on this question is difficult, for it can only be founded on inductions, the materials and facts collected being of a nature extremely vague and inconclusive.

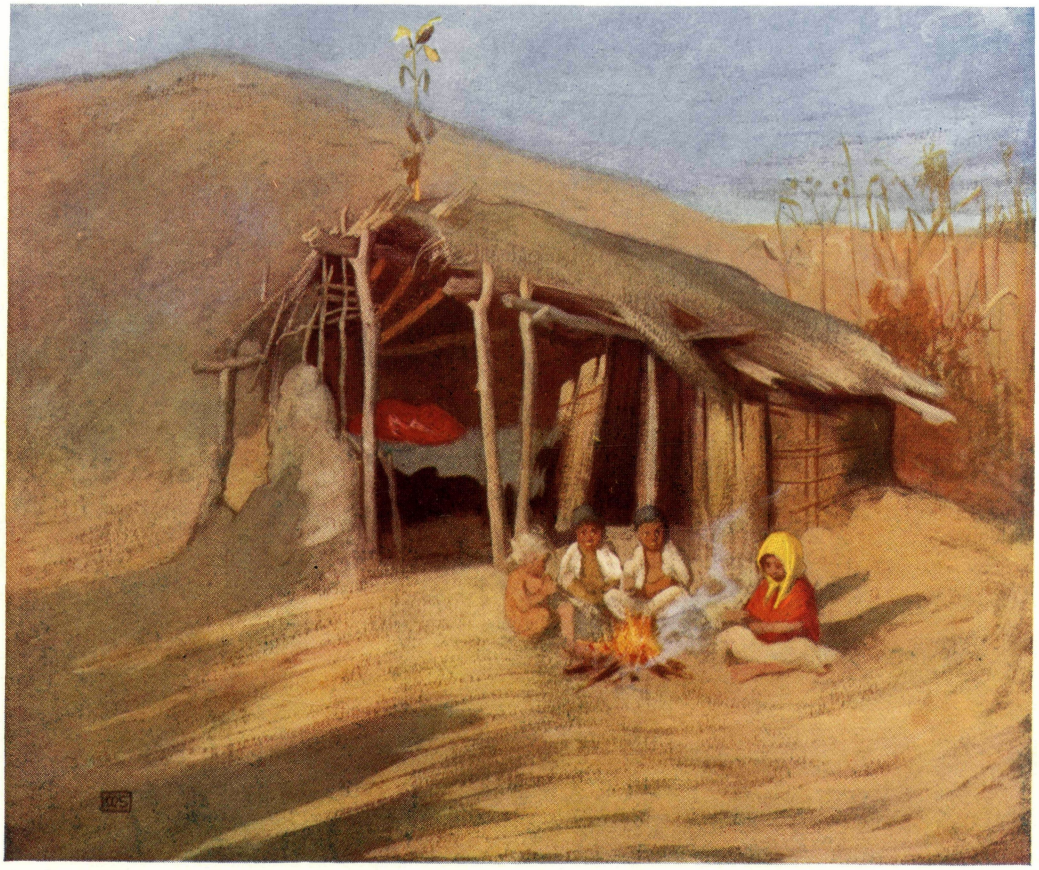
'In other days nearly every hamlet of Hungary had its troup of Czigány musicians, which only moved in a certain district, and earned there enough

to provide for the season spent in forests and camps. There were more or less celebrated ones; sometimes whole counties were known and renowned for the excellence of their artists (*virtuoses*); most *grand seigneurs* had orchestras in their pay, and a keen spirit of rivalry existed as to who should retain the best.

'The Czigány art was thus spread throughout the land like a flourishing vegetation. All the population was, so to say, enfolded by it; it was a real pleasure, a national taste. All—rich and poor, great and small—participated in and enjoyed it to the same degree; for the same artists, the same orchestras, who now delighted Prince and Magnate, now charmed and touched the people, playing with the same *brio*, the same poetry, for peasants dancing in the barns as they did where, under gilded ceilings, great ladies reclined.

'The most distinguished bands received handsome annual payment from the Magnates, but they never engaged themselves beyond a limited period of the year; after which they dispersed, either separately or in groups, to considerable towns or the smallest villages, to live there in the same condition as other Gipsies. Very rarely were bands or individuals so famous as to be sent for from far away.

A GIPSY HOME



'Beyond a few ballads and some warlike songs, we discovered among the Hungarian Gipsies no trace of vocal music worthy of attention. Few of their women have good voices. Too much exposed to atmospheric changes, too much accustomed to drink, too soon tired by wild dances and the cries exciting them, too much fatigued by the weight of children, whom they carry on their backs the whole day like the savages of America, the freshness of their *timbre* is often lost.

'Now, from the nomads they were, the Gipsy artists have become commercial travellers. Instead of going with their tribe—folded tent and caldron carried in a dusty cart—they travel by train from one capital to another, formed into a society to *faire les affaires.*

'Since they have inhaled a new musical atmosphere, their art has ceased to be a joy for them, but become rather a trade ; since they have learned this hunger for gain, this passion for lucre proper to great commercial centres, infinitely more corrupt and more corrupting than the habit of stealing when exercised with a sort of primitive naïveté, they have become devoted, like many others, to the monster of speculation, seek reputation only to make money, and forget in this cult—hideous

when it is the artist who abandons himself to it—art, for cupidity.'

Whether or no Liszt was right in ascribing Gipsy music to Czigány rather than to Magyar composers, he himself, in the concluding paragraph of his book, showed himself to be contented with the thought that, at all events, it is Hungarian. He wrote thus:

'Hungary, then, can with justice claim as her own this art, nourished on her corn and her wine, ripened in her sunlight and her shadow, acclaimed by her admiration, embellished and ennobled thanks to her predilections and her protection, and so woven together with her customs that it is combined with the most intimate, the sweetest, memories of every Hungarian. Even as a glorious conquest, it figures among the highest distinctions of our country; and its memory should be placed, like a precious jewel, on one of the points of our ancient and superb crown.'

CHAPTER VI

KALOCSA: A MAGYAR CATHEDRAL TOWN

OF the many towns we saw during several periods —amounting in all to more than three years— which we spent in Hungary, we learnt to know none so well as we did Kalocsa. Invited first by the Prelate, we often returned, even after he had left, and were always most kindly received by the numerous friends and acquaintances we had gradually made there. For the sake of brevity, I will not treat these visits separately.

The Cathedral is—I presume—always the most important object in a Cathedral town; and that of Kalocsa is no exception to this rule. It dominates everything, and can be seen from afar across the level country. Built in the eighteenth-century Renaissance style, it is correct without being impressive. The interior contains some fine stucco work, is highly ornate, and has been recently

redecorated in a florid manner; while the exterior is plastered and toned with a light yellow-ochre colour. The west end, with two tall towers, has a certain grace in its proportions, and also in its details, which appealed to me more the more familiar I became with it.

On Sundays and holidays the Cathedral is crowded for High Mass, which is celebrated with great pomp. Men take their places to the right, women to the left; girls—farmers' daughters, servants, etc., in costume—stand or kneel everywhere in the aisles. The reason for this last arrangement is that they wear so many skirts—fifteen to twenty-one is a Sunday allowance—that they could not possibly get in between the seats, and could not sit down if they did. We were at one time allowed the use of a chamber resembling a private box, with curved glass windows towards the church, which was high up on one side of the chancel, whence we could follow the elaborate services, or retire without attracting attention when a sermon which we could not understand was to be preached.

On fine days, when the congregation leaves the Cathedral, it forms a brilliant spectacle. The old people seem to melt away unnoticed, or serve but as a foil for the young. The young men invariably

WOMAN OF KALOCSA IN WORK-DAY DRESS

dress in black, though their short velvet jackets have sometimes a discreetly worked border of crimson flowers and green leaves, and they always wear top-boots. Active, compact-looking fellows, and clean-shaven all but their moustaches, there is something about them suggestive of the circus. But they, again, serve but as a foil for the maids—the gaily-dressed, the finely-moving maids—who in colour can outvie golden and silver pheasants strutting in the sun.

Hard by the Cathedral stand the iron gates, surmounted by a Cardinal's hat in the same metal, whence the drive, passing through a garden of roses, leads up to the great doors of the palace of the Archbishop.

The palace, built about the same date as the Cathedral, is a large pleasant-looking, light-coloured building, with two retiring wings. Along its front run two rows of windows, sixteen in each, and it has a large grey roof. Inside are a chapel, innumerable reception-rooms and guest-chambers, a dining-hall, etc., all handsomely furnished, and an important library containing many rare old books. One of the rooms is especially charming. It is entirely panelled with a hard, polished, and most beautifully inlaid wood of a deep brown colour.

At the back of the palace the gardens and wooded grounds of large extent are always open to the public, and reach down to the dyke, which, entirely encircling the town, protects it in case of flood.

Near the Cathedral and the Palace are a few irregular open spaces planted with trees, and round about them stand the simple large old houses of the higher clergy.

From this group of buildings lead the High Street, which is nearly a mile long, and a shorter road, at right angles to it, to the railway-station. When we arrived for the first time these were the only paved roads in the district, but one was in course of construction to Hoyos, a village some eight miles off. For this all the material was brought in barges to the nearest place on the Danube, four miles away, and then in trucks over a temporary light railway. There is no stone in this part of the country, so the cost of road-making is extremely heavy. When an artesian well was bored to a depth of 400 yards at the Kalocsa Seminary, no stone of any kind was met with.

It is supposed that where the great plain, or Alföld, now is, there was once a vast lake, whose waters at length broke through the mountains at the Iron Gates near Orsova. The alluvial deposits

brought into this lake by many great rivers formed the ground which now produces some of the finest crops in the world.

In Kalocsa there are many educational institutions—seminaries, training-schools, a Jesuit college for the sons of aristocratic and wealthy families, convent schools for girls, and schools for middle-class boys, besides the usual national schools for the comparatively poor. There are also courts of law, banks, and the offices needed in the administration of the great estates of the Archbishopric. Naturally, then, there are many interesting and refined people in the town, besides the dignitaries of the Church whom I have mentioned in another chapter.

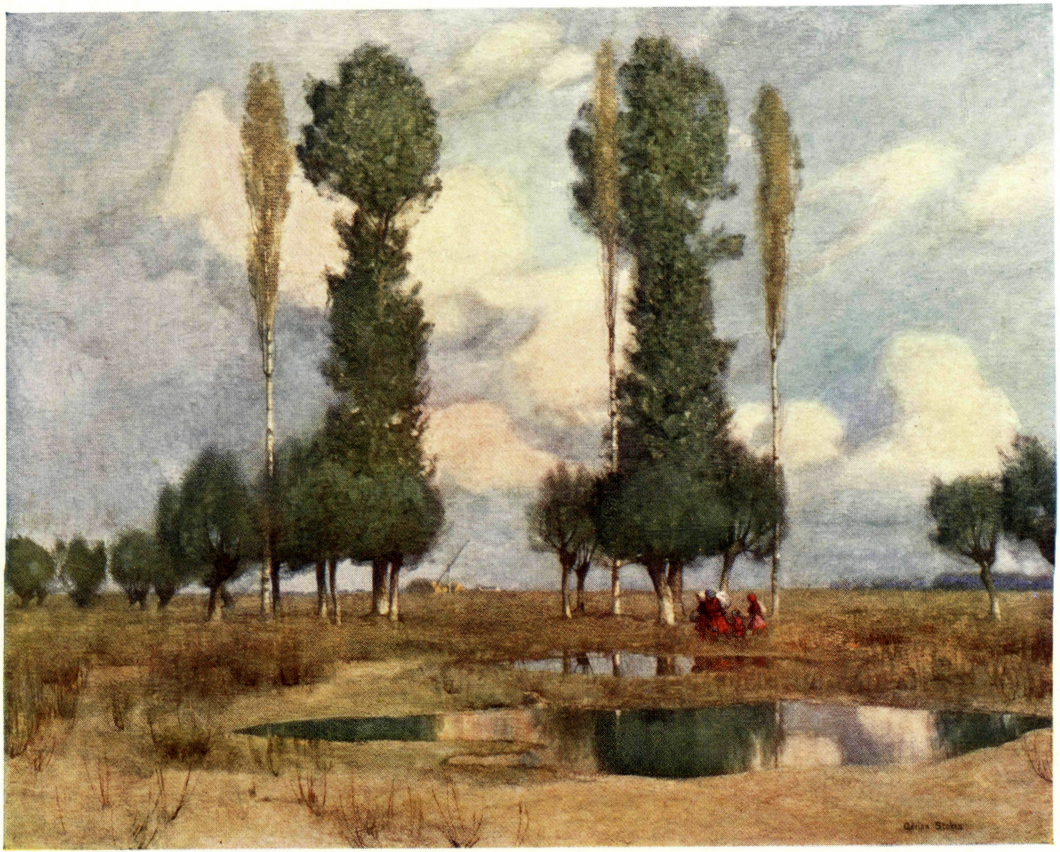
The first of these whose acquaintance we made was a Professor, Principal of the training-school for schoolmasters; a man of universal interests and knowledge, and an accomplished musician.

On coming down from the mountain districts of the Tátra—some fourteen hours by rail—to Kalocsa, we took rooms in the house of a man who combined the duties of clerk in the town-hall with rope-making at home. Both he and his son—a young artist—could speak German; but his kindly wife took the greatest care of us without being able

to understand anything we said. It was here the Professor called on us, introduced by the son, and pressed us to show him our work. A few days later he returned to ask if we would allow a few of his friends to see what we had shown to him. Then *they* came. One was a tall young priest who edited the Kalocsa weekly newspaper. A highly eulogistic article appeared in it, and our reputations were made! The glamour of the Prelate's protection being over us, our position as persons of the highest respectability was also soon established.

Our modest lodgings (none more magnificent were obtainable had we desired them) were situated at the least fashionable end of the town—that farthest from the Cathedral—and not far from some sandy stretches of waste ground which formed one of the most fascinating painting-grounds I have ever known. There were many shallow pools of water on them, and willows and tall spreading poplars, which composed in an endless variety of interesting forms. The sandy ground was fine in tone, and the scanty vegetation on it just right. The sunsets and their reflections were often magnificent. Unfortunately, it was an extremely wet season, but whenever I could venture out I used to go and sketch there. We were told afterwards that

ON THE WASTE LANDS NEAR KALOCSA



many people who, from afar off, saw me at work thought I was crazy. Even the Prelate, who walked with us to see the motives after my own heart which I had found, shook his head and smiled incredulously; for no one but pigs and the boys who herded them had ever been known to loiter in that dreary place before!

It was gratifying for us when, later on, the work was shown, to find how heartily it was admired, and to think that our new acquaintances might be led by it to look more at places and things hitherto considered to be beneath their notice.

Several schoolboys also lodged at the ropemaker's, in rooms farther up the court than ours. They were nice boys, always very well behaved and polite to us. We used to pity them; for, though one or two played violins, beyond that they seemed to have no sort of recreation. It was sad to see them on half-holidays hanging about the front-door for hours at a time, with comrades from neighbouring lodgings; and to think how much healthy enjoyment they might have had if opportunity had been afforded them of playing some of our now much-decried English games.

For some reason best known to himself, the

Prelate, at whose house we were very often entertained, did not introduce us to the principal laymen of Kalocsa; but we became acquainted with them through the Professor, who was a great favourite everywhere.

Foremost in our memories is the Diocesan Engineer-Architect, whose house formed a rendezvous for a group of men embodying the intellectual attainment of the town. He was a bachelor, a vegetarian, a practical believer in Dr. Jäger and in Metchnikoff's milk-cure—in fact, was quite up to date in fads, and withal was one of the kindest and most amiable of men. In his rooms lay about architectural reviews and the newest Hungarian illustrated periodicals, after the manner of *The Studio;* and on the bookshelves were to be found, side by side with lives of poets and painters, etc., many books of reference. Thus, when any point arose in discussion which could not be satisfactorily settled in the first resort by the Professor, a visit was invariably paid to the encyclopædia of the Engineer.

The house, covering a good deal of ground, was one story high. It faced the High Street, where, under a double row of trees, a party of us often sat in the dusk of summer evenings with the

Engineer and his mother; each new-comer having been invited to go through the garden into the house and choose a wicker chair for himself. On those occasions there was a noteworthy absence of mere gossip. The conversation would drift over wide fields, and not infrequently dwell on the ancient power and glory of Hungary—for all present were patriots *pur sang*.

There are no exceptions to the rules of pronunciation in the Magyar language, so the irregularity of our English spelling and pronunciation seemed worthy of remark. The Engineer had years before tried to teach himself English, and still remembered long quotations from Dickens, which he would repeat for the bewilderment of his friends. We once had the advantage of hearing them, but, beyond the fact that 'Scrooge was as dead as a door-nail,' little was intelligible to us. There was a legend current of a man in Kalocsa, known to our friends, who studied English for three years under a French teacher of modern languages. When able to read and write it fluently, he went on his travels, and soon came across some people he took to be English. Anxious to air his newly acquired knowledge, he addressed them, and they replied; but not one word did either understand.

French was tried, with more success. The Englishmen then explained that they thought he had been talking Hungarian, and he confessed that, though from their appearance he concluded they must be English, when they spoke he thought they were Scandinavians.

This having been related, an opportunity was afforded to the Professor. 'Why,' he said, in illustration of the difficulty, 'in England a man may spell his name "Boz," and it is pronounced "Dickens." I believe you are capable of writing "Babylon," and calling it "Cairo"!'

Sometimes stories were told of a famous Cardinal Haynald—friend of Liszt and Munkácsy—who a few years previously had been Archbishop of Kalocsa. In all respects a *grand seigneur*, his memory was still revered. One of the stories was this: He was once persuaded to preside at a general meeting of ladies who devoted their lives to philanthropical work in various parts of Hungary. Eager and excited in their endeavours to further the particular interests they represented, they soon ceased to observe the ordinary rules of debate. The great Cardinal slowly arose and rang his bell. When silence was restored, 'Ladies,' said he, 'it is advisable, in the interest of the cause you

A PAPRIKA-SELLER, KALOCSA

all have at heart, that not *more* than five of you speak at once.'

The dear old lady who was the Engineer's mother sometimes spoke of bygone times. In her youth she lived in a small county town in South Hungary. No railways were there then—where now four lines meet—and she described how her parents would take their whole family away in a large covered cart on a visit to relations, travelling often eight or ten hours a day for two or three days. There were seats in front for the elders, but the back part of the cart was thickly strewn with straw, in which the younger children used to play or lie asleep in comfort. The whole journey was a pleasant outing when the roads were not too heavy.

Several of the men belonging to the Engineer's set always went for their morning walk, from 8.30 to 9 o'clock, up and down the High Street, and nowhere else. Many others took the air there at the same time, and endless were the raisings of hats and the greetings, '*Alászolgája, Árcos*'; '*Alászolgája, Ferencz*' ('Your obedient servant, Arcos'; 'Your obedient servant, Frank'). There was much stopping, too, to chat with friends, or when the talk among themselves became absorbing.

In the evening this promenade was repeated, from 6.30 to 7.30, but was then less popular, owing to the competing attractions of the casino.

When I joined in these walks (the Engineer was most pressing as to their necessity for the preservation of health), an interesting topic was generally started for my benefit. I was told, for instance, something of Hungary's famous authors—of Petőfi Sándor (in Hungarian the surname is always placed first), the great lyric poet, who was born at Kisközös, near Kalocsa; of the beauty of his verse and the depth of his feeling; of his love of country, especially of his native plains; and of his mysterious disappearance at a battle, in defence of his country's rights, in 1849. His body was never found, and whether he was killed during the fight, or perished slowly afterwards in a Siberian prison, has never been ascertained. Petőfi is the best beloved poet in Hungary; next to him, perhaps, comes the epic poet Arany János. Of writers of romance, Jokai Mor is easily first in popular estimation.

The casino, or club, occupied in winter a set of rooms on the first floor of the principal hotel, in the High Street; but in summer it was installed in a large house and garden a few hundred yards distant from the Cathedral. Amongst the members of the

club were some clergymen and all the laymen of any position in the town, including a few of the principal shopkeepers. In Hungary, as in Austria, the aristocrats keep apart—superior by Divine right—but the rest of the world, who lead honourable lives, meet on more or less equal terms.

One of the chief attractions of the summer casino was its skittle-alley. This was no ordinary skittle-alley, but a very long and an extremely difficult one. Instead of the usual slight groove to bowl down, it had a long hog's back, composed of hard earth, kept in perfect order. So difficult was it to knock down all nine that a 'Skittle King' was appointed, whose duty it was to write on a roll of honour the name of anyone who achieved this feat. The person so honoured was expected to order for the 'Skittle King' the best cigar available, and for the company a cask of beer or bottles of wine until they were satisfied.

It was here I learnt how to count in Hungarian as far as nine, the boy who set up the skittles, or the players, always calling out the number that had fallen: *egy*, one; *kettő*, two; *három*, three; *négy*, four; *öt*, five; *hat*, six; *hét*, seven; *nyolcz*, eight; *kilencz*, nine. It was no easy matter.

Never shall I forget the roar of *Kilencz* which

went up when, on the last day but one of a long summer visit, I, for the first time, bowled over the whole nine! I had been revolving in my mind various excuses for ordering wine for the players on my last day, and wondering which would be most acceptable. Here it was, indeed, not an excuse, but a duty! It may be added that only once in each season was a skittle-player expected to pay for his glory.

When painting on my favourite wastes, soon after we took lodgings at the rope-maker's, I sometimes saw a hare, sometimes heard partridges calling in neighbouring fields. Very soon I asked the Professor if he thought that, in return for a moderate payment, I could obtain the right to go for an occasional stroll with my gun. The licence taken out in the Tátra was still good, and I was longing for exercise. He replied that he would see what could be done. Just then there was no Archbishop, and no one knew who would be the next; but two of the most important people in the service of the archbishopric were the chief Head-Forester and the chief Steward, both friends of the Professor, and to them he presently applied; and that was the origin of many very delightful days for me.

SWINE AT THEIR BATH, NEAR KALOCSA

The shooting in the immediate neighbourhood of Kalocsa was let to clubs, and that at a distance was difficult to reach on account of the deplorable state of the roads after continued rain; but both the Head-Forester, whom I will call by his German title, *Waldmeister*, as he was thus generally named to me, and the Steward promised to remember me when occasion arose.

My first excursion was with a Clerk of the Steward's, to a *puszta*, near a railway-station, where he was sent on business. The land was as flat, and nearly as bare, as a table, and we killed but little game; but as I shot neither the Clerk nor his dog, it was considered safe soon to give me another invitation.

Early one morning the *Waldmeister*, accompanied by the Head-Forester immediately below him in rank, called for me in a light but very strong open four-wheeled carriage, drawn by a pair of the finest horses from the Palace. Had the carriage been less strong, or the horses less spirited and powerful, we should never have arrived at our destination The drive that followed beggars description. When hardly clear of the town we began to flounder through mud, and the straining, jolting, and jerking pass belief. Later on things got even worse:

the carriage sank to its axles, the horses nearly to their bellies; the coachman urged and coaxed, but never whipped, his willing horses, and frequently let them rest; then, with a huge effort, we were for a time again pulled forward. It took two hours to travel seven miles, for it was a quite unusually wet autumn, and — except at various places that season—I never saw such roads before or since.

We had been invited to a large *puszta*, belonging to the Chapter of the Cathedral, for what is known in German as *Kreis Jagd* (literally, 'circle hunt'), a form of sport I believe to be unknown in England, and suitable only to flat, open countries where game cannot otherwise easily be brought to the gun.

Our host, the occupier of the *puszta*, very much resembled what used to be called in England a 'yeoman farmer,' or in some places a 'gentleman farmer,' both in build, features, and general get-up. Box-cloth leggings, with the buttons well in front, riding-breeches, cap: all were correct—and a sturdy man was he.

About the farm everything was spacious and suggested plenty. It was up-to-date in all respects, the *Waldmeister* told me. It was lit throughout

by electricity, and narrow-gauge railway-lines connected the various great buildings.

The farmer ushered us into the dining-room, where a handsome lady—his wife—was dispensing a light luncheon, or second breakfast, to a number of guests who had already arrived. Eleven men stood up and, one by one, introduced themselves to me; they all knew the *Waldmeister* and his other companion. Among them were the vet, a brewer, and the son of an ironmonger, from Kalocsa; who the rest were I have forgotten beyond that they were relations and friends of the family, who thus came together in an annual gathering. Fur and leather had much to do with the picturesqueness of their appearance.

Outside about fifty beaters—some men, but mostly boys—were assembled. There was nothing distinctive about them or their clothes; they might have come from anywhere. Each boy carried a long stick and a white linen bag with food for the day. On our joining them the whole party moved away together, and what happened then was this: two of the guns who knew the country well started, one to the right, one to the left, each with a few beaters; then another gun, with three or four beaters, followed each of them, and so on

until the whole party had spread out. The leaders walked in large semicircles, and when they met, a circle about three-quarters of a mile in diameter had been formed, as the other guns stopped at regular intervals, with the beaters spaced between them. The order was passed to advance slowly towards the centre of the circle. Almost immediately flocks of wild geese got up, formed into lines and wedges, and passed over us well out of shot. Now and then a covey of partridges came over, dropping one or two on the way, and hares tried to break through our thin line. Some succeeded, but most of them were either shot or turned back. As we advanced we gradually closed nearer together, it became increasingly difficult for anything to get away, and we soon saw—still hundreds of yards away from us—the hares which it had been the main object of our manœuvre to circumvent. They seemed bewildered; some would race to the right, some to the left, everywhere they found men! Then they foregathered in the centre. When a small rise in the ground obscured their view of the enemy some would make for it, only to meet with disappointment on reaching the top. Such a hillock was once before me. Over it came a hare, a long red

MARKET GIRL, KALOCSA

hare, ears flat with the back; like a racehorse it came down at full stretch, straight towards me, then turned a double somersault in the air, and lay still. Before there was time to reload my first barrel, another hare, a large light-coloured one, sped across in front of me at full speed, only to turn head over heels and slide through the wet grass. '*Király!*' (King) cried a beater near me, beside himself with joy—and that was the brightest moment of my day.

When the circle was reduced to a width of 300 yards we halted, the beaters ran in, and we were allowed only to shoot outwards. For a few minutes there was quite a fusillade. None of us shot with more than one gun, and many hares happily escaped to enjoy their own lives, and help us to enjoy ours on future occasions.

Three rings were made that day, and then, about three o'clock, we returned to the farm for dinner. Oh, shades of Pickwick, and most hospitable Wardle, I hope you were present at that feast!

In a large comfortably furnished dining-room we took our places at a long table laden with cakse, fruit, and wine, which looked as if it had been prepared for an old-fashioned wedding breakfast. The only lady present was our Hostess, who

presided at one end of the table; at the other sat our Host, while in the middle of one of the sides was our Host's father. This stout old gentleman was always addressed as *Bácsi* (pronounced *Bartchy*), a term meaning uncle, which is frequently used when a person addresses a man older than himself with whom he is on familiar terms. The word *Néni* (aunt) is similarly used to an elder lady.

Good feeling prevailed, and also good manners—for a considerable amount of etiquette is always observed at a Hungarian meal. There was much fun and much laughter, but the language spoken being Hungarian, I missed all the points.

The dinner was served thus: First came an excellent soup, then boiled beef with vegetables, and then a sweet dish or pudding. 'How sensible,' I said to myself, 'to give such a homely, simple dinner in a farm!' But not a bit of it! The pudding disposed of, veal cooked with paprika was handed round; after that came baked fish, then fowls, then ices, then cheese, then dessert; and all the time wine flowed as freely as water from a spring.

Of course, many toasts were proposed, and we all drank to each other separately and collectively—not out of empty glasses, as is usual after big

dinners at home, but generously—each time a bumper!

The evening was now drawing in, and the *Waldmeister*, anxious lest darkness should overtake us on our difficult way—for the moon rose late—proposed that we should start for home. We performed a usual after-dinner ceremony by going up to the pretty lady who had presided with much grace and kissing her hand, and then we bade good-bye, shaking hands cordially with all the rest of the party. If our boon companions took advantage of the moon to return to their homes, or stayed till daylight on the morrow, I never heard.

These *Kreis Jagden* take place in November and December, when the crops have been all garnered and the maize-stalks cut down. On an estate across the Danube, twenty miles from Kalocsa, 800 hares were shot in one day, and I have heard of 2,000 being killed at another place. Where these great shoots are held the hares are always spared during the earlier part of the season, except a few required for the table. When partridge-shooting in October, for instance, we were each told to shoot two hares to take away with us, but no more.

The word *puszta*, several times used above,

literally means desolate. Originally it was applied to pastures, far from town or village, where horses and cattle were driven, and where the herdsmen remained, often for months at a time, without returning home. A few such places exist still, and there is one of great extent where we stayed, and about which I shall have to tell later on. The name, as I understand, is now also given to any large farm standing alone in the plains, and is applied indiscriminately either to the buildings or the land.

There are in Hungary countless towns and villages, but it is a peculiarity of the country, especially in mountainous districts, that farms and other buildings are not dotted about everywhere between them, as in neighbouring countries to the west, where by every green patch on a mountain-side is a white house, and on every knoll a church.

Farmers whose land lies many miles distant from Kalocsa, and who have homes in the villages nearest to it, possess also houses in the town, which they consider to be their headquarters, and come there for 'week-ends' or when work is slack. This, and similar customs elsewhere, probably arose when the depredations of the Turks drove people to congregate together for safety.

A CONVENT MOAT

Among the attractions of Kalocsa for young people of the farmer class were Sunday afternoon dances at several modest inns in outlying parts of the town. We looked at one through open doors—a blaze of bright colours, whirling through tobacco-smoke, to the wildly inspiriting tunes of Gipsy dance-music. Unfortunately, the young men had a habit of carrying long knives in their top-boots, and, when maddened by jealousy or rivalry for the favours of the young women, used them only too freely. Several bad cases of stabbing occurred, one at least ending in death, and Sunday dancing is now forbidden.

The habit of using knives to settle quarrels is the only unmanly thing I ever heard attributed to Magyars, and that, I trust, is not widely spread, for I seldom heard of it anywhere else.

There was to be a wedding at the vineyard belonging to the Cathedral Chapter, and the Prelate, who yielded to entreaties that he would be present at the feast, invited us to go with him. He had watched over the growth of the vineyard from the first, and was revered and beloved in the neighbourhood. Some fifteen or twenty years ago phylloxera ravaged the vines throughout Hungary, but they are now as flourishing as ever. The vine-

yard to which we went was, I believe, started as one of the first experiments in growing Hungarian vines on very light sandy soil. The wine produced is light, palatable, and little intoxicating, and the number of vineyards of this description is rapidly increasing wherever possible.

It was a bright October morning when we set out. Half an hour by train landed us at Keczel, from which place we drove rapidly to the vineyard —about an hour's distance away. There all was commotion, for it was the daughter of the manager who had been married that morning, and she and the bridegroom had just returned from church. We inspected the large, perfectly-kept vineyard and the cellars, where great barrels stood in rows, and were then summoned to the house. When we entered the large bare hall with two tables running the entire length of it, where a hundred and thirty guests were already assembled, the band struck up the Hungarian national hymn, and the bride's father came and kissed our hands. We were escorted to the top of one of the tables, close to where the bride and bridegroom and a few of their nearest relations, of both sexes, were seated. For the rest, the men and women sat apart.

Presently the best man entered from the far end

of the room, followed by five other young men, each bearing a large bowl of soup. They all wore neat black velvet jackets and top-boots; but the best man had, in addition, a bunch of flowers in his buttonhole, tied with a pink silk bow, from which fell broad streamers. His hair in front was dressed in little black curls, which were plastered down across his forehead. When he had approached to within a few paces of the bride, he and his comrades, one behind the other, all stopped, with the tureens still in their hands, and then the best man recited, in sing-song fashion, humorous or caustic verses which had been composed for the occasion, describing the food he held, its origin and its uses. No doubt he alluded to other matters also, for there was much giggling and laughter, though he himself never even smiled. This quaint ceremony was repeated with every course.

The behaviour of all present that day was charming, and though wine circulated freely, and the people seemed bright and gay, nothing happened to which even the most fastidious could take exception. It is, indeed, always delightful to see, and be in the company of, real Magyar peasants. Some of the women were very attractive, and when the dancing began they were fascinating, swinging and

swaying in their many skirts—full of go, but never vulgar.

On our return journey through the sand-hills we passed Gipsy encampments, where, against the fire-light, graceful forms of children were silhouetted; in the villages, the small houses, well hooded by high heather roofs, looked milky-white in the gathering dusk.

Our first visit to Kalocsa lasted on into the winter. The leaves fell; the mud froze.

The *Waldmeister* had frequently promised to take me for a short day's shooting in some woods a few miles down the Danube, when the roads became hard. One morning, in a slight snowstorm, which, however, soon cleared away, we started. A nephew of the *Waldmeister*, a medical student, was on the box by the coachman; the *Waldmeister* and I seated ourselves behind them, half buried in rugs and furs, and then the jolting began, the most excruciating jolting, six or eight miles of it, until we reached the great dyke along the river. On the way I admired the rich red wine colour of deep festoons of paprika pods which hung beneath the thatched roofs of each white farmhouse.

The dyke is usually blocked, at intervals, by padlocked bars which can be opened like gates by

THE CONFIRMATION WREATH

the few privileged persons who have keys. One such was, of course, the *Waldmeister*; but the key was not now needed, as in time of frost, when no harm can be done by traffic, the way along the dyke is opened for all.

We had still many miles to travel, and had gone two or three, when round a bend in the dyke, which farther on was hidden by enormous trees, we saw coming towards us two waggons laden high with maize-stalks. There was no room to pass; to turn was impossible. On one side the bank sloped steeply down for twenty feet; on the other, towards the river, a small extra dyke, four feet high and two feet broad at the top, had been added. What was to be done? I could see no way out of the difficulty; but our chief was a man of resource, and though at first somewhat nonplussed, he speedily hit on the only possible plan. Our horses were unharnessed, led to a place where the earth of the downward slope, being somewhat broken, afforded possible, though difficult, foothold, and then cleverly coaxed down to the field below. We four men then lifted the carriage and placed it astride on the top of the small upper dyke. The waggons passed, their loads brushing the carriage all along; the waggoners received a 'wigging'; and soon

we resumed our journey, none the worse for our efforts.

Driving down at last from the dyke, we passed through woods and young plantations, and came to the house of an Under-Forester, situated in a forest glade close to the Danube. A Forester had come across the river to join us—for, all the outlying places on the estate being connected with Kalocsa by telephone, it was easy to make such arrangements—the beaters were ready, and we at once moved off to the plantations.

My stand was in a pathway, twenty yards from a heap of wood at which a man was working, but he stopped work and hid himself on my arrival. Hardly had the beaters entered the wood when I saw, indistinctly, something which I thought must be a hare—though it seemed too long and moved too smoothly — glide very rapidly through the thin stems towards the wood-pile. I meant to shoot it as it crossed the open drive; but it did not appear. Whether the woodman moved, or what else checked it, I do not know. There was not a sound in the undergrowth. Where had it gone? A few moments later, only five paces before me, appeared, as if by magic, the face of a fox. I saw it clearly, looking at me through the

brushwood—bright black eyes, nose, ears; all keen. I ought to have fired, but it was so close! and some feeling brought from home—though I have never hunted—also influenced me. Then a wonder happened. While I still looked intently on that motionless face, it slowly faded out and vanished! Not a twig moved, not a leaf rustled, but the fox was gone!

There was general disappointment that no foxes had been found, as the beat had been arranged especially in hope of destroying one or two which had done much damage, and were believed to be in that cover. My ignorance of the language had prevented me from knowing this in time, and I never told the story of my fox till now.

We had a capital, though all too short, day afterwards. The arrangements were admirably carried out, and plenty of hares and not a few partridges were driven forward. I remember being impressed by the noiselessness of the flight of some owls. Half a dozen were put up quite near me, and circled about in a dazed fashion, without any perceptible sound being caused by their wings. It was a second uncanny experience!

As we drove home along the dyke, a wintry red sun set behind the woods on the far side of the

great river, and darkness came while we were still far from home. The carriage lamps had not been brought, as we expected to return by daylight, and it was therefore necessary to go to the nearest farm and borrow a stable lantern, which the student held up from his place on the box, on the top of a stick six feet long. We all agreed that we preferred the risks of a cut home across country, over anything there might happen to be in the way, to another bumping along the rutty roads such as we had experienced in the morning. That was a weird drive over frozen fields slightly sprinkled with snow, which were only visible for a few yards before us. Sometimes a trench, which had to be circumvented, brought us up sharp; sometimes most grotesque willow-trunks, coming within range of the lantern light, seemed to peer at us for a moment out of the darkness; but all the time we saw the Cathedral, like a beacon, faintly gleaming in the distance. The strong electric lights on the square, themselves unseen, lit up the towers and produced this effect.

When, much shaken, we had pulled up before my lodgings, 'If you please, a hare,' were the parting words of the *Waldmeister* as he drew one out of the box along with some birds, and handed

COTTAGE AT KALOCSA

Blaisdell Studios

them to me; for so much English had he secretly learned in honour of the occasion.

At Kalocsa all through the long winter nights the waking might hear, at intervals, a low, melancholy, long-sustained note. For some time this interested us, but by day we forgot to ask what it meant. It was caused by the watchmen, who, in huge sheep's-wool mantles, paraded the town, and whistled thus sadly to prove that they were not asleep.

CHAPTER VII

KALOCSA, AND ACROSS CROATIA TO FIUME

WHEN, after a while, a new Archbishop came to reside at Kalocsa, many high functions were held; promotions and other changes were made. For instance, a member of the Chapter, on being made a Bishop, left for another See, and thus one of the highest stalls in the Cathedral became vacant. With the greatest possible ceremony and formality all those occupying lower stalls were moved up, and no one of them looked displeased. Corresponding advantages of a temporal character accompanied this sedate move.

We lived at that time—by way of change—on the road to the railway-station, about half a mile from the Palace. My wife had been given the use, as studio, of an empty dormitory at the smaller seminary, which she could approach by a back-door without disturbing anybody—one of the

countless acts of friendly consideration we received from both the clergy and laity—and I generally worked in some small woods near a dyke, where many ecclesiastical gentlemen, alone or in parties, took their evening walk. One of the most constant of these was the Secretary of the Archbishop, and he never passed without stopping to see how my picture was getting on. He, like many of the other priests, had been educated at Rome, where he had acquired a taste for art—a taste, indeed, like that of some High Church clergymen at home, mainly interested in saints and symbols—but my efforts at landscape painting seeming to him better than none, he spoke of them to the Archbishop, on whom we had already called to pay our respects.

One day the Secretary came to us to say that we were requested by His Grace to bring our works for his inspection on the following Sunday morning, at 12.30, and were invited to stay for dinner afterwards. There was something feudal about this, which, though to us unusual, was not unattractive.

With noon next Sunday came a smart brougham, and pair of bays in glittering harness, for ourselves; and two manservants, in white gloves, for our pictures, which were quite small.

The Prelate, the Secretary, and a number of priests forming the Court, were in one of the reception-rooms when we arrived, and all helped in arranging the pictures in the light most becoming to them. When that was done the Archbishop was informed of it, and he presently entered. It is the custom for Catholics, on being received by him, to bend the knee slightly and attempt to kiss the ring on his right hand, in token of deference to authority. I observed, however, that he lowered his hand with a deprecatory movement, and did not allow this actually to be done.

When our pictures had been reviewed with many friendly comments, the Archbishop offered his arm to my wife, and, followed by the rest of us, led her to the great hall where dinner was served. The repast was sumptuous, but I could not help noticing that the Archbishop—like all the great dignitaries of the Church I have met—himself gave an example of extreme, almost ascetic, temperance. On such occasions there is no frivolity. His Grace leads the conversation and is deferred to by all, though he listens with the utmost amiability to what all have to say.

Far otherwise was it when we picnicked with a

PRAYER FOR THE DEAD

party of the younger clergy, at the vineyard of the parish priest—called Boer Tanya (Boer Farm) in honour of our late enemies—or supped informally with them. Then gaiety and laughter, wine and song, held sway, and they all behaved like happy, light-hearted schoolboys, without a care in the world.

One of the most distinguished men in Kalocsa was an aged Jesuit priest, who lived, and had lived for years, alone in a tower on the top of the Great Seminary in the High Street. He was an astronomer, and his observations were devoted principally to the sun, its spots and other phenomena. He showed us many drawings he had made of them.

The owner of our lodgings held some small post in the town, and his wife still sang in the Cathedral choir. They had three fair daughters living with them. The eldest helped her mother to mind the home, the second was a certificated schoolmistress, and the third was working hard with the object of becoming one. There was yet another girl, who boarded in the house and studied for the same examinations. Those two students were inseparable, and, either in the house or among the roses and vines of the garden, continually read or

repeated the same lessons aloud together, from morning until night.

Often on hot summer nights we all sat together in the vine-covered veranda at the back of the house. The parents spoke German fairly well, the daughters hardly at all, and yet they contrived to give us little exercises in Hungarian, generally consisting of a list of simple words, which we were expected to be able to commit to memory and repeat at the next lesson. *Fő*, head; *kéz*, hand; *láb*, foot; *nap*, sun; *hold*, moon—how hard they were to learn, and how easy to forget! Or, again, they taught us that weight must always be laid on the first syllable, and, most important, how to pronounce the letters, or combinations of letters, of the alphabet. *S* is pronounced as *sh* in English, *z* as soft *s*, *cs* as *tch*, *gy* as *dj*, *cz* as *z*, *ly* as *lj*, *ny* as *nj*, *sz* as hard *s*. What we heard about accents would take long to relate. The schoolmistress, a tall, very fair girl who combined gentleness with much dignity of manner, was most gifted as a teacher, and was always kind and obliging, as, indeed, were the whole family.

One morning, on awaking, we could hardly believe our ears. No sound of voices came from the room next to ours; nor, more faintly, from

those farther removed; and in the garden all was still. The long-looked-for day of the final examination had come at last!

And not long afterwards came a night when we were awakened by what seemed to us strains of the sweetest music that ever fell on mortal ear. Soft and low, it rose and fell—sighing of wind in the pine-forest, waves on a distant shore. And then it seemed to breathe of love—love in doubt, love despondent. And, again, taking courage, it told of delight—entreating, caressing, rapturously exultant.

The Gipsies—sent by who knows whom—had come in the dead of night to play a serenade: for —the girls had passed.

The Danube near Kalocsa is broad and smooth; mild and enervating are the airs that in summer and autumn scarcely fan its shores. Willows large as forest oaks, and other trees still taller which flourish luxuriantly by the grass-grown dyke; reeds, grasses, cultivated plain, and hazy distance—all things there are mellowed by one pervading influence, and nowhere is there a harsh note.

When, still intensely brilliant, the sun sets beyond the river, its powerful rays uninterrupted till the level horizon is reached, the effects of colour

among the trees, and reed-bordered pools which reflect them, are magical.

But the mosquitoes! They plague, though they cannot wound, more than those of Venice, and make painting in those lovely places misery.

Here and there along the river floats a group of small flour-mills, in form resembling the Noah's ark of the nursery; but in colour grey and sombre. In winter they are hauled on land to avoid the ice, for the Danube is generally frozen in January and February. Sometimes drifting ice is blocked in front, and then piled up in irregular masses to an immense height by pressure from behind; thus it happens that people living on opposite sides of the river, who for the rest of the year are near neighbours separated only by a few minutes' row, often cannot visit each other in winter without undertaking a journey by train lasting eight or ten hours. When a bridge is completed at Baja, thirty miles below Kalocsa—which was in course of construction when we were there—this inconvenience will be greatly remedied. Again, sixty miles below Baja there is a railway ferry at Gombos, where the whole train runs on to barges and is drawn across; but I believe it cannot be worked during the cold season. I have

THE RETURN FROM CHURCH, ZSDJAR

Adrian Stoica

heard some little grumbling from people who think that it was unnecessary to build as many as five bridges at Budapest, when there was not one for nearly two hundred miles down the Danube; but they are all at heart proud of their magnificent capital.

Enormous numbers of wild geese frequent the plains and find safety on the wide river. Their raucous note may be heard while they are still far away, the beating of their wings when they are high overhead. They appear like a thin waving thread in the distance. As they approach, however, it will usually be found that they are formed like a V or several V's, with sides of unequal length, the individual birds being two or three feet apart. They are extraordinarily wary and difficult of approach, though when in carts we have sometimes nearly come within shooting distance of them. It is said that if one cares to have a hole dug near water in a lonesome place, and has then patience to wait in it till evening with no more than the head protruding, some shooting may be had.

Storks also frequent the country round Kalocsa, and build nests on chimneys in the town, where their long-legged young ones may often be seen standing, waiting to be fed. They sweep over the

houses with long, low sailing flight, hardly ever flapping their wings, from the damp meadows where they have been slowly striding about, lifting up long red shanks, and giving an occasional peck with long red beaks as they go. They all leave in August, having first assembled like swallows; but they choose a large open space over which to wheel together preparatory to their long flight. No one ever injures them. The children believe they bring babies; older people, luck.

No long time ever elapsed while we were at Kalocsa when I did not join our friends during their morning or evening walks in the High Street, and I never did so without finding them interested in a new topic. At one time it was my cheque-book. It was incomprehensible to them that I should be trusted with one in which I could write any sum I liked; and all my explanations were in vain.

Once, on returning after a long absence, I found them, and many other people, to be wearing little red tulips with green leaves, in enamel, pinned on or underneath the lapels of their coats; and the glasses from which they drank their beer at the hotel were ornamented with the same flower. The tulip is the national emblem, and this new habit

betokened that those who wore it pledged themselves to support Hungarian industries by never buying anything that had been made abroad if things of the same kind were produced at home. An agitation had been carried on for the abolition of free trade between the two portions of the dual monarchy, and the imposition of duties on manufactured articles coming from the Austrian Empire, with a view to the encouragement of industrial enterprise in Hungary. But of such matters I have little knowledge. Our friends wore their tulips for a time, and joined in the general amusement when it was whispered—perhaps untruly—that their pretty badges had been themselves made in Bohemia and sold in Vienna.

Besides the Engineer and the Professor, one of those who took regular walks was a landowner who had retired from the management of his property, and come to live in the town. He was a kindly and hospitable gentleman. At his house we learned to know a refined Magyar family, not of the aristocratic class, and to appreciate the perfection of Hungarian housekeeping, the perfection of Hungarian food.

Then there was a Judge, or Justice of the Peace, whose mind dwelt much in the past, and who had

the history of his country by heart. When any place was mentioned that lies between the Adriatic and the North Sea, he invariably took me by the buttonhole, saying in a sepulchral voice: '*Einmal hat das auch zu Ungarn gehört*' (Once that also belonged to Hungary).

And, among others, was the respectable cashier of the bank, who cashed my cheques by order of his chiefs, but could never overcome his suspicion that there was something wrong about my cheque-book.

The Engineer had an Assistant who was related to the Steward on a large *puszta* belonging to the archbishopric, situated about an hour's drive from Kalocsa when the roads were good—as, indeed, they generally were, except during the wet autumn of our first year—and we frequently went there together to shoot in the maize-fields.

All those who held good appointments from the Archbishop might send to the Palace stables for carriages when they required them in his service, and were often allowed them for expeditions on their own account. There were many of these carriages, but I noticed that they varied in smartness with the rank of the applicant. The Engineer himself would not have been happy in the chariot

YOUNG GIRL OF ZSDJAR IN SUNDAY CLOTHES

in which his Assistant and I were overjoyed to drive to that most hospitable *puszta* on many a fine Sunday morning in the fall of the year.

On arriving we were always most cordially made welcome: a light lunch was immediately served; another carriage—or two or three, according to the size of the party—was brought round, and then, with dogs and guns, we drove across the open country to the place chosen for shooting. Generally we walked up our game—hares, partridges, and quails—through the maize, which in some places was eight or ten feet high, in others only three or four; and trying work it was on a hot day. But the reward was great when a carriage, bringing wine and mineral waters, met us at the far end of a large field, and relieved us of the game we were carrying.

On great occasions, when the Steward had come out from Kalocsa, and a large enough number of guns were present, driving was practised in this way. A strip of maize was chosen, perhaps half a mile long, and from two to three hundred yards wide; at one end of this were posted all the guns but two; and at the other, two horsemen, one on each side of the maize, with a stout cord drawn between them. The two remaining guns

stood a short distance before the riders. When all was ready the party with the cord started, and the rustling of it on the maize drove the game forward. If, however, anything went wrong and the cord stopped, even for an instant, many hares doubled back. I recall one such drive, when five of us were standing on a road which passed along one end of the maize that was being worked. Nothing whatever came towards us until the cord was within a hundred yards, and I began to think the whole affair was a fiasco. Steadily it came on, relentless, with a loud rustling of the dried leaves; and then, with a burst, the partridges got up, hundreds of them, and broke away in all directions, while for a few moments hares darted about on the road before us, or ran almost between our legs. It was bewildering, and the bag for that drive was ridiculously small, considering how well some of the party generally shot.

I remember another time when things happened quite differently, and we had far more success. From the moment when the horsemen started with the cord until all was over, hardly a minute passed without someone getting a shot, even though the best came at the end.

When shooting was over came the good dinner—

the preparation of which had been superintended by the handsome lady of the house herself—accompanied by much clinking of glasses, when we drank the usual toasts; and then the respectful kissing of the ladies' hands, as we thanked them for the good cheer; and the drive home in the twilight, under avenues where many hawks came to roost, and up through the woods at the back of the Palace. How pleasant it all was!

In olden times the Danube, on its way south through the plains, turned aside, described the form of a horseshoe, and then resumed its original course. Modern engineers have cut a channel connecting the two ends of this figure, and the river now flows through it. The old river-bed, a series of lagoons, encloses an estate where lives a gentleman who devotes his time to shooting, and whose wife is said to shoot almost as well as he does.

It holds an enormous amount of game—pheasants, partridges, hares, and many kinds of wildfowl, as well as red-deer and wild-boar. Its richly wooded landscape, romantic in character, suggests remoteness.

I paid two short visits there, the first time being taken by the *Waldmeister*, out of the shooting season. A good house has now been built, but at

that time a number of smaller buildings were used—some as bedrooms, some as kitchens, etc., and one—the largest—as a dining-room. Over the dining-table, hanging by chains from the ceiling, was a broad oval band of iron designed by the owner, which formed a candelabra, striking, if somewhat barbaric, in style. At one end of the white room, hung with arms and antlers, was a minstrels' gallery, on which were arranged brass hunting-horns, and other spiral instruments of the same metal. The gramophone behind them, which played hunting tunes after dinner, was out of sight.

On my second visit we went out for wild-boar, but failed to find any, though they were known to be in the part of the forest we went to. A gale of wind was blowing, and the tree-tops, waving about, made a great noise. It was said to be impossible in these conditions to drive the beasts with the few beaters who had been got together at short notice, so we adjourned to land under cultivation, and devoted ourselves to shooting pheasants and partridges for the rest of the day.

One day the lady and gentleman from this place, happening to be in Kalocsa, were good enough to take supper with us at the hotel, where we were joined by the *Waldmeister* and a friend

A COTTAGE AT ZSDJAR

of theirs. The Gipsies came to play, and after supper—there being no other guests present—we danced. Then our friend took the violin from the leading Gipsy and played and sang Hungarian music, the Gipsies accompanying him.

One song that he sang with much pathos seemed typically Hungarian. We had several times heard it, and my wife asked him to tell her the words, which she felt sure must be beautiful and touching. 'I think I can turn the refrain into English,' he replied; and these are the words he sang:

'For the running horses,
And the pretty wifies,
Oh! what
Pity grow old.'

'I have translated it,' whispered his wife to the ear of mine.

Among other things, we remember our last walk with the Prelate before he left Kalocsa on his appointment as Bishop of . . . . It was a sultry evening, and all around us, far away beyond the great teeming plain, huge masses of cumulus cloud towered up. Some were lit a warm rose colour, fading into silvery greys; others told dark and flat against the light. Beneath them all light-

ning played, and the booming of distant thunder rolled towards us from five separate storms.

And we remember the trim and tidy maids, swinging their skirts as they tripped to and from the artesian wells, whose greeting was the Latin word *Servus* as they passed each other with their cans. And there was another greeting, which came like a voice from the past when timidly spoken by little school-children whom we met on country roads: '*Dicsértesék a Jezus Krisztus*' (Beloved be Jesus Christ)—to which we had learnt the response '*Mind örökke, ammen*' (For all eternity, amen).

We always left Kalocsa with regret, and it is sad for us to think that in all probability we shall never go there again. Besides the persons I have mentioned, many others were courteous and kind to us in a great variety of ways. We shall never forget them.

On several occasions we crossed Croatia on the way to Fiume. Our train left Budapest early in the morning, and—if we went through—landed us at our destination in about thirteen hours. After the first five hours of our journey, which lay through a country that appeared to be prospering, but had no very distinctive features, and by towns that looked

modern or modernized, we crossed the River Dráva, Drave, or Drau (according to the language preferred), and entered the rolling woodlands of Croatia. Two hours' more travelling took us to the capital of the country, called by Croatians Zagreb, by Hungarians Zágráb, and by the rest of mankind Agram. It lies not far from the River Száva, Save, or Sau, which, flowing far to the eastward, enters the Danube at the place we call Belgrade.

Agram, according to Mr. Baedeker, in the year 1903 had 61,000 inhabitants, of whom 4,250 were Germans and 2,800 Hungarians. It was last destroyed on November 9, 1880—by earthquake.

Behind the city, which is composed of two parts, united by a short and steep funicular railway, is a range of mountains ; before it, an undulating plain, clothed with woods and forests, and watered by several fine rivers.

We stayed at Agram for a day, and admired the fine Gothic Cathedral, which has been rebuilt since the disaster. The last Cathedral stood in a close, surrounded by great walls, with round towers at the angles, which withstood the shocks of earthquake in 1880. We were sorry to see a swarm of workmen busily pulling down the last two of them, in order that the view of the new edifice

should not be obstructed. Another building which survived is the very perfect thirteenth-century Gothic Church of St. Mark, in the upper town. Near this church a promenade runs along the front of the town, where the band plays, and whence there are fine views over wooded landscape.

Croatia does not form part of Hungary proper, though it belongs to Hungary. It has a Diet of its own, and also sends members to the Central Parliament. The chief thing that I remember of much that I was told of the complicated political relations between the two countries is—that they are generally strained.

What little we saw of peasant costume, either in Agram or from the windows of the train, charmed us. Several women wore costumes of snow-white linen, with many pleats, which were scrupulously clean and neat. On their heads were white, red, or orange handkerchiefs, finely draped, and their sleeves and jackets were handsomely embroidered.

The rest of the journey is, for the most part, very beautiful, particularly where the train follows the course of a river (the Kulpa, I believe), which, with here and there a shallow fall, winds about deeply embedded among smooth and shapely hills; and again for the last hour before reaching Fiume.

WILD STRAWBERRIES

Unfortunately, it was so dark during the last part of the journey that we could not enjoy it; but when returning by early morning trains, we each time thought the views of winding coast and islands—stretching away into the luminous sea as far as the eye could reach—as lovely as any we had ever seen.

Fiume, 385 miles from Budapest, and separated from the rest of Hungary by the whole width of Croatia, is the only Hungarian seaport. It has a population of 40,000, and has flourished under many different rulers since ancient times, when it was called Tarsatica. Only in 1870 was it finally united with Hungary. It much resembles many other ports on the southern coasts of Europe. Harbours full of picturesque boats and glancing waters, quays and breakwaters, motley crowds and piles of merchandise about newly-arrived steamers, broad fronts of glaring houses, hotels, and cafés where people sit at little round tables in the street —all seemed familiar to us.

There is not much at Fiume that reminds of its antiquity; an unimportant Roman arch, said to have been erected in honour of the Emperor Claudius II., being nearly all that remains. The town can boast some fine modern buildings, how-

ever, and the celebrated Whitehead torpedo factory is situated there.

A winding road leads up from Fiume to a place of pilgrimage where—by the credulous—the 'Blessed House of Loreto' is believed to have reposed for a while after its long flight from the Holy Land. In the old church, called by the sweet name 'Madonna del Mare,' that now occupies the site, there is a picture of 'Our Lady of Loreto,' which, according to legend, was painted by St. Luke.

Many pious Hungarians come to Fiume, the object of their pilgrimage being, I suspect, not this holy mount; but, rather, to worship by the last expanse of open sea remaining to the Magyar race.

CHAPTER VIII

ZSDJAR

IT may possibly be remembered that, when in the Tátra, we went one day to Tátra-Lomnicz in the height of the season, and the Gräfin then took us for a drive to a Slovak village. That drive, and its consequences, I will now describe.

In a comfortable landau we started—the Gräfin, a lady friend, my wife, and I—up the road which, rounding the flank of the Carpathians, leads to Poland.

The Gräfin's daughter, unfortunately, was unable to accompany us, having only just returned from a lively ball in a country-house, which had been kept up all through one night until nine in the morning; had begun again in the evening, and been continued until 3 a.m. next day—a fact I mention as a not unusual instance of Magyar vitality and endurance.

The day was grey and overcast, and I could not

bring myself even to express the raptures I was expected to feel while passing through that somewhat grim mountain scenery. Through a thick forest of moderate-sized pines, relieved only by notice-boards telling that trespassing was forbidden, the road led on until we came to the stately woods of Barlangliget.

Many nice-looking people strolled about there. It is not a fashionable place, but one where the fairly well-to-do spend their summer holidays, and the difference in appearance of such people in Hungary from those in some neighbouring countries is marked. They are very tastefully, if simply, dressed; there is a well-bred air about them. The fat and formless figures which annually invade Austria, from the North, hung with opera-glasses and skirts that are looped up, revealing white-stockinged ankles and elastic-sided boots; and the no less sturdy gentlemen in shirt-sleeves, with perspiring faces and hobnailed enormities, who accompany them, are as yet almost unknown here.

From Barlangliget onwards the road mounted rapidly, and a brawling stream flowed down beside it—the first thing, so far, to get at all near my heart. Great grey mountains reared up on our

HAY-TIME, UPPER HUNGARY

left; smaller ones, or wooded hills, were on the right. No farms or other buildings were to be seen until, after two hours' driving, we approached the long straggling line of widely-separated houses, extending for three miles, which is called Zsdjar, and is situated near the top of the pass.

Many of the grey-roofed log-houses, with red-lined windows, were set far back from the road, amid narrow starved-looking fields. In places two or three were close together; in others, nearly a quarter of a mile divided them. The road was hilly, and a few spindly willows—not pollarded—grew beside it. Meadows sloped down to a small river two hundred yards away, and beyond that steep pine-covered slopes rose up again to bare dark mountains. All was *triste*, and green, and grey.

It was a Sunday morning, and we had proceeded far through the deserted place before a crowd of people, returning from church, began to top the hill on the road before us. As they came on the effect they produced was startling. Only once have I been affected quite in the same way, and that was in the days of the Grosvenor Gallery by a decorative painting by Hornel and Henry, composed in strange bold shapes of emerald green, gold,

vermilion and white, with a scanty allowance of secondary colours to relieve them.

On their heads the women of Zsdjar wore handkerchiefs, red, orange, or green; gold and silver embroidery in broad bands sparkled on their bodices; their sleeves were of whitest linen, embroidered with pale crimson at the shoulders; their skirts were scarlet, and their aprons black or green. They wore black top-boots, ornamented on the heels, as did also the young girls walking in a separate group. These girls went bareheaded save for a *plaque* of tomato-coloured satin which was fastened to the knot of hair at the back, and developed into three streamers that passed under the waistband and reached almost to the heels. Their smooth dark hair was drawn tightly back and brushed or oiled down, so that not a single wave existed over any brow. On their bodices gold and silver braid also gleamed; but in many instances the effect was tempered by a thin white gauze veil drawn tightly round the shoulders. The rest of their apparel resembled that of their mothers, except that their skirts were sometimes white.

The men wore low black hats with red ribbons; waistcoats of sheepskin, the wool turned inside, and the outside leather embroidered all over with

crimson and scarlet; flannel-coloured felt trousers, with red lines down the seams; and shoes of soft leather, turned up and laced across the insteps.

Nothing was shabby, not a thing torn or untidy, in the whole crowd we passed.

My wife was enchanted; the Gräfin decided that, *coûte que coûte*, we were to paint at Zsdjar; and I privately determined to do nothing of the kind, unless reasonably good quarters could be found.

We drove on to the church, which, with the Priest's house and small school, formed an isolated group near the far end of the scattered village. The aged Parish Priest was too unwell to receive us, but while I stayed in the court admiring a tame roe-deer, the ladies endeavoured to captivate a young curate, who appeared to them to be a handsome and intelligent young gentleman.

They learnt that a small and very primitive inn near the middle of the village had been opened that day for the first time, and that there was to be a dance in honour of the occasion. About midday we went there, as our only hope of obtaining lunch. Bread, eggs, and little sausages were to be had, but the sausages were of such a dubious appearance that none of us ventured to eat them. When I pricked one with my fork, a thin red fluid ran all

over the plate. No! I thought we would not stay at Zsdjar, in spite of the Gräfin's evident conviction that the (in my case mythical) enthusiasm of artists in pursuit of the peasant should be enough to support them otherwise unfed.

The Notary and the schoolmaster had both been sent for, and presently arrived, the latter accompanied by his very pretty bride in peasant dress, who seemed to be twenty, though she was but sixteen years old. She obstinately refused to allow the Baroness to take a photograph of her, and thus foreshadowed difficulty in obtaining models to paint. The Notary, who was friendly and talkative, told us that his house at the lower end of the village was too large for him, that he would be prepared to take lodgers the following year, and urged us most warmly to come ourselves. We thereupon agreed to postpone our sojourn until then, and promised to write to him before we came.

Early in the afternoon dancing began with a *Csárdás*. Half a dozen Gipsy fiddlers—one with a huge double-bass—sat on a raised bench, looking swarthy against the white wall, and, as they warmed to their work, the fun became fast and furious. The Notary was anxious that we should see dances peculiar to the district, but the Gipsies

THE BELLE OF ZSDJAR

did not know the music. A bright peasant-boy, who did know it, then brought his fiddle and, seating himself beside them, led them with the greatest spirit. One dance was started by six young men, who with short, quick steps circled round the room and burst into loud snatches of song, when the spirit moved them, or squatted down suddenly and beat the floor two or three times with their hands. Then they called out the girls of their choice, and danced away with them without stopping until the music ceased.

Another dance began, and before it had finished the fascinating curate joined the crowd of onlookers.

Four young men stood opposite to four others; a girl, keeping time to the music, danced about in and out among these men, or where she would, while a man, also dancing, followed her until, with a scream, she allowed herself to be caught. Then this couple waltzed about, and the others, in turn, did as they had done.

Our carriage was waiting, and when we went to join it on the conclusion of the dance, everyone else, to our surprise, also left the house. They all had prayer-books with them, and we learnt that the curate had come to lead his flock to church, but on finding us so much interested, had considerately

waited until we had seen enough. The whole gay crowd followed him to afternoon service, and festivities were to be continued as soon as Benediction was over.

The aged Parish Priest was loved by his people, and exercised a good influence among them. He had persuaded all the men to give up their habit of drinking spirits—to the very great advantage of everyone, except the Jews who kept a miserable inn at each end of Zsdjar—but he wisely allowed moderate drinking of wine or beer to go unreproached.

Brandwein, or cheap spirit, is the curse of Slovak peasants. At Vázsecz many a man would drink two litres in an evening, with the worst results to himself and his family; though there were exceptions, as was pointed out by our landlady, Frau Deutsch—herself an interested party—when she showed us the shepherd who always drank more than anyone else when he returned home at the end of each week. He was over eighty, as straight as an arrow, and as active as a man of twenty.

When the following year came round, we wrote from Kalocsa to the Notary of Zsdjar, to ask if he was prepared to receive us, but no answer was

returned. We wrote to the curate, and again no answer came. We asked the Prelate to write for us to the curate, and he did so, but with no more effect. Then the *Waldmeister* said: 'Go there, and you will find somewhere to live: the kind of people you have written to always put off answering until to-morrow.' But before following his advice we made one more effort to gain information. Having discovered the name of the sick Parish Priest, we wrote to him. He immediately replied from his death-bed, in a trembling hand, that he understood a hotel had been built which was arranged to receive families, where we should find all we sought. We wrote to the landlord of the hotel, whose name the good Priest had mentioned, and waited; but no answer was vouchsafed. Then we started for Zsdjar.

We went to the nearest place to it on the railway, a picturesque little town called Szepes-Béla, where there is a poor inn; where several of the houses at one end of the main street are ornamented with charming designs in stucco, dating from the *Empire* period; and where we had *krumholz* baths in a quaint old bathing establishment hidden among trees half a mile from the town. Branches of *krumholz*, or creeping fir—which

forms such an insuperable barrier on mountain-sides—were steeped in boiling water until it became as brown as what used to be called 'half-and-half' in English inns. The aromatic hot water was then brought in large tubs slung on poles by two sturdy bare-armed handmaidens, and tilted over into deep wooden baths. We agreed afterwards that we had seldom enjoyed anything of the kind so much.

It was a drive of eight or ten miles up to Barlangliget, where we slept and deposited our luggage. Then, burdened only with a light knapsack, we set off on foot to solve the mystery of the silence of Zsdjar.

One of the first houses we came to at the end of our long walk was that of the Notary, and he was at home. He received us in the same very friendly manner as that in which he had talked to us the preceding year. Had he received our letter? He had. Why had he not answered it? He had always meant to. Was his house ready for us? He had always meant to get it ready, but had discovered that an unpleasant odour in some of the rooms was due to a fungus growing between the logs of which the house was built, and was thinking of having it removed. When that was

THE SCHOOLMASTER'S WIFE, ZSDJAR

done, perhaps he would take lodgers—perhaps, another year. He regretted. We regretted. But how about the new 'family hotel'? 'What hotel? There is none, unless you mean the place where you saw the peasants dancing last year.'

We walked on for a couple of miles to that haunt of revelry, which appeared to be just as we had left it. The landlord was at home. Had he received our letter about the rooms prepared for families? He had. Why had he not answered it? He had always meant to, but it was difficult—he could not write. A rare exception among landlords in that country, he was a Christian. Thus he came under the protection of the priests, who had tried to do him a good turn.

Continuing our walk for half a mile, we arrived at the house of the Parish Priest. The curate was at home. Had he received our letter? He had. Why had he not answered it? He had always meant to. Had he received the letter from the Prelate—who was much annoyed at receiving no reply? He had, and had always meant to answer it, but could not overcome the embarrassment he should have felt in doing so. He then told us that some time previously the old Priest, and all his belongings, had been removed to another house,

and he himself had been appointed in his place; but that as this appointment had not yet been definitely confirmed by the highest authority, he had not furnished the house. He had really felt ashamed to tell the Prelate that he was not in a position to offer hospitality to anyone recommended by him.

Then the mother was summoned, who kept house, and we had a consultation. He would be happy to take us as paying guests; there were two large rooms at our disposition, but there was no furniture for them. She did not wish us to come at all; certainly not, unless we brought a servant. She had already too much work to get through with her small staff.

After much discussion and much persuasion on the part of my wife, who was most anxious to paint in the place, it was decided that we should go to the 'family hotel,' for a few days, the Priest should go to Kesmark and hire furniture, and his mother should try to get an extra servant.

The two days and nights spent in that bleak inn will not soon be forgotten. Besides back premises, it contained a bare bar-room where carters drank as they stopped to rest their horses on the long, dreary road; and a smaller room opening from it, about

twelve feet square and equally bare, which was reserved for more distinguished guests. Upstairs the two best bedrooms were small and narrow, their rough walls and arched ceilings were distempered a crude blue, and each of them contained a small bed, a deal chair, and a small iron washstand with a tiny basin in it—all very clean —and nothing else. They were entered from a large room with a bed in each corner. We had our two beds crowded into one little room, as my wife was nervous about remaining alone, and when we tried to go to sleep the first night a drunken man lay stretched near our door.

The anxious landlady did all she could to please, even going so far as to bring her own tooth-brush, which she hoped might be of service until our luggage arrived. She could provide no meat, no vegetables, and no butter; but there were bread, cheese, and eggs, which she trusted would be enough for our wants 'until the day after to-morrow,' when more ample provisions would be sent up from a town. It was not long before I added some very fine trout to this humble *menu;* and they were really well cooked by a young woman then paying a short visit to the landlady. We tried to engage this person to be our servant. At first she would;

then she thought she could not; then—having had an interview with the Priest's mother at his house—she declared that nothing on earth should induce her to go near that place again.

A cartload of furniture came up. The Priest had driven down alone to Kesmark to hire it, after firmly declining my wife's offer to accompany him, on the ground that it would cause her unnecessary fatigue. When it was placed in the rooms we were to occupy we were invited to see it.

There was a handsome large washstand with heavy marble top and generous double set of crockery; there was a large dark wardrobe, and a chest of drawers to match; there was a stuffed sofa with a curling carved back; and, besides other things, there were two handsome bedsteads, with high and polished heads. 'But where is the bedding?' we both cried together. 'My mother must see to that,' said the Priest.

The terms he had made at the shop for these articles—which were all new—were not unfavourable for himself. We were to pay two-thirds of their purchase price (and we did) for two months' hire; and if by the end of that time his position as parish priest was confirmed, he was to keep the

A MAGYAR COTTAGE AT BÁNFFY-HUNYAD

furniture on payment of the remaining third of its value.

A smart man, I thought, was that young Slovak priest, and I hoped confiding strangers might not often come within his grip; but my wife long persisted in her belief that sweet simplicity was his leading trait. Decidedly, he was a smart young man in many ways—even, 'a bit of a sportsman.' He had two miles of fishing on the river, and a repeating rifle, which he sometimes fired in the air to see if it was all right; he had a yellow four-wheeled dogcart, and an iron-grey horse with a trick of backing when it ought to be going uphill; and he had the appearance of a well-groomed curate, fresh from Oxford, rather than that of a Roman Catholic priest in the wilds. What wonder if at least one pair of warm brown eyes grew softer when he passed!

The bed difficulty was solved by the production of two long sacks of straw, laced down the sides, and of sheets and blankets borrowed from the 'family hotel.' The servant difficulty still remained—and that was never overcome.

Besides the priest and his mother, the household comprised a small maid-of-all-work, named Marouska, aged twelve; a coachman, named

Lukas, aged fourteen; and an undergrown cowherd, with a very gruff voice, named Simek, aged ten.

During all our stay of nearly two months' duration things never ran smoothly for long. It was almost impossible to get models. The number of trials and disappointments my wife survived passes belief. Promises broken, days of waiting, work broken off in the middle when sitters would come no more, hunting for children hiding in the corn, room in empty house which she used as studio in bad weather broken into, and all her colours stolen—these are but some of them.

The people did not need money, for, in addition to what they made at home, a steady stream of it continually reached them from relations in America. The Priest at first tried to help, as he had promised; but soon grew discouraged, and either hid, or fled, when he thought we were going to ask him to speak for us. My own troubles were comparatively small, though when I painted a picture of the people trooping away after church I had to do it from observation lasting two or three minutes, as they actually went, once a week—and most of the Sundays were wet. No one would stand for me in the road or elsewhere.

Sometimes we were short of food, and had it not been that the Priest gave me permission to fish in the stream, we might have suffered from actual hunger. The only meat ever to be had was brought in the post-cart which came every day from Szepes-Béla; but the postman fell out with the Priest, and would bring no more. The mother would kill no more fowls, partly because they were getting scarce, but chiefly, I think, because she hoped we might be starved into going away.

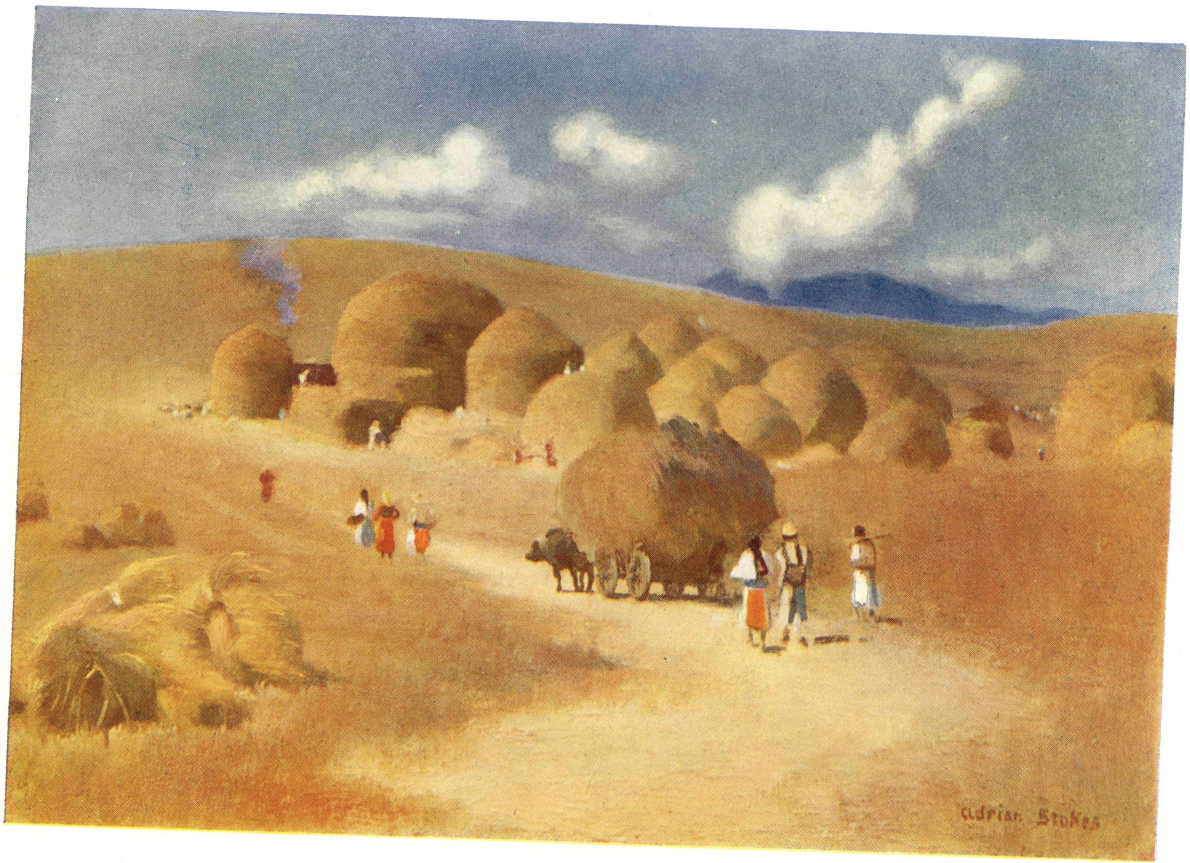
What meals we had were served in our own rooms by the little maid Marouska, who, though quite uncivilized, was a willing servant. She never knocked at the door, and often bounced in most unexpectedly: thus she once found me in the outer room enjoying the pleasures of an early tub, but, instead of retiring instantly, as I expected, stood looking at me with arms akimbo, and roaring with laughter, as if I was the funniest thing she had ever seen in her life. In the evening, when I went to wash my paint-brushes in the kitchen, I generally found her engaged in fisticuffs with Simek; while Lukas, hard by, encouraged first one, then the other, or occasionally punished them both.

One day the Priest came to us to say that a girl, who appeared to him to be very beautiful, had just died in the village under the saddest circumstances; and that he would like to take us to see her, and to paint her if we wished. He led us down the road to a small barn, where he stopped, opened the door, and made a sign to us to enter. In the light which poured in through the open doorway, lying on straw which covered her feet and the lower part of her person, we saw the figure of a quite young woman. Close to her, but more in the shade, an old woman crouched down, convulsed with tears. When, at the Priest's request, a covering was removed which had veiled the head of the reclining figure, it revealed the face of a beautiful girl, who seemed to be asleep. She appeared to be happily dreaming, with a half-smile on her lips.

It was the old sad story: unselfish love, and treachery, and the penalty paid by the weak.

The unhappy girl had poisoned herself with phosphorus obtained from matches, and when afterwards she repented and told all to her mother, it was too late to save her. She was taken to the hospital in the small town where they were, but the doctors could do no more

HARVEST-TIME IN TRANSYLVANIA


Adrian Stokes

than advise the mother to take her away to the village which was her home. She went to the church and made her confession, and then those two started out in a small cart on their pathetic journey through the night. When, in the early morning, they had arrived as far as Zsdjar, the poor girl felt she could travel no farther, and her mother helped her into the barn—to die.

A special order came that the burial should take place in consecrated ground, as the girl had confessed and tried to make her peace with Heaven. We attended it, unseen. Besides the surpliced Priest and his acolytes, only the mother, broken down with silent grief, and a few women sobbing as though their hearts would break, were present at those last sad rites. The colours of their clothes —vermilion, black and white—told strongly on the vivid green of the churchyard, and the bright sun shone as it seldom shone up in that desolate place.

Humbled by the thought of the importance we had attached to our own little troubles, we returned to our work.

The church was an unpretentious building, with a low square tower, whitewashed walls, and a roof of grey shingles. A hundred yards away was the

substantial stone house in which we lived. It formed one side of a small courtyard, which was surrounded, for the rest, with outhouses, and entered through a great wooden doorway carefully barred and locked at night. Not far from these two, but higher up the hill, was the schoolhouse, where the schoolmaster should have been living with his pretty peasant bride. But at the time of which I write it was empty; for things did not run smoothly at Zsdjar that summer. The wife had gone back to her parents; the master had disappeared, no one knew whither.

The width of a field or two separated this group of buildings from the highroad. It was a lonesome place, and seemed even gruesome, when we were shown a stout oak chest in the sacristy on which a priest was hacked to pieces, forty years ago, as he tried to defend from robbers the modest church treasure it contained. The gashes made by their axes may be seen on it still.

At Mass on Sunday mornings the church was crowded. Young men and boys kept together near the door; to the right of the aisle the seats were filled with men, to the left with women; while in the aisle itself young married women,

dressed in special finery, stood about. But the most charming of all were the young girls in rows near the chancel steps. They were all dressed alike, and when they bent down together at the solemn parts of the service, they formed some of the most graceful and beautiful groups we have ever seen.

One Sunday morning, after church, as we were loitering about watching the people—whose appearance was an endless delight to us—we were approached by a tall, slim gentleman. He was well dressed, excepting that he wore a straw sailor's hat and brown canvas shoes, which struck both my wife and me as being inappropriate, as the weather was very uncertain. He introduced himself as a Pole, spoke both French and German fluently, and discoursed at length on language and costume, but carefully avoided satisfying our curiosity as to where he had come from or where he was staying. He inquired which rooms we occupied, asked if we were satisfied with the attendance, and clung to us until it was time for dinner. We should certainly have invited him to share our meal but that it happened to be one of the very lean periods, and there was hardly anything to eat. We therefore said good-bye, and left him politely

bowing and expressing the pleasure he had in making our acquaintance.

All things come to an end, even a visit to Zsdjar —though I often felt that it never would—and our last day there arrived. The autumn had set in cold and wet, and that day the wind roared down the valley, the rain fell in sheets.

We were busily engaged packing the few useful and very many useless things we travel about with, when, about five o'clock, the Priest's mother, evidently much agitated, came to say: 'That Pole who spoke to you one Sunday a few weeks ago has been here since ten o'clock this morning. I am afraid of him! My son gave him dinner, and he has been drinking wine all the afternoon. Why has he come in this weather? Who can he be? What can he want? I am frightened!' Soon after she had left our sitting-room the Priest came in, looking much upset. He said he could not get rid of the Pole, and had now come to us, at his request, to ask for my visiting-card, so that—in case he went to London—he could call on me. I begged the Priest to say my cards were packed and that I had not one handy, which was true, though my reason for not searching for one was that I feared, if the man was an adventurer, it might be used

THE QUEEN OF THE HARVESTERS,
BÁNFFY-HUNYAD

as a means for preying on some of our Hungarian friends. Hardly had the Priest retired, when in burst the Pole himself to enforce his request. He looked all about the room, and, going to the door of the bedroom, peered in there. Though his conduct was so strange, I could not in the end refuse to give him my London address written on a scrap of paper. With that he seemed satisfied, and went away. He stayed on in the house until it was dark, and then departed through the pouring rain, still in the straw hat and canvas shoes with which we were familiar, but without overcoat or umbrella.

Next entered little Simek, the cowherd, dripping wet, to say in husky tones, 'The man who just went away met two other men hiding behind the shrine on the road, and they have been talking there for some time.' 'For Heaven's sake,' cried the Priest's mother, 'put out the lamp. They may shoot you through the windows.' I could think of no reason why they should wish to shoot us, so the lamp was left burning, and, as soon as we had got rid of the Priest, his mother, and Simek, we quietly went on with our packing. We were to leave at five in the morning, and much remained to be done.

Our rooms were on the ground-floor, but the windows, which looked on to a paddock six feet

below, were defended by stout iron bars. The doors of the rooms were solid, and the locks were strong.

Outside the rain continued, and near our windows long branches, dimly lighted, swayed about in the wind.

Presently I heard an unusual sound at one of the windows, and inquired of my wife if she had heard anything. 'Yes,' she replied, 'I have several times heard a faint noise at the window near me, but did not mention it, thinking it might possibly be only fancy.' Then I went rapidly to my window, and something outside moved away from it. It seemed to me that it might be the wings of a light-coloured bird, or it might be hands which unclasped the bars on my approach. My next thought was that Master Simek—who was something of a wag—had been trying to frighten us; so I went into the kitchen to chide him. But he seemed surprised, and the Priest's mother said that neither Simek, nor Lukas, had been out of the room for some time.

On that the Priest became really anxious, and went into the yard, where he fired two shots from his rifle, in order to let anyone whom it might concern know that we were armed. Then he sent

Lukas to the nearest farm for two men to come and sleep in the kitchen; and fine fellows they looked, when, in their white clothes and broad brown hats, they came in barefooted out of the rain, their wet axes gleaming in the lamplight. They were sent on a tour round the premises, which they made, lantern in hand, without discovering anything suspicious.

We then retired to rest, and I had been asleep some little time when my wife woke me to say that she had distinctly, several times, heard a sound outside, like that made by hammer and chisel. There it was; I heard it, too: Click—click! Then, after a pause, Tick—tick—click! There was no doubt about it.

We had promised the Priest to wake him at once if anything unusual happened, so I went to his door and told him what we heard. In two minutes he appeared in pyjamas, rifle in hand. Then he, too, heard the noise: Tick—tick—click! Pause. Tick—tick—tick! 'They are breaking into the back kitchen, where the wine is. From there they will come through the kitchen,' he cried, and, wild with fright, he fired two bullets in the direction whence he thought the sounds proceeded. He then sent the peasants for a second tour of the place, and

while they were away promised to accompany us with his rifle when we started down the lonely pass before daybreak on the morrow. Once arrived at Barlangliget, he thought we should be safe.

But the peasants returned, having discovered nothing, and the sounds, though at longer intervals, went on! Then suddenly I found out what caused them, and, though at first my announcement was treated with incredulity and contempt, it was soon found to be correct. In a corner of the room there was a tall tiled stove. There had been no fire in it that day, but on the other side of the wall there had been a large fire in the kitchen. This had warmed the stove, and when it subsequently cooled, the contraction of the tiles caused the sounds which had deceived us.

Perhaps there had been an unusually large fire in the kitchen that day, on account of the bad weather; perhaps our stove had made such noises every night without being listened to—I cannot tell—nor do I know what it was that came to our windows, but I don't believe it was the poor wet Pole. Perhaps it was something that had been blown from the trees—a little owl, or other baby bird.

When we started on our journey in the early

COTTAGES ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF
BÁNFFY-HUNYAD

Buffaloes drawing a cart.

twilight, the Priest did not accompany us. I think, even, that he hardly liked getting up to wish us good-bye.

In general, the towns we saw throughout Hungary looked new; and, indeed, we were more than once—until we became wary—sent to places said to be most interesting, only to find that new municipal buildings, new banks, new schools, streets in course of construction, electric trams and electric lighting, were their chief attractions. But there were places that well repaid a visit, and of these one was Löcse, (German, Leutschau), chief town of the Zips country, near to the Tátra. Sometimes called the 'Nuremberg of Hungary'—though the comparison suggested is too ambitious—it has a very fine thirteenth-century Gothic church and a picturesque town-hall, which stand close together in an open place, surrounded by houses in many cases old and charming. Inside the church are some excellent early German altar-pieces and finely carved stalls, and in the sacristy we saw several rare things which we remembered having seen before at the 1900 Paris Exhibition.

Kassa (German, Kaschau), where we also stopped after leaving Zsdjar, is an important town

with nearly 40,000 inhabitants. It possesses the finest Gothic cathedral in Hungary, a noble building which has recently been most admirably restored. We found in the interior—besides objects mentioned in the guide-books — several medieval German images of exceptional beauty.

While we were at dinner in the large dining-room of the excellent hotel we stayed at, gentlemen in evening dress kept passing through it and disappearing by a door at the far end. This continued for a long time, and we watched them with ever-increasing interest. Though dressed in the conventional manner, there was something special and yet indefinable about their appearance that recalled the romantic period of 1848. A political banquet was held in an adjoining room, after which speeches were made by one or two leading statesmen, and from just inside the door we had the pleasure of admiring the eloquence of Count Andrássy, though, unfortunately, we could not understand a word of what he said.

CHAPTER IX

BÁNFFY-HUNYAD

BÁNFFY-HUNYAD is a town in Transylvania, seven hours by express train eastwards from Budapest. We went there because the people—Magyar and Rumanian—are celebrated for the beauty of their costume, and the country is pretty. In several beautifully and richly illustrated books which we saw in Hungary, this district was largely drawn on; and not merely on account of its fine Magyar people and their handsome clothes, but also for its wood-carving and embroidery. We trespass but little on the ground they covered.

When our train arrived, about ten o'clock on a dark night, and we called out, as usual, *Horda, horda* (porter), half a dozen ragged urchins scrambled up the carriage steps for our hand luggage. No one was at the gate to take our tickets, and no one was at hand who could speak

a word of anything but Hungarian. We left our heavy luggage to take care of itself, the small boys put the rest of our things into an open cab, and, having pronounced the one word *Szálloda* (hotel), we were rattled away. In ten minutes we drew up before the door of a spacious but shabby-looking café, where a game of billiards was being played, and untidy people sat about at small tables. The waiters could not speak German, but a Jew soon came forward to interpret for us. If we would wait a little, we could have a clean double-bedded room and all we required. Presently we were shown through dim courts, up stairways, and along a balcony, to our room, where an exceedingly pretty young woman, in a muslin dressing-gown, with winning manners made us welcome. The room was large enough, the beds were good, but—as we have frequently found to be the case in hotels in other small Hungarian towns—there was no wardrobe, no chest of drawers, no cupboard, and not even a peg to hang anything on. While we were still endeavouring to persuade the lightly-clad chambermaid to bring a plentiful supply of water —under protest from the accompanying Jew, who continually asked, *Für was?* (what for?)—an irate young Magyar made his appearance. It was his

SUNSET IN THE HILLS OF TRANSYLVANIA

room, he said. He had occupied it for eight days, his things had been removed without his consent, and he refused to give it up. However, his anger cooled when he learned that we had no hand in the matter, and he ended by bidding us pleasantly 'Good-night' before he retired to the tiny closet which was the only available place for him to sleep in. Before the next night we were moved to a comfortable and well-furnished room, which had become vacant; but we soon found lodgings in an exquisitely clean house in the main road, where a good Magyar lady and her servants—who could talk in nothing but their own tongue—made us as comfortable as possible.

The day after our arrival was market-day, and the open place by which the hotel was situated was crowded with people and aglow with colour. We made our way among booths and stalls loaded with fine fruit and vegetables, through a seething mass of picturesque peasants, and reached the Protestant church, standing, surrounded by trees, on raised ground in one corner of the large square.

The Magyars at Bánffy-Hunyad were Calvinists; the Rumanians (or Wallachs) belonged to some form of the Greek faith.

The church we had come to was broad and white,

with a great dark grey roof, a low tower, and a spire, which was surrounded by four smaller ones at the angles. The inside was somewhat bare except the wooden ceiling, which was divided into panels decorated with painted patterns believed to be of Magyar origin. Part of the floor was up, a crypt having recently been discovered containing tombs and other things dating from Catholic times.

Continuing our walk down a broad road, we were attracted by the well-kept white houses with little windows and heavy roofs, and the roofed doorways to the yards. Many of the door-posts were carved in charming patterns, peculiar to the district, in which the tulip played a leading *rôle*. We were several times invited to enter by well-to-do farmers who saw that we were strangers, and were friendly and at the same time dignified, as were also their wives and daughters.

We found the interiors of the houses to be kept in most perfect order, and that they were patterns of cleanliness. The walls were lavishly hung with brightly coloured plates and rows of decorative earthenware jugs, many of which were very old. The beds were loaded up to the ceilings with mattresses and pillows with deep bands of rich red embroidery, and in nearly every room there was a

green-tiled stove. The women opened for us heavy, gaily decorated chests—the tulip again much in evidence—and showed us their fine clothes, among which the many-pleated aprons, often scarlet, embroidered with silks of various bright colours, especially pleased us; but everything was in good taste.

Our way led on out of the town to where we saw before us a vast expanse of sunny landscape, reaching away to a low line of distant blue mountains. The harvest was at its height. On every hill were countless corn-stooks, and close before us threshing on a large scale was in progress. Waggons laden with corn, drawn by black buffaloes, approached from every side; swarms of bright people were busily at work; loose buffaloes strolled where they would, or crowded deep into a muddy pond; the humming of machines filled the air, and everything told of peace and plenty.

Returning by another road, we came upon a young woman sitting sewing by her cottage door. At our request she showed us in, and we bought from her a pretty apron, like those we had previously so much admired. Then other girls from neighbouring cottages, in the friendliest manner, brought their embroideries, and one of them went a considerable

distance for a wreath, or crown, of pearls and tinsel flowers, such as is worn by the young women on certain occasions. When I offered her money in return for the trouble she had taken to please us, she very delicately refused to accept it.

Soon after we left those amiable maidens, we sought refuge from a shower in the one-roomed cottage of a poor widow. But, though poor, she herself and her modest dwelling were scrupulously clean and neat. The floor, the walls, the bed in one corner, the large red stove, and the shining rows of crockery, all looked well cared for. My wife made great friends with this woman, by means of signs, and she agreed to sit and to be painted as we saw her first.

We were greatly impressed by the refinement and dignity of the Magyar people we met that morning. Their manners could not possibly have been better or more charming.

Our stay of several weeks at Bánffy-Hunyad passed away pleasantly, though not without the usual difficulty in obtaining models; for it was the busiest time of the harvest season, and all available hands were at work in the fields. The Gräfin sent us an introduction to a lady and gentleman who

INTERIOR AT BÁNFFY-HUNYAD

took great interest in 'home industries,' and had made a collection of handsome peasant embroideries, wood-carvings, and painted pottery, which they showed us. They also invited us to several meals, but as neither of them could speak any language but their own, we could not converse with them except when other guests were present to interpret. That was the only instance we met with where Hungarians in a good social position could not speak at least two or three languages. Their motive in refusing to learn foreign tongues had been, we were told, a purely patriotic one. They had proudly thought their own should be sufficient.

Several of the great ladies of Transylvania have formed a society for the encouragement and protection of the beautiful and traditional work, of various kinds, which is done by the poorer classes in the country—and, indeed, it is well worth preserving.

Among the excursions we made to villages in the neighbourhood of Bánffy-Hunyad, those to Korosfő and Magyar-Bikal pleased us best.

We drove for five miles to Korosfő over rich rolling downs, and when we arrived many people were leaving the white church, situated on a high mound of grass and light ochre-coloured broken

ground. The afternoon sun fell full on them as they came down the path, a glory of ruby red, vermilion, purest white and golden yellow, relieved by black. And it was not alone their colours that charmed. They were fine, well-grown Magyar young men and women, perfectly dressed in the costume of their own home. The crimson top-boots of the girls were especially dainty and fascinating.

When we left our carriage, we were taken possession of by a neat old woman, who led us up through the descending crowd, the men in it lifting their hats to us as they passed. Somewhat blinded by the sun, we entered the church without noticing that a service was still going on, and should have retired on becoming aware of it had not our guide encouraged us in a loud voice to look about us. A sermon was being preached by a young clergyman to young people who filled one part of the nave ; but when the parson noticed us, he stopped and came down from the pulpit to introduce himself, and remain with us while we admired the ceiling, which was divided by beams into squares, painted in patterns very similar to those we had seen in Bánffy-Hunyad. The language difficulty precluding much conversation, we

soon bowed ourselves out, and left him to continue his discourse to the young men and maidens, who, in separate divisions, had remained quietly seated during the little scene.

Our aged guide next took us to visit several scrupulously clean houses, where, in addition to rows of crockery, many strips of handsomely embroidered linen hung from the rafters or against the walls. At last we persuaded her to take us to her own abode and show us the old embroideries we understood she possessed. Her friends and neighbours came also with theirs, as well as some newly carved boxes and small table-tops, the designs on which seemed to us rather thin. The embroidered patterns on the linen, especially the very old ones, were, on the contrary, rich and altogether admirable. They were invariably worked either in indigo or a red somewhat resembling the colour of paprika.

When we had gladly made a few small purchases, surrounded by an ever-growing crowd of clean and friendly people of all ages—from decrepit old men to toddling babies—our guide and hostess produced a large loaf of bread, butter, excellent bacon, and glasses of pure white buffalo milk, from which she pressed us to partake, out of pure kindness and without any thought of receiving payment.

We made our way back to the carriage by picturesque thatched barns, pretty groups of white cottages, and the familiar hooded gateways with richly carved posts. The designs—in which again the tulip was often present—were in many cases painted, and where the colours had become weather-worn, they were most harmonious and pleasing.

The women and girls wished us good-bye, or said '*Kezét csókolom*' (I kiss your hand), while the men raised their hats as we went; and when I had rolled a cigarette, a man ran after me to strike a match. Such kindness, to foreigners unable to speak their language, as we received from everyone that afternoon seemed to us remarkable indeed; and we should have liked to be able to return to pass a few days at Korosfő, had there been an inn of any kind in the village.

A doctor on whom we had ventured to call, because we heard his wife spoke English, and would like opportunities of practising it, drove us one afternoon over some hills to Magyar-Bikal. The road for nearly the whole distance was bordered by orchards in which the trees bent down under the weight of their fruit. We pulled up at the house of the Calvinist clergyman, where we found a large

MAGYAR SHEPHERDS, NEAR
BÁNFFY-HUNYAD

family and several friends assembled in honour of the birthday of the parson's eldest son. Instead of allowing us to go away, as we proposed, they all insisted that we must join their party, or at least return for the festivities when we had seen what interested us in the village.

The whole place was almost buried among fine old fruit-trees; even the graveyard was full of them. The graves were marked by tall, upright wooden posts, about a foot wide, with curiously carved heads, instead of gravestones or crosses. Where young girls were buried a rod bearing a flag was attached in a slanting direction to the top of each post, the flag being composed of aprons or handkerchiefs they had worn.

There was nothing noteworthy about the church —which was soon to be destroyed to make way for a larger one—except its wood ceiling, dating from the seventeenth century. This, like the others we had seen, was divided into panels, about four feet square, which were painted with delicate and beautiful patterns. We were told that the directors of a museum in Budapest wished to acquire the best preserved portion of it. Separate from the church, but close to it, was a wooden belfry with a tapering spire. It was pointed out

to us, as of interest, that the squared logs of which this tower was composed had been hewed with axes, not sawn.

The village schoolmaster had revived the art of wood-carving among the peasants, and he showed us tables, chairs, and boxes cut by them in old Hungarian designs.

Great pains are now taken to hunt out and preserve, or reproduce, any ancient artistic productions of the Magyars. That there are not more of these is said to be due to the ravages of the Turks, and the fact that all through the Middle Ages, and even the Renaissance period, Hungarians were engaged in war, and had no time to develop in other directions.

The Rumanians at Bánffy-Hunyad are of a far lower grade than the Magyars. They are, for the most part, farm servants or labourers, and many of them, who have no fixed employment, may be seen, picturesque figures, going in search of work with all their worldly goods in the sacks which are slung over their shoulders. They seem to belong to the soil and its labours.

One Saturday we noticed in the distance a crowd of Rumanian women coming towards the town. They were singing, or chanting, in a strange

mournful way, and at their head was a young woman crowned with corn—for the harvest was over where they had been at work. We followed them to a large farmhouse, and on the farmer's wife inviting us to enter, we again admired brightly painted chests, green stoves, flowery earthenware, and embroidered hangings, all spick-and-span. The lady presented my wife with the crown of wheat-ears, and arranged that its wearer should come to be painted the following day.

From our open window on the main road there was always something interesting or amusing to be seen. I often enjoyed watching the happy return of the pigs in the evening, after their day in the country with the swineherds. First, contented grunts were to be heard far away; then a pig would gallop by, followed by two or three others close upon his heels; then there was an interval; and after that, pigs, single, or in groups, passed for ten minutes—all sorts of pigs; pigs that grunted, pigs that squeaked, tall, thin pigs, broad, fat pigs, little pigs with curly hair—all hurried by with a kind of galloping trot, and each turned sharp in at his own door without taking any notice of the rest.

Then a stream of snarling black buffaloes—perhaps two hundred of them—would slowly come

from the other direction, their heads protruded, their grey horns which grow back close to their necks giving them a vicious appearance, like that of a horse with turned-back ears. These animals are enormously strong: two of them are said to be able to pull a load that six horses cannot move. The cows give only half the quantity of milk yielded by ordinary domestic cows, but it brings double the price. It is so white that it looks like liquid plaster of Paris.

Being unable to sleep one early morning, I determined to observe what went on outside, before the time when we were accustomed to begin our day. The hour was 3.30: everything was bathed in that vague light which precedes dawn; the stars were still bright in the sky, and a waning moon dipped towards the horizon. All was still.

Before long warm lights gleamed faintly here and there in whitewashed cottages over the way.

Cocks crowed in the distance.

A door opened, and a tall peasant strode rapidly away in the twilight. I heard the sound of low voices; footsteps approached, passed, and all again was still.

The dawn approached, rose and gold swimming

THE GARLIC-SELLER

over all things in the east; to the west, opal and blue.

The sound of a horn at four o'clock—too-to, too-to—and the cracking of whips heralded the approach of a herd of buffaloes. Many yard-doors were thrown open, and from each of them emerged two or three beasts sped with parting lashes to join the procession which was slowly slouching by; and for several minutes belated buffaloes were whipped up and hurried after them. Then again there was quietness for a time.

Four Wallachs, in long white cloaks and nether garments bound round from the shoes up with thongs of leather, came out from next door to us, still munching their early meal, and strode off.

A powerful Magyar in a felt hat, dark blue jacket, short white trousers—or divided skirts—reaching below the knees, and polished black top-boots, pressed on a forgotten buffalo; and then for a time nothing passed, until a herd of long-horned white oxen came, driven by a Wallach in turned-down straw hat and flannel-coloured clothes of thick hanging felt.

Carriage bells jingled in the distance, and a carriage appeared drawn by a pair of brown horses, which trotted smartly along the road. Their driver

was arrayed in a coat of light brown leather; behind him his master proudly reclined with folded arms and an air of vast importance.

The light grew stronger; the only sound to be heard was the chirping of sparrows.

A party of reapers with scythes on their shoulders, points upwards, strolled along, accompanied by women—Rumanians—each wearing two small rugs, orange or striped purple, fastened to their waists, one hanging in front, the other behind. Their white shirt-sleeves were embroidered with black at the shoulders and wrists; they wore loose leather vests, and on their heads black handkerchiefs, which were knotted at the back of their necks.

Four white oxen with deep-toned bells were driven by; and then I fell asleep.

At 5.30 I was awakened by the loud blowing of a brass horn. The sun was up, and an army of pigs was passing in a cloud of sunlit dust—not merrily as at night, but slowly, with unwilling steps. From every door their ranks were swelled, and later, unpunctual pigs were driven after them. The sound of the horn died away towards the open country.

Ducks quacked, cows lowed, and maids swept out the court opposite.

Several empty buffalo-waggons passed, with Wallach peasants sitting on their front rails, smoking.

Next came a gay tribe of Magyar maidens on their way to the harvest-fields. Their sleeves were snowy white, their skirts were brilliant red; most of them wore wide straw hats; some went barefooted, and some stepped along in tall high-heeled boots of crimson leather. They passed on towards the sun, and disappeared in a cloud of dust raised by a second herd of swine which was approaching.

Two boys, with great cow-horns slung on their backs, and long-lashed whips, drove their unwilling pigs away down the road.

The common light of day had come, and I lay down for another doze before it was time to get up for breakfast.

On Sundays the Magyar people of Bánffy-Hunyad were magnificently dressed—the women so much so that my wife was not much tempted to paint them. They appeared to her to be too much like ladies bedizened for a fancy-dress ball to be really picturesque, though had she known that this book was to be illustrated, they should not have been omitted.

The men wore thick white felt overcoats, heavily

embroidered with black, without putting their arms through the sleeves; round black hats; white linen trousers, very short and loose; and black top-boots.

A peculiar custom of the women was that of turning up the black outer skirt to the waist in front, in such a way that a broad band of lining showed, orange or vermilion, as it sloped down to their heels at the back.

The matrons we saw sitting together in church wore dark handkerchiefs on their heads; dark leather vests, richly embroidered with black and white, or claret, green and black; black pleated outer skirts, with broad band embroidered with black below the waist; aprons of rich colours; and black top-boots with remarkably small feet.

The young unmarried women wore on their heads *pártas*, or wreaths of imitation pearls and ruby tinsel, from which four long bright ribbons descended; cloth vests, worked in many colours; bright pleated aprons, often tomato or flame colour; white skirts; and dainty crimson leather top-boots with high heels. Two long ribbons, blue or scarlet, hung from their necks almost to the ground; their sleeves were of whitest linen, and their hair hung in a long plait, ending in a silken cord with two tassels, either brown or red. Under each left arm

HAY-TIME IN TRANSYLVANIA

a brightly coloured shawl was held, which reached down to the bottom of the skirts.

There was a high-bred look about all these Magyar people. The men were tall, straight, and small-headed; the young women tall and slender, with small hands and feet. Their manners were incomparable.

When children or young girls came to my wife, they always kissed her hand. They frequently kissed mine too, and those soft lips left a sweet and gentle feeling of their youth and freshness.

CHAPTER X

DESZE, SOME OTHER PLACES, AND A SALT-MINE

LEAVING England one year late in May, we went to Budapest, and thence on to pay a visit to the Bishop of * * * * (formerly 'the Prelate') at his diocese in the East of Hungary. I remember, during the last portion of that journey, the graceful acacia-trees in full flower and their delicious scent, through which we passed for hours at a time.

We found the Bishop's secretary waiting for us on the platform, wearing a long black cassock and a low top-hat, and attended by a footman in pale blue livery with white cordings, a crimson silk cap shaped somewhat like a fez, with a silver band, and top-boots. Outside the station were a smart carriage and pair for us and a cab for our luggage. The coachman wore pale blue livery, like the footman's, except that his cap was of black fur with a high cockade.

The Palace, built in the form of a square, fronted the street, its gardens and shady grounds being at the back. Our carriage drew up under an archway inside the building, and we were ceremoniously conducted by the secretary and several men-servants up broad flights of low stone stairs and along a light corridor to the apartments reserved for guests.

Where was the smiling sister, and where the merry handmaidens of other days!

We had proceeded half through the special meal which had been prepared when the folding-doors of the dining-room were thrown open, and we saw the Bishop coming towards us over soft carpets through a long line of lofty rooms, the servants bowing low as he approached. Holding out both hands, he welcomed us, and we fell once more under the spell of his great dignity and charm.

Sometimes we were allowed to visit him in his own rooms, which were simply, even sparely, furnished; sometimes he visited us in ours, and on such occasions the old relations of friendly familiarity were continued; but at meals, when several deferential or silent priests were always present, there was invariably a certain amount of constraint.

Hungarian Bishops are great personages, for not

only are they very wealthy, but they have seats in the House of Lords, and, I believe, take precedence of everyone else in their respective sees. Their appointment by the Pope has to be ratified by the King of Hungary before they are duly elected.

A Hungarian professor, who could speak a little English, once remarked to us: 'Our Bishops are Princes!—Princes! When they go to Rome, Cardinals call on them, and hold out their hands for money—money! And our priests are gentlemen—not, as in Italy and some other countries, beggars—beggars!'

We greatly enjoyed the Bishop's hospitality for a few days, and then set out to find painting quarters for the summer.

We went to Máramaros-Sziget, a considerable town on the Tisza (German, Theis), which to us, as artists, was uninteresting, and then on by rail to Kőrősmező, close to the frontier of Galicia. The country we passed through is often called 'the Switzerland of Hungary,' but it really more closely resembles parts of Scotland or Wales.

When we arrived the weather was cold and wet. Only one small shabby open cab was available, and the best seat in that, under the hood, had been already taken The country was bleak, the inn far

PEASANT WOMAN IN HER GUBA
KISBÁNYA

away, and we found that the one fairly good bedroom in it had been secured by two gentlemen who came by our train. Beyond the road by which the inn stood a half-empty river flowed, its water thick with reddish mud; and unattractive-looking Jews in long black *kaftans*, with curls hanging down their cheeks, walked about disputing in the rain. The dreariness of everything could not well be surpassed.

We were still trying to eat the horrid supper cooked in goose-fat which our Hebrew landlady had provided, when one of the gentlemen entered from the other room. His object was to find out who and what we were, and I wish we had had enough spirit left to try to mystify him. When he learnt that we were only artists in search of the picturesque he seemed greatly relieved, and if, as I suppose, we sank in his estimation, he was polite enough not to show it. On my saying to him as a random shot in return, 'You have come about the oil-wells?' he almost staggered back. He was a prosperous-looking Hungarian Jew, lately returned from America; his friend, a tall and pleasant American, of a not uncommon business type. They had come over in quest of oil, and had frequently broken their journey and travelled by

circuitous routes across Hungary in order to avoid being tracked.

On the Galician side of the mountains forming the frontier great quantities of oil are found. It is to be hoped that the Hungarian slopes may prove equally rich.

We left the next day, but not before we had enjoyed the excitement of seeing the river flooded, and the rafts come tearing down, steered in front by long oars worked on wooden pins. In spite of the bad weather the mountainous landscape we saw during a long morning walk was very beautiful, and an old Greek church we visited most picturesque; but the peasants had little charm, and the place was swarming with Galician Jews. The costume of the Ruthenians was new to us. The women's dress somewhat resembled that of Rumanians; the men wore thick red trousers, tight round the ankles.

My wife, by way of making conversation, asked the landlady if her servant, who lacked characteristic features, was also a Jewess. 'Yes, she is,' was the answer; 'and so honest that if you were to leave about *Zucker, Gold, und süsse Mandeln* [sugar, gold, and sweet almonds], she would not touch them.' There seemed to be something almost

Biblical about the conception of this admixture which caused me to make a note of it.

There are several watering-places with mineral springs in East Hungary, where, doubtless, happy and healthy holidays may be passed in agreeable society; but we avoided them as useless for the purpose we had in view, and it would be very unfair to infer from our experiences that no pleasant quarters are to be found in that part of the country.

After Kőrösmező we tried Nagy-Bánya—a town frequented by painters—but failed to find anything particularly characteristic or charming there, though it was founded by a Saxon colony in the eleventh century and its mines have been worked from time immemorial.

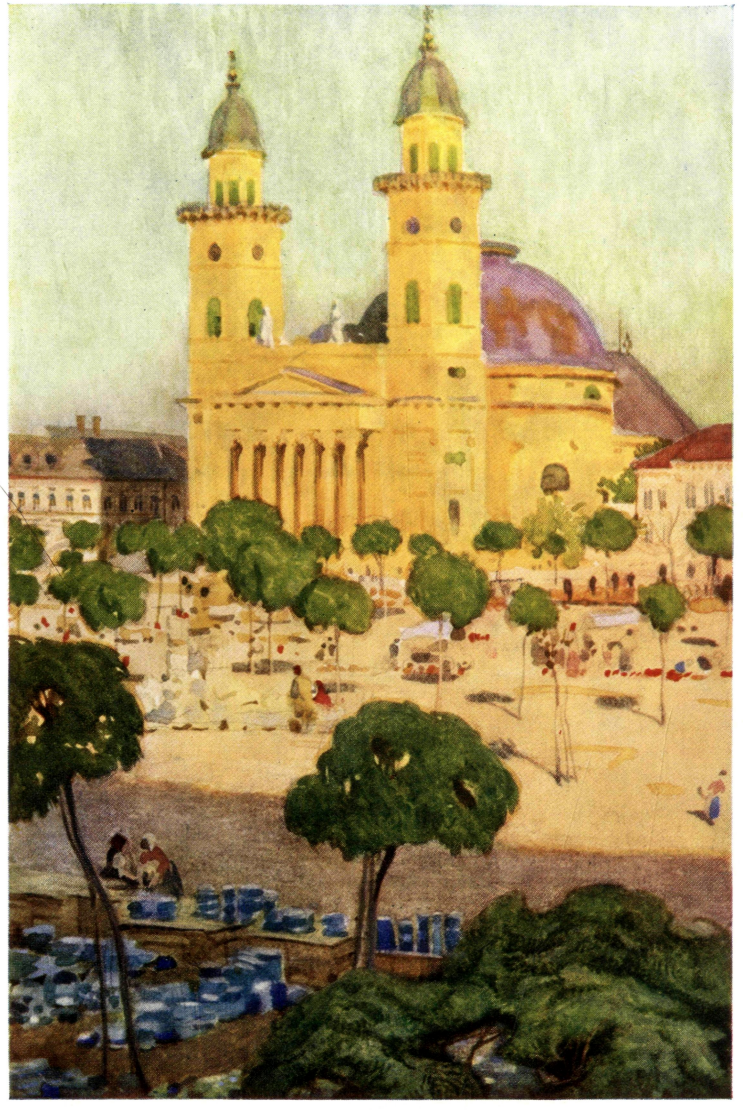
We then went to Felső-Bánya, half an hour by train up a valley leading into the Carpathian Mountains at the foot of which Nagy-Bánya lies. It is smaller than the latter place and much more picturesque, though the streams, in which stamps were pounding, were defiled by refuse from the mines. One of the chief magistrates was most attentive to us; the inn, if simple, was good enough and its landlord was very obliging; the streets and groups of buildings by the square seemed paintable; so that at first we thought of

making a prolonged stay there. But the model difficulty, combined with the fact that the soiled state of the river destroyed much of the beauty of subjects I should have chosen to paint, caused us soon to change our minds, and we determined to go still farther afield.

My wife one day captured a small Wallachian shepherd boy, a dear little fellow, who, with the consent of his father, came most willingly to be drawn. Two sittings were arranged for, the money to be paid on the conclusion of the second. But after the first he disappeared, and—though several people went in search of him—as far as we know, was never seen or heard of any more. And this is only one instance from many of a similar kind.

From Felső-Bánya we drove several times to Kis-Bánya (Bánya means mine, and the words Nagy, Felső, Kis; Great, Upper, and Small; respectively), along a stream that doubtless once has sparkled, and through perfect hill scenery which resembled Devonshire and Wales. About halfway we came to a gold-mine belonging to a French company, where the tasteful house of the engineers, the little bridges and dainty summer-houses in the gardens, and the general aspect of brightness, awoke vivid recollections of far-away France.

THE CATHEDRAL AND SQUARE,
SZATMÁR



At Kis-Bánya we drove to the Greek church, and, finding it locked, called on the priest, who readily opened it for us. The interior contained many rude paintings Byzantine in character, and, before the sanctuary, the customary wooden screen divided by carved framework into painted panels. The priest was a Rumanian knowing at most a dozen words of German, but his Latin language seemed easy after the hopeless difficulty of Hungarian. We talked with him in broken Italian, German, and the few words of Latin that remain to us, all combined, with complete success. He kindly offered to take us to see several Rumanian farms, but insisted that we should first come to break bread with him at his own house.

We found the houses of the farmers we visited to be picturesque and clean. Outside they were white, or light blue, with small windows framed in dark wood, and—the older ones—high roofs of rich dark-coloured thatch which in shape resembled candle-extinguishers with blunted tips. Inside, the principal rooms were hung round with towels with red embroidered ends, and over these were rows of jugs and plates of rough earthenware, most decorative and charming in colour. The clean white tablecloths spread on the tables were

embroidered in the centres, and richly round the borders, with red Rumanian patterns of great variety. Some of the women were remarkably handsome, and one, the wife of the peasant magistrate, agreed to sit for my wife if she could return to paint her. At that time many of them were weaving the great goat's-hair mantles, which, when worn, give them very much the appearance of Polar bears. For the rest, their costume was composed of red aprons, white skirts, and handkerchiefs on their heads which were generally red. Most of the men were engaged in the mines, but also found time to attend their land.

Leaving our heavy luggage behind, we set out from Felső-Bánya one morning in an open cart, without springs, for a long journey over the mountains, hoping to find some place that pleased us on the way; the thoughtful landlord having previously begged us not to give large tips to his servants, as they were not used to receive, and did not deserve, them.

It was a long pull of three hours for the horses—first by the side of a rushing stream, and then up among steep hills covered with forests of beech and oak—to the top of the pass, where we had already arrived, having climbed by short cuts through the

trees. There we rested for a while, and picnicked in a grassy glade, enjoying the delicious mountain air under a clear summer sky. But soon clouds began to gather ominously, and we heard the faint growling of distant thunder.

The descending road was good, and we rattled and jolted merrily down it for an hour or more—the clouds closing overhead, the thunder growing ever louder—to Kracsfalő, the first village, which, with its surroundings, delighted us so much that we decided, if possible, to stay there. If, as we discovered later, we had gone to the Greek priest who lived at some distance from the road, he would have been glad to take us in, and his wife would have cared for us; but the only rooms we found were in a little bright green house belonging to a Jewish shopkeeper. While my wife was inspecting them I noticed a grey-backed crow hung by its feet from the top of a pole to frighten birds away from the garden. It must have been there for a long time, as it had but life enough left occasionally to struggle and feebly flap its wings. I succeeded in making our Rumanian driver go and put an end to its misery; but afterwards it would have taken much to induce us to stay in that house, even if the rooms had

been clean, which they were not, or the untidy woman had not asked an exorbitant rent for them, which she did.

Continuing our journey, we came to another village, named Desze, which looked almost as enticing as Kracsfalő. A large house stood at the top of a court which was open towards the road, and a young man was walking across it. I hailed him and asked him to help us. He told us the house belonged to the Notary, and that he himself was Vice-Notary, or Clerk. The Notary had gone away for a few days, but the Clerk thought that we might possibly be able to arrange to have meals with him and his family if we could find rooms somewhere else to sleep in.

He took us up a rough stony lane to the little school-house—which was unused, as it was holiday-time—and went on himself for the Greek priest, who had the keys. In the end it was arranged that we should rent the place, furnished with beds, etc., provided anyone could be found to cook for us, or if we could arrange by letter to board with the Notary.

We had still a level drive of twenty miles before us—to Máramaros Sziget, where we intended to sleep for the night—and had not proceeded far on

A SHEPHERD-BOY OF FELSÖBÁNYA

our way when the storm which had been long gathering broke over us in streaks of forked lightning, venomous and deafening crackling of thunder echoed by the mountains, and a perfect deluge of rain. For a time it was terrible. No shelter was at hand, and before we reached the first miserable inn on the road we were wet through, the bottom of the cart resembled a leaking boat, and the driver looked very much like a drowned rat. It was a miserable cartload that drew up before the principal hotel in Máramaros Sziget that evening, and went dripping through the place to their beds!

The next day a railway journey of a few hours took us—none the worse for our wetting—back to comfortable quarters at the Bishop's Palace.

During that second visit we made the acquaintance of a number of young men whose love of England and English literature had induced them to form themselves into a small club for the study of our language. They were much troubled by the difficulties of pronunciation—having nothing but books to guide them—and were eager to accompany us on our walks and to hear English as it is spoken at home. (In the course of our wanderings through Hungary we came across

several similar societies, formed for the same purpose.)

One day there was a dinner-party at the Palace. I was introduced to my neighbours in Hungarian, without understanding what I was doubtless told about their rank, etc.; but from his important appearance, and the fact that purple relieved the black of his clothes, I took one of them to be a priest of high position in the Catholic Church. And great was my amazement when, in the course of conversation, he simply said to me: '*Ich habe sieben Knaben*' (I have seven sons).

I had still to learn that the Greek Church in Hungary is divided into two sections, the 'Orthodox' and the 'United.' The 'United' section is a compromise between the Greek and Roman Churches. It is recognized by the Roman Catholic Pope, though marriage is allowed to its clergy and the vulgar tongue is used in its church services. My new acquaintance was a clergyman of the United Greek Church.

We afterwards found villages where priests of the Roman Catholic and United Greek religions lived in close friendship, and at one place, Sugatag, they used the same church for alternate services.

In due course—having heard that we should find

the school-house sufficiently furnished, that a German-speaking servant had been found, and that we could have our meals at the Notary's house—we set out for Desze, by the same route as before.

Surrounded by a crowd of Rumanian villagers, we arrived one afternoon, at the time we had announced, before the little school; the horses having bravely pulled our load of baggage up the steep and stony lane. But we could not get in. The garden door was locked, and no one was about. Presently the eldest son of the Notary, with his gun, was seen coming down through an orchard. He introduced himself, volunteered to go for the Greek priest, and, after a time, returned with him and the schoolmaster. They let us in, but only to find that nothing whatever had been prepared for us except one small wooden bedstead, without any bedding, which was placed in a corner of the largest of the bare rooms.

I think the terms we had agreed on with the priest, though modest, must have seemed to him too good to be true, and that he never allowed himself to believe that we were really coming.

However, in an incredibly short space of time things were got more or less into order. The three men all helped; servants came down laden from the

priest's house; and 'Rosa'—the middle-aged woman who spoke German—was engaged to wait on us. We then went down to the Notary's for supper, a quarter of a mile from our new home.

The Notary, an Armenian of considerable property, was a man of excitable temperament and thoroughly good heart. His wife, a Magyar, was typically a mother. Both their families had been ennobled in the seventeenth century—as might be learnt from coats of arms and inscriptions in the drawing-room.

When we made our first appearance eleven of their children—of all ages, from two to twenty-one—were at home, and clustered round the flight of wooden steps which led into the house, and on which their father was seated smoking a long meerschaum pipe. They were all friendly, and while they took us into the dining-room the eldest son played a noisy march on a cymbal in the hall. The table was soon loaded with large quantities of wholesome food, and excellent wine was served together with a mineral water, with a strong smell of sulphur, which at first we could not bring ourselves to drink. Our meal was nearly over before the mother appeared, as she preferred to cook herself—though she had plenty of servants—and never

THE RUMANIAN CHURCH AT DESZE

György in the foreground.

sat down to eat until everyone at table was satisfied. Children came and went as they would, and when most of them had disappeared we heard again the cymbal, and also the sound of young voices singing simple Rumanian and Magyar songs. Out of compliment to us—as foreigners—when we joined them they immediately struck up *Die Wacht am Rhein*, the only foreign song they knew! Then the Vice-Notary came and joined in the singing, and the Notary brought his flute, and maid-servants bore in trays with wine and other drinks.

Not wishing to intrude longer on these family festivities we proposed retiring, but the Notary stopped us, saying: 'Stay, stay! it will not often be as it is to-night'; and it then transpired that it was the feast of Whit-Monday, according to the Greeks. Later, when we again suggested that it was time for us to go, as his wife must be fatigued, 'She is never tired,' said the Notary proudly; 'she is as strong as a railway-line.' And so I believe she was; for when all the younger children had gone to bed, and she had seen that all was well with them, her motherly instinct was still unexhausted and she brought a fox-terrier puppy and nursed that.

When at last we did go, we went with three young men, carrying lanterns, to escort us. One of

them was the schoolmaster, who had arranged himself a nest among the benches in the schoolroom and slept there for a time. But he afterwards went away for a holiday, and then we were quite alone in the house during the nights.

The first morning we were awakened by Rosa with the coffee, and that was her last act of service to us; for she went away without a word, and never came back any more. She was one of those people who prefer the excitement of odd jobs to regular employment; though she was to be seen every Saturday keeping a small shop for a Jew who would not himself make money on that day.

Thus left servantless, we did not know what to do—the inhabitants of Desze being all either Rumanian peasants with little or no notion of cleanliness, or Jews who kept drinking-dens and were not prepossessing, to say the least.

But there was a bright Rumanian boy named György, aged eleven, who was devoted to the schoolmaster, and was always hanging about the little trellis vine-grown porch of the school-house. Hearing of our difficulty, he came and volunteered to be our servant, was engaged, and in our remembrance of Desze, György is the outstanding figure. He only knew his own language and the

few words of Hungarian which he had learned at school, but he was so intelligent that in a short time he could anticipate our every wish. On Sundays he was always spotless in a loose white linen shirt which fell outside broad short trousers of the same material; and beyond a strap round his waist, and a small felt hat with turned-down brim, that was all he ever wore except a *guba*, or goat's-hair overcoat, in wet weather; but by the end of the week he was generally a grimy little person. Until about Wednesday he was considered clean enough to make the beds, which he did, imitating exactly the movements he had observed in my wife, as he tucked in the sheets or tapped down the pillows. From five o'clock in the morning he would lie waiting in the little porch until sent to the Notary's for our breakfast, with which he always brought a glass jug of fresh water from a well. He brought water for the baths, cleaned the shoes, swept out the rooms, and made the beds when he was allowed to. He then took me out to work, set up my easel and umbrella, and arranged the colours neatly in my box before he returned to render similar services to my wife. He came to tell us when it was time to go back for dinner, brought our coffee in the afternoon, and took us

out to work again in the evening, or, if we allowed, accompanied us on our walks, on which occasions he would jump about or turn cart-wheels on his hands with glee at having nothing to carry. György remained true to us to the end.

The country in which Desze lay was hilly, and in the distance was to be seen a spur of the Carpathians with Mount Gutin as its main feature. Maize grew in many of the fields, willows and tall poplars bordered the highroad, and orchards surrounded the thatched white cottages. Below the village—about a quarter of a mile—a charming river flowed by island copse and mill, sometimes streaming over rocks and stones. This was spanned to the island by a primitive bridge, some fifty feet long, which was composed of one tree-trunk that divided into two branches two-thirds of the way across. It had no sort of handrail, nor had the shorter log which sloped steeply up from the island to the top of a huge rock on the far side. For us it was a giddy adventure to cross, the water rushing and curling underneath ; but the peasants went over with perfect ease and confidence, and György was fond of dancing in the middle. One day, seeing my wife's hesitation to make the attempt, a son of the Notary led her to a broad place higher

A WOMAN OF DESZE

up the river where the water reached no higher than the knees, and then gallantly took off his own boots for her to wade in, while he, barefooted, helped her over the sharp stones and carried her dry shoes.

A favourite resort of the Notary's children was a bench before the house of the gendarme, where we sometimes joined them after work to see what was to be seen; for everything passed by there—buffaloes, oxen, cows, calves, pigs, dogs, geese, besides men, women and children in Rumanian costume.

Each woman wore a long white garment of coarse linen and two thick aprons, in colour reddish-purple, with horizontal orange stripes, which hung down, one in front, one behind, fitting closely to the loins. The shoes, of one piece of leather, were turned up and pointed and laced across the instep, the laces continuing round the linen bands protecting the legs. The head-dress was a handkerchief, generally black. The men, whose hair was very long and black, were dressed in white linen—the shirts short and loose, the trousers tight about the hips and loose about the ankles—broad brown leather belts, small felt hats, and shoes like those of the women.

Our first impressions of these people were favourable. We were taken by the sweet looks of the children and the gentle manners of their elders. But soon we found that we were looked at askance, and our work was considered to be unholy by an ever-increasing number of them. When—with the help of the Notary's father-in-law as interpreter—my wife asked a charming young girl to sit for her, she replied, looking much scared: 'Even if I had time, I could not.' And again, the same day, they were talking to a peasant woman about the possibility of painting her little boy; and she was quite willing that this should be done until a crippled man hobbled by, saying: 'Don't, don't; they are Antichrist.' On hearing that she hid the boy in the folds of her dress, and, with a terrified expression on her face, hurried him away. Sometimes we met her afterwards on the road with her child, and she always concealed him when we came near.

A number of Jewish families lived in Desze, and looked untidy all the week, till sunset-time on Friday. They then repaired to their houses—which were coloured light blue outside—to light candles and perform their devotions, as one could not help noticing when passing their uncurtained windows. The men would then gird on their long

black *kaftans*, and, crowned with broad caps or rolls of reddish-brown fur, assemble at their little cottage synagogue. On Saturdays most of the women sat, arrayed in all their glory, on their front-door steps.

One day, after we had been at the place a fortnight, I was painting in the orchard by the school when I heard strange voices in my wife's room and caught the words, spoken in German: 'How old?' 'Yes, Southport, in England.' 'His father's, his mother's name?' Hastening in, I found the table strewn with documents, and the Vice-Notary doing his best, with his scanty knowledge of German, to interrogate my wife about ourselves and our affairs. Turning to me, he asked politely but firmly: 'What papers have you?' 'None,' said I. 'Not even a passport?' 'No.' I told him my pocket was picked when going on to the boat at Queenborough, on my way to Hungary, and the passport went with the rest; and that, as in all my wanderings I had never been asked to show one, I did not think it necessary to delay my journey to get another. 'But surely,' he replied, 'you must have something to show who you are?' All I could find in my portmanteau that looked at all official was, a season-ticket to an exhibition at the Royal Academy, and an old game licence. Note was

taken of these, but they were considered unsatisfactory. I was then put through the long list of questions my wife had already answered. my answers were checked with hers, as though to find out if we had been untruthful; and that was the only part of the performance I really resented. 'Name and surname? what age? where born? name of father? name of mother?' etc., were replied to, and my words written in duplicate and attested by my signature. I then advised the Vice-Notary to refer his chiefs to the Bishop of ——, who would be able to give any further information that might be desired.

We were informed that the *Stuhlrichter* (a species of Judge) had heard that we were in his district, and had sent from Sziget, twenty miles away, for instant information concerning us. Probably he thought it a suspicious circumstance that foreign visitors should stay anywhere but in the expensive hotels of the Tátra, or other smart watering-places. And yet tourists are generally wished for, and I was often asked why so few came. 'You are not prepared for them,' was the natural reply. 'Your country is most beautiful and interesting, and so are your people, but you have comparatively few inns fit to live in. Go to

A RUMANIAN HOMESTEAD AT DESZE

Adrien Stokes

Styria, on your borders, or Tyrol, a little farther removed, and you will find in every village a clean inn with good beds and excellent food of a simple kind, where you get a pleasant welcome and your bill is modest. Here village inns in which it is possible to live either do not exist at all or are, too frequently, ill-kept and dirty. Those in the small towns are generally not much better; and yet the pride of their landlords allows nothing less than a high scale of charges.'

We found the hotels and inns of Styria, which were near to the frontier of Hungary, to be crowded with Hungarians during the summer season; and nearly all of those people would prefer to remain in their own country if similar accommodation was to be had at a moderate rate.

In a village not very far from Desze lived a Greek priest, who was renowned for his learning, and whose favourite pursuit was the study of foreign languages. When we had finished the books we took with us we asked the Notary to lend us some; but, having none that we could read, he advised us to apply to this priest, adding that he had several times expressed the wish to make our acquaintance. I called on him, accompanied by two of the sons of the Notary, and we were shown into a comfortably

furnished room which was darkened to keep out the heat, and in which the hangings, sofas, etc., were rich and dark in colour. When the priest appeared he bade us welcome in German. He told me that he could read English fairly well but had never heard it spoken, and that, though he was so old as to have been a priest for sixteen years, I was the first Englishman he had ever seen. He had a library apart from the house where he locked himself in and answered no summons. One day, with the help of dictionaries, he read English, the next French, the next Italian, and he often asked his fellow-priests: 'Why do not you also study the great thoughts of other people?' I was much impressed in spite of the fact, that, for so studious a linguist, his German was weak. And then his wife came in with wine and cakes, and, when our glasses were filled, the priest rose and proposed a toast in the following words: '*Drinken wir à la santé du Roi Edouard. Er ist* a gallant man.' If the form was faulty, the sentiment was sound indeed! (That is but one of many instances we met with of the wish to do honour to His Majesty, who, when Prince of Wales, won the hearts of the people of Hungary.)

On further acquaintance I found the priest to be a simple well-meaning man, with more heart than

brains, whose extraordinary hobby it was to live immersed in the elementary grammars of the French, German, Hungarian, Slavonic, Latin, and English languages. Rumanian was his native tongue.

He took me to his library—a modest little shed in the yard—to see what books he could lend; but the shelves, loaded with dusty works on religion, did not look promising. After searching long, he produced the English book which he considered the most interesting he had to offer, and, opening it, showed me the title: 'The Little Dog Flora, with her Silver Bell.'

When he returned my call a short time afterwards we told him that, at Desze, we were believed to be Antichrist, and asked him to use his influence to dispel that superstition. He seemed doubtful of being able to help us, and related the following story of his own people: Two years ago there was no rain for a long time; everything was parched, and the peasants were in despair. The priest went away for a day, and on his return learnt that the villagers had removed the bell from the church tower. In great anxiety, he summoned some of them, and asked the meaning of their conduct. With sullen looks they replied that they had given

the money to buy the bell, that it belonged to them to do with as they would, and that what they had done their forefathers had done with church bells before them. There exists an old superstition that to bring rain in a dry season it is only necessary to take down the church bell and sink it in the river. This had been done, and no sooner had the bell sunk in the water than, strange to say, it began to rain. The effect on the assembled crowd may be imagined! However, the rain stopped in five minutes, and though the bell remained concealed for four days in a deep pool, not another drop fell. The high clergy and magistrates of the county town were summoned, and only with their aid was the whereabouts of the missing bell discovered, and the authority of the priest upheld.

A steam saw-mill was built at Kracsfalő, and its engines and machinery—the first ever seen in the place—were for a time regarded with awe. Three weeks before our arrival, on the day when it began to work, several of the older people had disappeared from the village, and gone to hide in the woods beyond Sugatag, ten miles away, because, they said, the mill could not start until a live man had been thrust into the machines for them to eat!

GROUP IN A RUMANIAN RELIGIOUS
PROCESSION, DESZE

When we saw it, it was working capitally, and giving employment to many industrious people.

In Hungary salt is a monopoly of the State. Some of the principal salt-mines were in the county of Máramaros, where we were living, and we visited one, the *Gábor-bánya*, or Gabriel Mine, at Akna Sugatag, a few miles from Desze.

Having donned blue blouses and old felt hats, we entered a lift, with an engineer as guide and a youth as attendant, both with lamps, and descended 400 feet into the mine. We walked along railway-lines down a tunnel but dimly seen, and stood in wonder at the entrance to a vast hall in the centre of which a bonfire blazed in our honour. A grand and most solemn temple it appeared to be—Egyptian, or perhaps belonging to those mysterious lands where Rider Haggard imagined 'She' to dwell—as the firelight gleamed on its enormous walls, or died away in the gloom of deep recesses. The colour of the walls and giant buttresses of salt was sombre greenish-grey, lined into strange designs by dark strata which, flowing sometimes horizontally, sometimes downwards in long curves and weird convolutions, gave an appearance of preciousness—as of marble.

A roll-call was proceeding in a remote corner—the echoing voices sounding strange and unnatural—and on its conclusion one of the men knelt down and repeated a prayer before a holy picture lit with candles. The others remained seated, but stopped smoking and removed their hats. When the prayer was ended the candles were blown out, and the men dispersed to their work, each carrying a metal lamp shaped like a sauce-boat, with the flame at the lip, and held by an iron stem a foot long. No one was engaged unless he could speak Hungarian; hence nearly all those at work in the mines were Magyars. In the short hours—from 4 a.m. to 10 a.m.—when work was carried on, the amount of salt required could be produced, and the miners had afterwards time to work at trades or in the fields.

We were shown the complete working of the salt as far as it was done down below. On the floor a flat slab, fifteen feet long, eight feet wide, and about one and a half feet deep, was cut round with pickaxes, except along one exposed edge from which the last slab had been removed. Twenty-one iron wedges were fixed along the bottom of the exposed side, and ten half-naked men, with heavy sledge-hammers, stood above

them in a row on the slab of salt. Then, keeping time, they began to make music, each man swinging down his hammer first on the head of the wedge to his left, then on that to his right. After every twenty blows there was a halt; and in this way the work continued, until at last the clang of the hammers was followed by the booming of a subterranean echo, denoting that the whole block was loose from the ground. The miners then jumped down, and, carrying their lamps, hurried off through the semi-darkness to their own special jobs.

The next operation was performed with small sharp picks, with thin and very pliable handles which were eighteen inches long. With such an instrument a miner attacked the slab we had seen loosened, and in a very short time had cut a long strip from one end of it. This he proceeded to divide into cubes measuring about eighteen inches, knocking off the worthless parts and chipping each piece with a dot and a line—his special mark. Some of the cubes were as clear as crystal; some were of a pale transparent olive-green colour; and others, again, containing earth or other impurities, were opaque and dark. When the whole slab had been thus dealt with, the squares were

sent in trucks to the lifts, and further processes were carried on above.

We admired several smaller halls and long corridors, and ascended flights of wooden stairs to a chapel in the solid salt, where Mass was said once a year. Altar, crucifix, steps, vaulted roof and floor, all were cut out of clear, transparent salt.

Our stay at Desze extended over two months. We bathed in the river and walked on the hills; we visited wooden churches whose walls inside were painted in tempera with primitive pictures; we attended a christening in a priest's kitchen, and a peasant wedding in his church; and went afterwards, with the music, to a dance outside the house of the newly-married couple, and a feast within it which consisted of formal rows of loaves of bread with flowers planted in them, and wine-bottles between, while other loaves hung suspended by garlands of leaves from the low ceiling. The bashful bride, in one corner, wept or hid her face, as was the custom. We found a poacher with his hand blown off by dynamite (he had been in the act of placing it in the river), who would almost certainly have bled to death had not one of the Notary's guests known how to stanch

STREAMS IN EAST HUNGARY

his wound; and we often sat in the evenings on the Notary's wooden steps, which commanded a view over rolling prairies extending beyond the river to the mountains, and watched the mud-crusted buffalo cows as they plucked last mouthfuls of mulberry leaves from the trees in the court below us before they were driven to their sheds for the night.

The party at the Notary's steadily increased. First came a son from college with a comrade who was to stay with him during the holidays; then a young engineer, friend of the eldest son, on a visit which was to last for six weeks; and next, the sister of the Notary's wife with her husband and son, for a shorter stay of a fortnight. How or where they all slept we never knew. If sometimes there was much noise at meals, we got used to it—as at first I thought we never should. Everyone was most kind and attentive, the young men being always ready to jump up and wait on us. When the weather grew hot the children came to table with very little on, but what garments they wore were fresh and clean; and some of them would come to say good-night in their little white nightgowns, while others rushed about, barelegged, with one shoe off and the other

on. Istvan, Gulo, Josko, Ilonka, Bérti, Lajos, Margit, Ládsi, Lulu, Soltan, Bandi, the baby Gábor, and the pup Franco—we liked them all. After each repast pretty little Margit brought to her father his long-stemmed pipe, and held a light for it; and sometimes, when she felt inclined, she came on to us to curtsy and to kiss our hands.

There was still one more person—the mother's father—who turned up occasionally for a day or two. In the summer a theatrical company played at Sziget, and he preferred to be there; and I fancy also that the life at the Notary's during the holidays may have been a little too much for him; but during the rest of the year he lived with his daughter at Desze. A gentle old man with no occupation, who never seemed to read a book or have any about him, I wondered how he passed the long cold winter months, and one day asked him. He told me that, when the weather was fine, he strolled with his gun over the snow to the orchard a mile away where the hares nibbled the bark of the young trees; and that, when it was bad, he played cards. 'Patience?' I suggested. 'That also,' he replied, 'but generally some game in which the left hand can play against the right.'

Seeing that I was amused, he continued: 'And when the left hand loses, I address it thus, "How could you, left hand, be so stupid? If you had played so-and-so, you would have won. You must pay a forfeit, you must pay for a glass of beer."' And I shrewdly suspect that when misfortune overtook the right hand it was addressed in the very same fashion.

CHAPTER XI

ESZTERGOM (GRAN), BUDAPEST, AND BÁCS

WHEN, for the second time, we enjoyed the smooth and reposeful journey from Vienna to Budapest by river, we stopped at Esztergom furnished with an introduction to the President of the ecclesiastical seminary there.

The first evening, strolling in the outskirts of the town, we were irresistibly attracted by sounds of distant Czigány music; and though, on leaving Hungary the previous year, we had heard so much —often of an inferior kind—as to feel somewhat tired of it, we soon found ourselves listening with renewed pleasure to a band in the orchard of a small *auberge.*

After a night spent in an hotel reported to be good, but really—like so many others we have stayed at—in a state of decadence and neglect, we called at the seminary, a large apricot-coloured

RUMANIAN CHILDREN BRINGING WATER TO BE BLESSED IN THE GREEK CHURCH, DESZE

building halfway down the hill on which the Cathedral is built, the main object of our visit being to obtain access to the famous treasure stored in the precincts of the Cathedral, and, if possible, permission to draw what we most admired in it.

The Dean received us in handsome state apartments, with much ceremony, and soon produced two large volumes containing pictures of Hungarian antiquities, through which he proceeded to hunt, at first haphazard, and then page by page, for a 'Calvary,' which he considered to be the rarest gem of the Esztergom collection. When two-thirds of Volume I. had been slowly looked through without finding what he sought, I ventured, diffidently, to say that it might be expedient to refer to the index; but, my remark unheeded, the tedious search went on. Well into the second volume, I repeated my observation, was again ignored, and derived what consolation I could from the reflection that the spiritual director of a hundred souls was more accustomed to give than to receive advice. The last page turned, the Dean looked at me, a faint but very humorous twinkle in the corners of his eyes, saying, 'Now we will consult the index'—and we immediately

were friends. The picture was soon found, but an hour had been lost.

We learnt that the treasure might only be seen in the presence of a Bishop whose time was precious, and that it was considered expedient that we should copy illustrations in books, rather than work from the originals. We had long ceased from wondering at ignorance of practical art matters among the learned, and remembered the English Judge who came to sit for his portrait, bringing with him a copy of 'Vanity Fair'—in which his likeness had appeared—in order that wig and gown might be painted from that.

A promise was given that the Bishop in charge should be asked to meet us on the following morning, and we left while the dinner-bell was clanging in the court. The Dean had expressed regret that he could not invite a lady to dine in the refectory, but said he would be glad if we could both be his guests in the afternoon, when he and two or three professors intended making an excursion down the river to a place where we could stroll among the woods, and sup together by the river's brink.

At the time appointed we arrived at a landing-stage, and found three priests in black shading

themselves under three grey umbrellas. They were the Dean and two professors—one of history, the other of dogmatic theology.

The afternoon was broiling — that week at Esztergom was one of the hottest I remember—and we were all glad to leave the little steamer and wander among shady glens that might have been in Devonshire, lacking only the sound of running water in the hollows. The Dean, whose ceremonious attitude of the morning had been somewhat awe-inspiring, dropped the last trace of it and, without loss of dignity, became delightful; History, a bright, kindly man, was charming from the first; while Theology made private excursions up hills, for the sake of the views, and returned as rigid as he left.

Our path led us to the 'Well' or 'Fountain of Love,' where we found the unmistakable signs of many picnics, and from a small brass pipe set in a rock a tiny stream of water trickled to the waste papers below. Who began it I cannot say, but we all joined in a very hearty laugh.

And a merry party we were at supper in the twilight under spreading oak-trees by the flowing river—all except Theology, who never quite thawed. The Dean, brimming over with humour, told

stories; and History, who was an admirable musician, having found a piano in an empty room hard by, played Hungarian music full of fire and pathos.

One of the stories that amused us—though most of its effect depended on the excellent mimicry with which it was accompanied—was this: Two solemn and very aged monks, who were staying at one of the many watering-places of Hungary, met in the bath, immersed in warm water up to their beards. The ceremony of mutual introduction over—each having mentioned his name and rank—one asked the other: 'Are you from the diocese of Gyulafehérvár?' The other, turning his head in a leisurely manner from side to side, snapped out emphatically: '*Nem!*' (No).

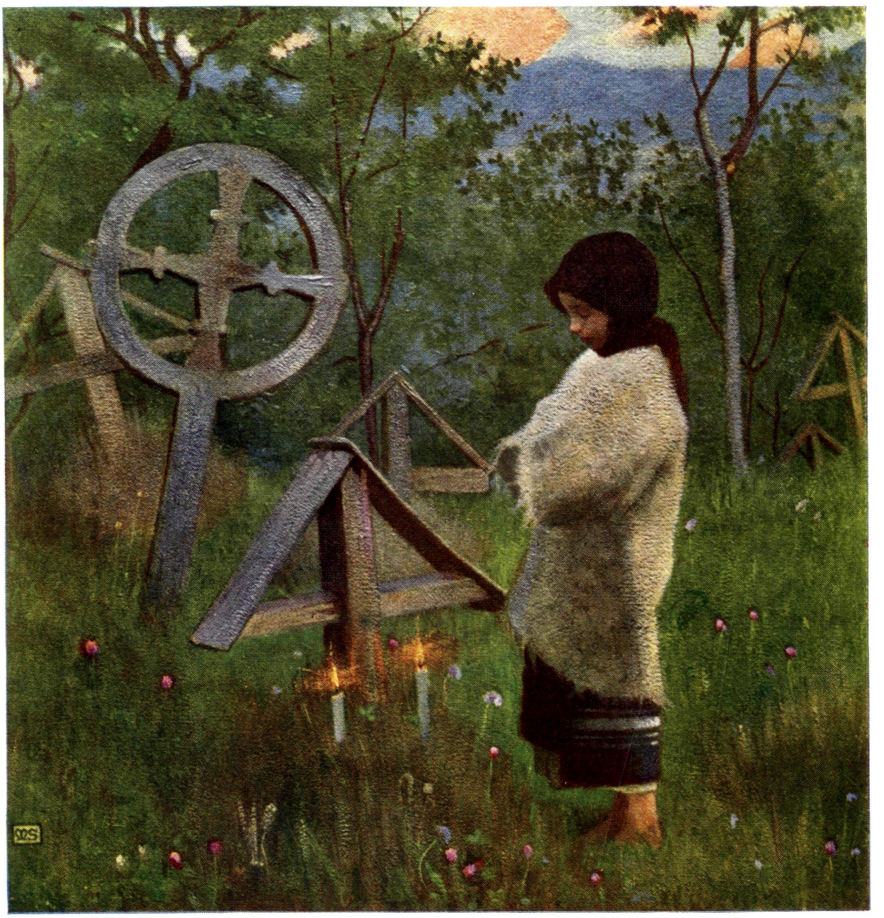
There was silence for a time, and then the first continued: 'Are you from the diocese of Székésfehérvár?' To the same slow movement came the answer: '*Nem!*'

With a pause between each question, the inquirer continued: 'Are you from the diocese of Nagyvárad?' '*Nem!*'

'Are you from the diocese of Kalocsa?' '*Nem!*'

'Are you from the diocese of Szatmár-Németi?'

ALL SOULS' DAY, DESZE



Then, slowly moving his head up and down, the questioned gently answered, '*Igen!*' (Yes).

There was a long silence before the first speaker resumed the conversation, asking: 'Why do not you ask me where I come from?' 'I never was inquisitive,' was the deliberate reply of the other, who, on passing soon afterwards our friend the Dean—with whom he was acquainted—mumbled out: 'The bath-master told me all about him before I went in.'

On the way to the boat the Dean sang in a low voice, in dialect, the quaint folk-songs of Styria, the home of my wife, to her great delight, generally breaking off in the middle in an almost inaudible chuckle.

Next morning, in an apartment adjoining the sacristy of the Cathedral, a Bishop in purple and lace most kindly showed, and related to us the history of, precious objects contained in glass cases in the centre of the room, and sumptuous vestments hung in presses near the walls. Those who remember the splendid collection which was so well shown in the Hungarian Pavilion in the *Rue des Nations* at the 1900 Paris Exhibition may recall some of the gold chalices ornamented with enamels, pearls and precious stones, ancient gold

and silver crosses, or pendants of beautiful design holding stones and pearls of great price, which were sent there from Esztergom. We were especially attracted by heads representing Christ and the Blessed Virgin, dating from the thirteenth century, which were embroidered in high relief and were of nearly life-size; and by the jewelled gold cross which has been held aloft by every Magyar King when, at his coronation, he swore to respect the ancient Constitution of Hungary.

The Calvary—for the picture of which we sought so long in vain the previous day—was rather more than two feet high, of solid gold, and designed in three stages each of a different style—Byzantine, Gothic, and early Italian Renaissance. The small enamel figures, illustrating scenes at the Crucifixion, were exquisite, and the whole was richly ornamented with gems, pearls and enamels. It was executed in Florence in the early part of the fifteenth century. This precious object accompanied King Matthias Corvinus wherever he went during his adventurous career, was afterwards deposited by one of his successors, as security for a loan, in 1494, and has never since been removed from Esztergom except during the occupation of that place by the Turks.

The art of enamelling was taught in Hungary by Italian masters during the fifteenth century; and that combination of goldsmiths' work with enamels and jewels, which seems so peculiarly Magyar, is really of Italian origin.

Among many sumptuously decorated vestments we admired a handsome set in black and gold which are only worn at Mass on the death of King, Queen, or Primate; but the greatest treasure was a chasuble on the back of which a cross, nearly three feet long, with figures of saints in high relief, was embroidered in coloured silks and a countless number of small pearls. This was given to the church, about 1500, by Ladislaus Zaleméré. The arms at the foot of the cross were those of the family Gutkeled, from which descended the Bathorys, who were at one time rulers of Transylvania.

Though we might not remain alone in the treasure chamber, nor could any object be removed from the glass cases, the Bishop was persuaded to have this beautiful work of art taken to a room close to the sacristy, where my wife spent several days painting it. Bishops and priests, becoming interested, often visited her, and as the work progressed so waxed their admiration, until at last one

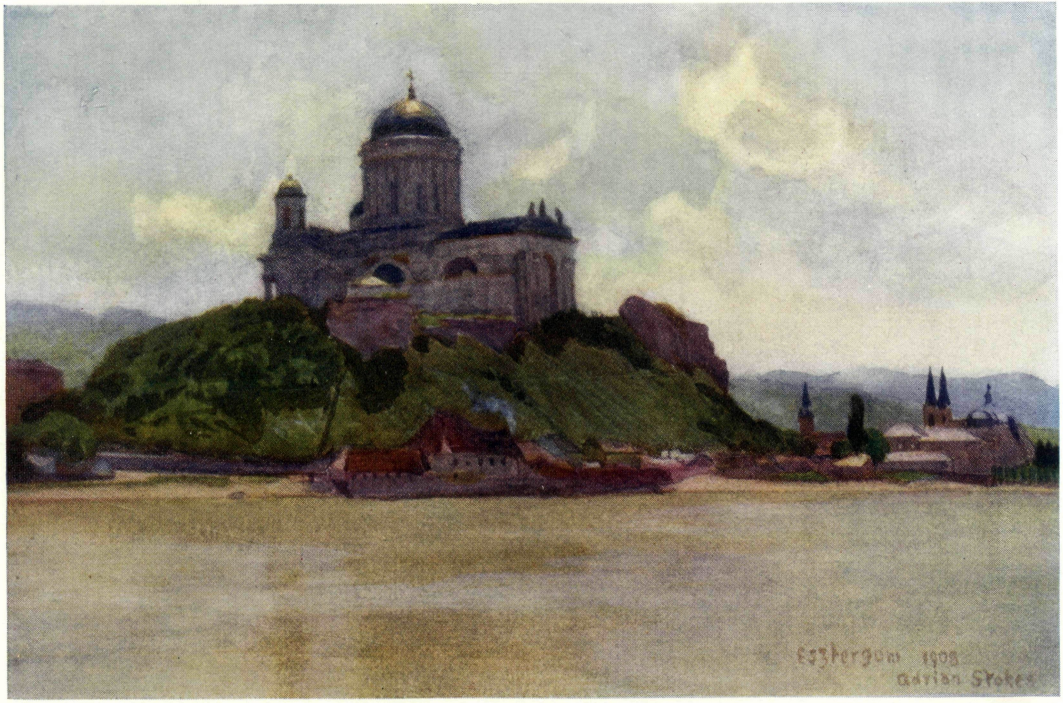
of them exclaimed : ' It is so perfect, perhaps King Edward will buy it '—a deliciously medieval notion, worthy of the situation.

The great Cathedral—or Basilica, as it was generally called at Esztergom—is modern, its construction having been begun in 1820, and carried on to completion by three successive Prince-Primates. The dignified interior conveyed the impression that the original intentions of one architect had been thoroughly carried out: its walls, columns and pilasters were of grey marble, ornamented with gold, and its painted altar-pieces were respectable—nothing more. But, doubtless, none finer were obtainable : for it takes a long line of Popes and Princes, vying with each other in magnificence, to evolve a Michael Angelo or a Raphael.

When, on a hot day in June, we first went to see it—though the great doors were all open to admit the heat—the cold inside the Cathedral was still so chilling that we dared not enter, but remained among the gigantic columns of the portico looking in.

In the Palace of the Primate there was a collection of pictures—many named after the most famous Old Masters—but most of them were of

THE BASILICA OF ESZTERGOM (GRAN) FROM THE DANUBE


Esztergom 1908
Adrian Stokes

doubtful authenticity. There was also a collection of illuminated manuscripts in the library, to which we failed to gain admission.

The seminarists dispersed for their long vacation during our visit, and thus we were able to enjoy a farewell luncheon with the hospitable Dean in his own rooms. The chasuble was formally returned to its proper place in the presence of a Bishop, and we then bade adieu, and continued our journey to Budapest very sensible of the kindness that had been shown to us.

Esztergom was a residence of Magyar Kings until 1241. The Latin name for it was Strigonium; the German is Gran.

Budapest is a magnificent modern city, which commands admiration not only by a unique situation on the noble Danube which winds through it, dividing Pest from Buda; but by daring architecture, sometimes imposing, sometimes fantastic; by exquisite colour and tone peculiar to itself; by an indefinable suggestion of the Orient in many features; and, not least, by up-to-date elegance, and the beauty of its people.

Less than half a century ago Pest was little more than a sleepy county town composed mainly

of low houses and dusty roads, on one side of the river, connected by a bridge of boats with the palace, some baths and a few forts, forming Buda on the other. The ambition and energy of the population during the last forty years have been astounding. Now you will find in Pest great ornate buildings of all kinds—parliament, law-courts, bourse, basilica, museums, opera, theatres, etc.—which have all been built during that short period; and splendid streets of shops, hotels, and houses, where the hurrying of busy people, the clatter of hoofs on stone pavements, and the loud clanging of tram-bells, suggest as much life as could possibly be desired. Five superb bridges span the river—seven hundred yards broad—to Buda, to new Government offices, elegant terraces, and a newly-built palace which crowns the hills. And besides all these there is, to the north, a new industrial quarter—joy and pride of many beholders. Unfortunately, its innumerable tall chimneys pour out volumes of smoke over Margit-Sziget (Margaret Island)—surely one of the most beautiful suburbs that any city ever possessed.

In ancient times Buda was a Roman colony named Aquincum, capital of the province Lower Pannonia; as remains of Roman amphitheatre,

baths, mosaics, etc., still attest. King Bela IV. built a royal castle there, in 1247, which remained a residence of Magyar Kings until after the crushing defeat of Hungarians by Turks at the battle of Mohács in 1526. Sultan Soliman laid siege to and took it in 1541, and it remained in the possession of the Turks till 1686, when Hungarians and Germans, united, succeeded in driving them out.

Pest was a thriving German town before the Mongolian invasion of 1241, when it was destroyed; but it did not regain its prosperity, and was still comparatively unimportant at the time of the Austro-Hungarian *Ausgleich* in 1867.

In 1872 Buda, Pest, and Kőbánya were united, forming Budapest, the capital and intellectual centre of Hungary, and the royal residence of the King. With the exception of Vienna, it is now the most important town of Austria-Hungary.

The population numbers little less than a million, of whom the great majority are either Magyars or Magyarized; but at least a quarter of them are Jews, who have acquired preponderating power in the press and finance of the country.

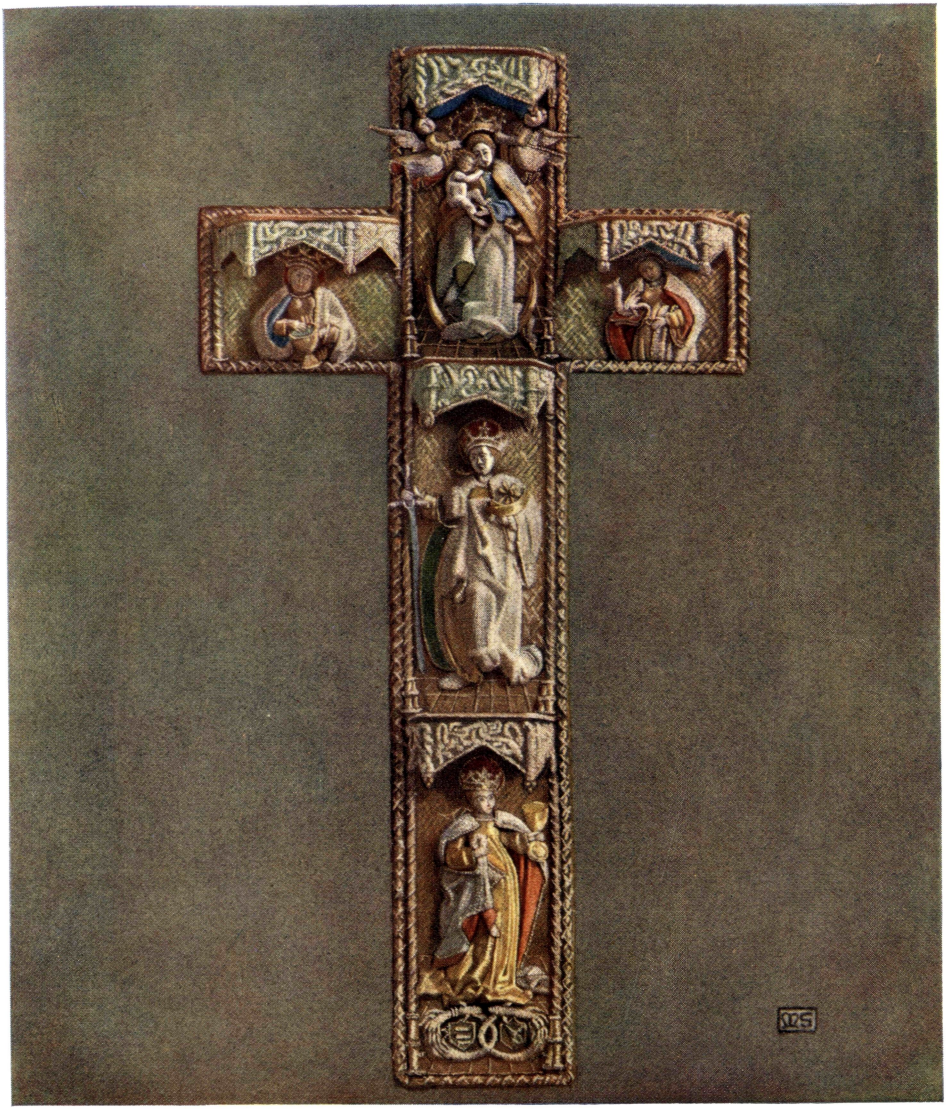
To be Magyar means to be proud, high-spirited, handsome, and generous. Unfortunately, all too

few belonging to the pure race remain; but it is admirable that their type should be the ideal one throughout the land. Countless families with names that were German, Tschec, or Slav, have changed them, and believed that after the change they belonged to a superior people. A man, evidently of foreign extraction, will then (I have seen it done) tap his chest and proudly proclaim, 'I am Magyar!' with an air that conveys the meaning, 'I am noble, chivalrous, and brave.' It is generally easy for Jews to translate their names literally, but sometimes they adopt fancy names. Many a 'Wolf' has become 'Farkas' (the Hungarian equivalent), and we met a handsome Mr. Steiner who changed his name to 'Sellő' (Nymph).

Our own experiences of Budapest were, for the most part, similar to those of many other tourists. We found that, if we did not write beforehand to engage rooms, the hotel chosen was full when we arrived. We had heard that everything was more expensive than in other cities, and we found that to be untrue. We found the people we met in streets and tramways extraordinarily courteous to us, as strangers, and often ready to guide us as far as critical corners on our way. We admired their

CROSS EMBROIDERED ON A CHASUBLE

In the treasure of Esztergom.



fine bearing, the style and cared-for appearance of their dress, and their manners—dignified, polite, but never servile in any class. Even the hotel waiters had more distinction of manner than is usual; but we found that this had its disadvantages, for it is the custom of the country to tip at least three of them after the simplest meal, and the third part of the amount generally given elsewhere seemed too little to offer to one who could move like a gentleman and had been most attentive. We learnt from the natives, however, that no more is expected, and after a time hardened our hearts. On one occasion a friendly landlord came to our table to ask if we were being properly attended to, and politely spoke in favour of Austrian cooking. My wife said she much preferred that of Hungary. 'Perhaps you are right,' he admitted: 'there is more life in it!' And that remark applies equally to many other things Hungarian, and people: there is more life in them than in most.

We went to the Houses of Parliament, which we found to be most sumptuous. Gilded Gothic corridors and antechambers with floors and walls of delicate marble (quarried in Hungary, our guide informed us), elaborate electric-light stands, rich

blood-red carpets, and romantic paintings of Hungarian castles and other scenes famous in history, helped to produce the effect. The House of Lords and the House of Commons were alike, the seats for members being arranged in horseshoe form, with high throne or pulpit for Speaker or President.

Not far away stand the Courts of Law, a remarkably fine Renaissance building in the form of a quadrangle. The staircase—inside the quad—the columns, etc., of rare and varied marbles, and the general design, are rich and magnificent. We entered one of the High Courts during a sitting —a very handsome chamber panelled with dark wood, where three Judges, in ordinary clothes, sat behind a long table at one end of which a lawyer, seated, was reading the statement of a case. Other lawyers sat at desks or various places about the room, and a few rows of seats were reserved for the public.

A splendid avenue or *boulevard*—named after Count Andrássy—which is lined for the greater part of its extent by the detached houses of the wealthy, leads, as does the electric railway beneath it, to the charming town park, in the centre of which a shallow lake reflects a reproduction of the famous castle built by Hunyady János in Tran-

sylvania. This Gothic building forms part of the Agricultural Museum, which is completed by two other portions, or wings—one Romanesque, the other Renaissance in style. The Museum contains everything possible that is of interest or importance to Hungarian agriculture; field, garden, vineyard, and forest being drawn on for this purpose. It also contains, among others, an excellent natural history collection, with special reference to hunting and fishing and the development of breed in domestic animals. A free library and reading-room occupy part of one of the wings. All the objects within are well and tastefully shown, and the exterior is probably finer, artistically, than that of any other museum of the kind in Europe.

On leaving the Museum we met our friend the sculptor, whom we had last seen on the day of the St. Miklós election. His statue of Károly Ferencz, in the grounds, was to be unveiled—I think, by the King—on the morrow; but he caused it to be uncovered for us, and we very much admired the bronze figure of a Magyar gentleman in an easy and lifelike attitude on a black marble seat.

During the time covered by most of our visits to Budapest a grand new classical Museum of Fine Arts was in course of construction, and change

were proceeding in the older ones preparatory to the removal, or exchange, of their contents. How many fruitless errands we made to their doors I cannot tell, for no one we met knew which of them were still open to the public, or when. We remember vividly, however, the collection of superbly wrought jewelled chains, swords, and other ornaments worn by the Magnates on great occasions, which we saw in one of them.

There is a Museum of Arts and Crafts, containing many beautiful objects arranged with great skill, which we found most interesting and attractive.

When, at last, the new Museum of Fine Arts was approaching completion, we were allowed to go to see the pictures there. It is a good collection, but not of the first rank as compared with those of other capitals. Among the pictures which we thought most worthy of remark were several small pictures of the Sienese school, and a fresco head by Giotto; a portrait of Cornaro Katalin, by Gentile Bellini; portrait heads of Philip II. of Spain and Mary Tudor, by Antonio Moro; a fine head of a young man, by Albrecht Dürer; a Jewish Rabbi with book and candle—the smallest of the Rembrandts; Bridge over the Arno, and Piazza della Signoria, by Canaletto; a life-size

THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT AND
MARGIT BRIDGE, BUDAPEST

half-length figure of a girl in black, with broad white collar, by Jan Vermeer; and a portrait of a lady by Goya, which is probably one of the finest in existence. Besides—as is usual in works by that artist—abounding in directness of painting and character, it has also rare and beautiful qualities of colour. The Early English school—now so much the fashion at home and abroad—is well represented by characteristic portraits by Reynolds, Gainsborough, Lawrence, Raeburn, and Hoppner, and by small examples of Constable and Morland.

In the modern section there are a considerable number of good pictures by British painters, most of them men who are more frequently considered to be prophets abroad than in their own country.

In Hungary there is a Minister of Fine Arts, who has two assistants, and they spend some £5,000 a year on modern art. A large gold medal and a small gold medal are awarded annually in the principal exhibition. The large gold medal carries with it the distinction of Senator. Senators buy for the State, and decide on the award of medals in future years. There is life in the Hungarian State, even in regard to art matters!

Munkácsy is the most famous of modern Hun-

garian painters. Several of his pictures are in the Museum—not of the very best—but throughout the country there is hardly a house that does not contain reproductions of some of his works. His original name was Lieb Mihaly (Michael Lieb), and he was born at Munkács, where his father was manager of a salt-mine. On his father's death, while he was quite young, he was apprenticed to a carpenter in Arad, and painted chests which the peasants liked to have gaily decorated with conventional tulips, etc. At the age of fourteen he was impressed by a portrait of the novelist Jokai, which he saw in a shop window, and painted it from memory so well that his uncle sent him to work in the studio of a local artist. That honest man kept him for a year or two as pupil, and then said he could teach him nothing more than he had already learnt. The Government granted him a stipendium which enabled him to go to study in Munich, where he soon won a brilliant reputation; and later on he moved to Paris, in which city, after many years, a successful career ended in weakened intellect, collapse, and death.

At the annual exhibitions there are always many highly talented and accomplished works

by Hungarian painters, in which the influence of Paris or Munich is generally felt, both in execution and choice of subject. As yet, however—as far as we could observe—no distinctly national school has developed, and painters seem too chary of attacking what is most characteristic or beautiful in their own wonderful land. Laszlò, whose ability has already earned a European reputation, is the leading portrait painter.

One Sunday afternoon, during our second visit to Budapest, we entered an electric tram-car—on which the names conveyed little to us except that they were difficult to pronounce—meaning to travel by it wherever it went. The conductor spoke Hungarian only, and we failed to make him understand that we did not wish to go anywhere in particular, until two young gentlemen interpreted for us. They were faultlessly dressed in light grey suits and new gloves. The elder one was very attentive, and pointed out the chief objects of interest to us on our way. He advised us to alight near the Elizabeth Bridge to look at a church with a beautiful Gothic chancel. If we would allow him he would accompany us, he said, 'For I also like to visit churches'; and afterwards he would conduct us to the Basilica, showing us on the way the

buildings he admired most in that quarter of Pest. His brother was sent home to say why he did not return, and we set out under his escort. He was very polite, well educated, and self-possessed; and only seventeen he told us, thinking we should be surprised. In the church he informed us which were the earliest Gothic portions, and which were later and less satisfactory. Then, in the broad new streets and squares, he pointed out elaborate banks and other buildings, and the new Post-Office, which he considered to be in the *Secession* style. He could not accustom himself to *Secession*, or approve of it, either in architecture or painting; but the *Renaissance* Basilica, which had only just been completed, would, he trusted, be found to be an admirable example of that more appropriate style of art. We agreed in his appreciation of its fine exterior, without criticism, and entered while afternoon service was taking place. In the clear space under the dome a young girl was standing alone and singing—singing with such a clear and glorious voice that we stood spell-bound in admiration. Evidently unconscious that she was attracting attention, she continued during the musical part of the service, and then, having drawn a shawl over her head, became lost in the departing crowd.

A RUMANIAN CHURCH IN TRANSYLVANIA

Before seeing us into a tram our young friend promised, if possible, to join us at supper and listen to the famous Gipsy who played at our hotel; but he must first go home and ask for permission, for 'My mother is very strict,' he said, 'and I cannot be too thankful for it.' He came to supper, and asked us sometimes to send him picture postcards on our travels. Most unfortunately, we lost his card and were unable to do so. We hope he has forgiven our apparent neglect.

The numerous bathing establishments of Budapest form a distinguishing feature of the city. Several of those on the Buda side of the river possess natural springs of such a high temperature that the water has to be cooled before passing into the baths. We chose one we knew to be frequented by our friends, and were loitering about in the grounds when the manager approached—having heard that we were English—and said that he would be happy to show us what was to be seen. We saw Turkish baths, electric baths, mud baths, swimming baths, etc., and were then told that, if we would say which kind we preferred, it should be prepared for us. When we emerged from our respective chambers, having enjoyed warm baths in green-tiled basins to which we descended by

flights of steps, we tried to discharge our debt; but the attendants refused to take money, saying that the director would like to see us in the bureau before we left. He hoped we had found our baths agreeable, but waived the question of payment—was honoured to have had English guests, and would be happy to guide us to the steamer which was to take us back to Pest. He did so, and even accompanied us to the door of our hotel; but on our begging him to join us at our meal, he politely excused himself.

There are a vast number of mineral springs in Hungary whose waters have various medicinal properties. Their analysis is printed on the bottles in which they are supplied, for the enlightenment of their consumers, or the encouragement of the timid. Here is a list of waters taken from the card of a restaurant where we often dined: Málnáser, Selters, Soda, Paráder, Luhi-Margit, Mohaer, Giesshübler, Salvator, Biliner, Krondorfer, Borszéker, Margitszigeter, Szolyvater, Artesischer, Kristali.

Of the five great bridges over the Danube, the first was designed by an English engineer named Clark, and built by an English firm; the second, third, and fourth, were constructed by Frenchmen

or Germans, and the fifth was entirely the work of Hungarians, all the materials for it having been produced in the country,

Feeling diffident of our own opinion, we wrote to an eminent architect at home—who had recently paid a flying visit to Budapest—to ask if he would agree with us in describing the street architecture as 'Commercial *Renaissance*,' with occasional flights into the *Art Nouveau* and *Secession* styles. He replied as follows: '"Commercial *Renaissance*" would aptly describe most of the buildings of Pest during the period from 1860 to 1890, but some of them are designed in quite a scholarly manner. Since then the influence of the French school has been felt, as in the Bourse and some other modern works; also (modified by the national traditions) in the Agricultural Museum, a building possessing considerable merit in its proportions and massing.

'The Palace at Buda owes much to its admirable site, to which, however, the lines of the plan are skilfully adapted, resulting in good grouping and sky-line. Much of the detail deserves notice—particularly the screens, steps, and terraces to the gardens.

'The Parliament House is really a *Renaissance* composition translated into Gothic, without the

feeling for the genius of that style that would alone make such a translation tolerable.

'Some of the most modern shops express their purpose in a distinctive and rational manner.'

It was unfortunate that, except during our first short visit to Budapest, our friends who had homes there were invariably absent, and we had thus little opportunity of observing intimate Hungarian life in the capital; but we were provided with several introductions to distinguished men, two of which we were able to present.

One of them was to Kossuth Ferencz—son of the famous patriot—who was at that time Minister of Commerce. He is himself an artist of considerable accomplishment, both as sculptor and painter, and most kindly gave information about various places, particularly Lake Balaton, which we afterwards found useful.

The other was to the famous traveller and Oriental scholar Professor Vambéry. It was most gratifying to hear the old gentleman—with the freshness and enthusiasm of a young man, though not without an astute criticism now and again—speak in praise of England, and in recognition of the kindness and appreciation he had received there.

We usually made the Hôtel Métropole our head-

A RUMANIAN MAIDEN

quarters, having gone there at first on account of the Czigány music—led by the famous Banda Márszа—which was particularly good, and afterwards because we became attached to it, owing to the attention we received. It is not a fashionable hotel, and some of the rooms towards the street are noisy, but the restaurant is in every way excellent. The manager, who had lived long in England, always looked after us with especial care on account of the regard which he, like so many Hungarians, has for our country, and I feel it would be ungrateful were we not to offer him this little tribute of recognition.

The opera, theatres, and music-halls, as far as our ignorance of the language allowed us to judge, closely resembled those of other capitals.

At one time a kinematograph showed scenes from life in the Bácska, a thriving agricultural district in South Hungary, where many old customs are still observed. I will relate some of my own adventures in that part of the country, at the close of the very rainy autumn of our first year in Hungary.

The *Waldmeister* of the Archbishopric of Kalocsa and Bács invited me to accompany him for a few

days at Bács, where we could shoot in a district that is *par excellence* Magyar. I was glad to accept his invitation, and, having received written instructions how to get there, agreed to meet him at Zombor, where his train was due to arrive before mine. 'Only be on the platform at 3.30 p.m. next Sunday, December 3: leave all the rest to me,' were his parting injunctions.

It was a bitterly cold day when I started on my journey, and I was not sorry when the station-master at Kis Körös, the junction for the main line, invited me to warm myself at his fire, and offered me the choice of two kinds of liqueur made in his village.

A few hours by express train over a russet-coloured plain broken by the undulations of low sand-hills brought me to Szabadka, a large and important modern town, where I had long to wait, and saw, besides handsome broad streets, some remarkable new villas—glaring and highly coloured examples of misdirected effort at originality.

Resuming the journey, I found myself alone with a gentleman and his extremely pretty niece whom he was bringing home from school for the Christmas holidays. They talked English, and the time passed pleasantly until we arrived at Zombor, where I

expected to meet my friend; but the *Waldmeister* was nowhere to be seen!

The *hordar* (porter), whom I was proud to be able to call in his mother-tongue, seized my kit-bag, rug, and gun, and was elbowing his way rapidly through the crush of passengers towards some hotel omnibuses outside the gate, when I stopped him by slipping my arm through his. We wasted unintelligible words on one another, but when the crowd had dispersed he went for the stationmaster, who soon came briskly up inquiring in German, 'Can I be of service? Where are you going to?' '*Ich weiss es nicht*' (I do not know) was the only reply I was able to give; for there was then no station at Bács, and we were to sleep at another place the name of which I had not heard. Noticing the stationmaster's look of surprise, I added: 'I am waiting for a friend.' 'So,' said he; 'where is he coming from?' And again I had to say: '*Ich weiss es nicht.*' Abruptly turning on his heels, he gave me up. My luggage was placed against a wall, and the shades of a winter night closed around me.

Several lines meet at Zombor, and out of the darkness the ruby lights, usual at a junction, cast their reflections on the polished rails. At intervals

a train arrived, discharged a few passengers, and puffed away into the darkness; then all again was still. Like Casabianca on the burning deck I obeyed orders; and for three long hours, and more, paced that chilly platform. But at last an engine steamed by, and, before the train had stopped, the door of a first-class carriage was thrown open. In a blue cloud of tobacco smoke, a confusion of brown leather coat and fur rug crowned by a green hat ornamented with rare plumes wildly beckoned me to jump in. The *Waldmeister* had arrived at last! He warmly welcomed me, and I was soon snugly ensconced among the fur-lined overcoats, game-bags, travelling-bags, cartridge-cases, and guns which strewed the seats. An accident had caused the delay, but a telegram had been despatched, so that when we alighted we were met by an open carriage and pair of horses which took us at a spanking pace over the paved road leading to the home of the gentleman who was to be our host—a large one-storied house near the middle of a small town.

Mr. X. was Hungarian, a landed proprietor and Member of Parliament; his wife was Rumanian, handsome and accomplished. At supper—which, out of compliment to me, had quite an English

A GIPSY'S CASTLE, TRANSYLVANIA

Adrian Stokes

character — the lady spoke French and English perfectly, and seemed to prefer either to the German language in which I tried to converse with her husband.

In middle-class families generally, but especially in the Bácska, it is the custom when guests are present to propose many toasts, and it is considered churlish for anyone to drink without first raising his glass to another person, who will then return the compliment. Thus, when the lady had retired, we drank to our wives, to our countries, to our friends, to one another, etc., and finished with a last toast to Szent János (St. John), which was new to me then, and which comes when nothing else can be thought of. Escorted to our sleeping apartment through great rooms hung with what seemed to be ancient tapestry, but which proved in the morning to be but modern imitation, we sought that repose needed to prepare us for an early start on the morrow.

During the earlier part of the evening I learnt that there were five young children in the family, and that Mrs. X. had caused to be sent from Paris a charming little girl, aged ten, to play and talk with them so that they might early acquire a good French accent. She told me that on the

child's arrival she was distressed to find that the girl had not been taught to say her prayers, and had never heard of the Virgin Mary.

In the morning we said good-bye to our very kind hosts, kissed the lady's hand, and started on our cross-country travels in a strong open carriage fit to stand the strain of muddy roads. Paved roads are rare in that stoneless region, and, as the autumn had been so wet, a pair of stout horses had all they could do to drag us along. At intervals we stopped, when the wheels were quite clogged up, and here and there along the way saw little heaps of mud which had been removed from those of other vehicles. In places, where there were no barriers, the road broadened out to many times its normal width, each fresh driver having trespassed a little farther on a neighbouring field in search of solid ground.

A slow drive of two hours brought us to the outskirts of a village. Round about a small white cottage a crowd of men and boys, beaters, armed with sticks, stood in groups; and slightly removed from them another group, sportsmanlike in appearance, with guns. The latter walked towards us, the gentleman first to greet proving to be the Over-Forester of Bács. The rest, who were under-

foresters and keepers, were all so smartly dressed that neither on this, nor on future occasions, could I make any guess as to the respective rank of such people save by the degree of vehemence with which they were reproved by the *Waldmeister* on evidence of neglect or stupidity. Fifty-two of them, in various parts of the great estates, were under his direction. For them his word was law, and he let them hear it! but I should like to record that his courtesy to me never failed.

To be a Forester a young man must have passed through an agricultural college, and, I believe, he is considered socially equal to a member of a university; but as all was new to me, I wrongly supposed the little cottage to be the home of the very magnificent being who had just received us. A well-built man of some thirty years, he wore a round fur cap resembling beaver, a yellow leather fur-lined jacket, box-cloth riding-breeches, green putties round his lower legs, and brown shooting boots. He was a very good shot, had a clear grey eye, an upturned moustache, and much importance of manner.

The beaters were sent on, and after some business had been discussed indoors by my new acquaintances and their chief, we all started in two carriages

for a forest about an hour's distance away. I was told not to expect much, but that possibly we might shoot a stag.

We saw no stags, only some tall grey stands, or perches, from which they have been shot in bygone days; and grand old forest trees, chiefly oaks, whose mossy trunks were reflected in pools of water which filled every hollow of the bare ground. Several drives were made, but nothing come forward except a few hares. The forest was too wet, and it was decided to move on to large plantations of young oaks, full of dead grass, which afforded excellent cover. The very first drive showed that we might well have spent the whole of our short day there. Covey after covey of partridges came over, and hares broke out in all directions; but, alas! it was soon time to go. We had a long journey before us, and a meal was first to be discussed. This was served in a small farmhouse, admirably clean and tidy, as the homes of the true Magyars invariably are, the main feature being an excellent *paprikas*, or stew of fowls with a gravy made red with paprika. Hot as it was, the dogs outside devoured the bones greedily, causing one of the company to remark: 'It was a mild one to-day. Not long ago we had

RUMANIAN COTTAGES IN TRANSYLVANIA

Adrian Stokes

a *paprikas* so strong that when the remains were offered to the dogs they barked at them!'

Towards evening we started for the old town of Bács, once a place of considerable importance, with 15,000 inhabitants, but now containing only one-third of that number. Our way led through the forest, the road being so soft as to be impossible for traffic. 'Bottomless' the mud was said to be, and the horses wallowed through it, sinking at times almost to the belly.

Their desperate efforts on such occasions often overstrain them, and I was told that no ordinary traveller could have hired them from the farmers, for love or money, after so much rain.

We drove on in the twilight, one carriage behind the other, through the great trees and shallow pools till, about nightfall, we reached the borders of a plain across which we were to make a 'bee-line' for the town. All went well until we came to a broad ditch, half full of water, only dimly to be seen. The leading carriage went down into it, quivered as if it would break in two, and was bravely pulled up on the far side. Our driver—whom I had admired in the daylight in his white felt overcoat with black fur collar and tall cap of Astrakhan—thinking he saw a safer place a

little to the left, plunged his horses in; but the point of the pole bored deep into the opposite bank, and when the great hoist was given, snap it went in the middle—and there were we, in the gathering darkness of a December night, on the wide, wide *puszta*, miles and miles from anywhere!

Torrents of ferocious language descended on the head of our unhappy coachman before it was decided what next to do. We had been three in the carriage besides the driver—the *Waldmeister*, a tiny old land-agent with bristling grey hair and fiery nose, whom we had picked up somewhere, and I. The *Waldmeister* and I crowded into the first carriage, leaving the little old gentleman to make his way as best he could to the nearest farm, borrow a cart, and follow with the luggage.

A long half-hour brought us safely to the abode of the occupier of the land, a group of large buildings forming a square made up of house, granaries, stables, etc., each separated from the next by a distance of about a hundred yards—a precaution in case of fire. Through these we noiselessly made our way lest, on discovery, we should be forced to partake of hospitality from which it would be difficult to make our escape; and before long saw

glimmering in the distance the lights of Bács, which we reached without further misadventure.

After stopping for a short time at the casino, or club, where the *Waldmeister* was greeted by many old friends who were evidently delighted to see him, we went on to the house of the Head-Forester, and took up our abode in an annexe composed of business offices and a suite of white rooms reserved for visitors. The house itself, of one story, contained a number of handsomely furnished sitting-rooms, and was very different from the lowly cot where I had first met our Host. We were entertained in true Hungarian fashion, and nothing could exceed the amiability of our Hostess or the delicacy of the good cheer for which she felt responsible.

The following morning we set out to shoot in young oak plantations of great extent—but the way there! Three good horses, abreast, struggled through the mud, while our small carriage swayed heavily from side to side. Past thatched white cottages standing among yellow reeds and pools of water, past the enormous ruins of a red-brick fortress, our brave steeds, stopping now and then for breath, at last succeeded in drawing us on to comparatively dry land, where, ignoring roads, we could make straight for our destination.

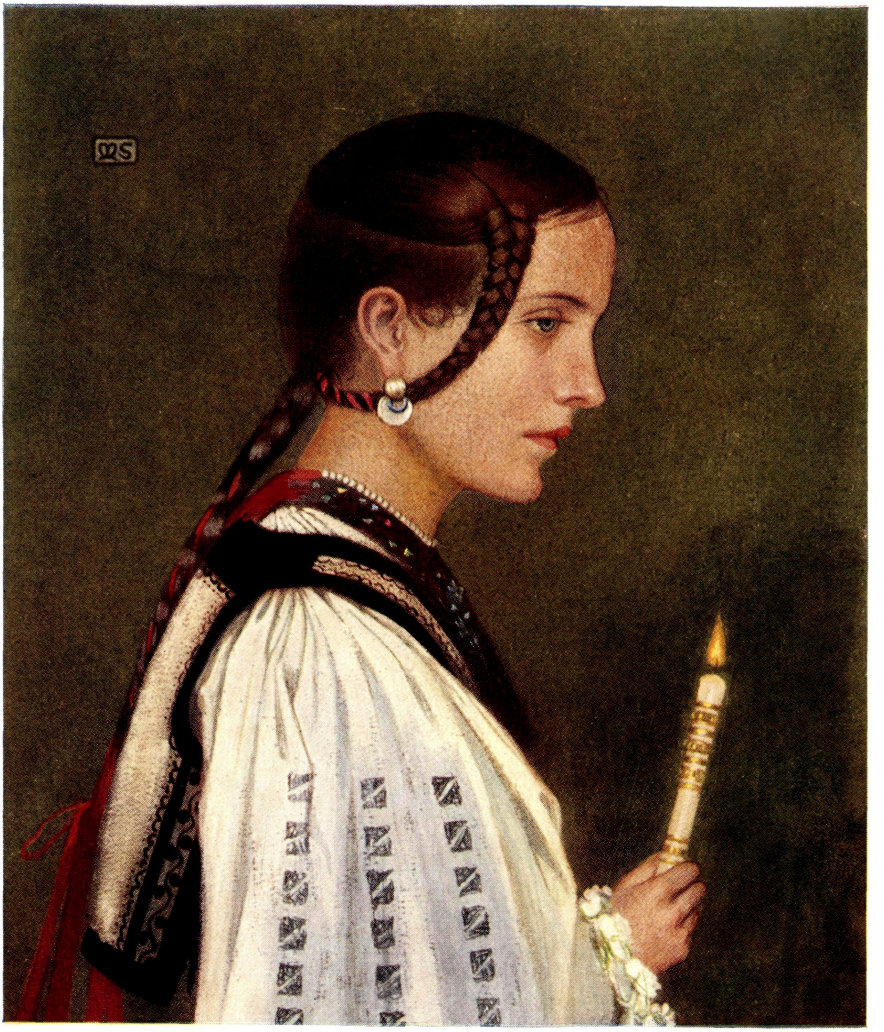
At last we came to the place where the party was to assemble, a farm only to be approached on foot over a floating-bridge, fifty yards wide, composed of bundles of maize-stalks lashed together, which swayed perilously as we crossed them.

Though no great quantity of game was found, the bag included roe-deer, pheasants, partridges, woodcocks, and hares. On one occasion, when I was next gun to the *Waldmeister*, the beaters called out *Cokos*, or something of the kind, meaning pheasant, and a fine cock-pheasant came sailing high over the trees straight towards him. He raised his gun at the right moment, fired immediately, and the bird fell with a thud dead at his feet. A moment later a woodcock followed precisely the same course, the same accurate process was repeated, and it fell close beside the pheasant.

At three o'clock the shooting was over and we returned to the farm by the floating-bridge to enjoy a *paprikas*, that time made of hare. The farmhouse, which sparkled with cleanliness, was well furnished and tenanted by Magyar peasants, the simple courtesy of whose manners could not be surpassed.

Our return journey was made in the same carriage as we had used in the morning, but

A RUMANIAN INVALID



with four horses abreast, and even for them it was a hard task.

In the evening we went to the casino, the *Waldmeister* to play a favourite card-game called *Taroc*, and I to amuse myself as best I could; but I soon got tired of looking at newspapers in a language I did not understand, and having noticed a billiard-table, asked if anyone would play with me. It proved to be, for me, one of those days which occur to most players of games when everything seems easy and one plays above one's form. Several men accepted my challenge, and some were sent from the card-tables to go and vanquish the *Angol-ur* (Englishman); but I beat them all, and thus aroused in them a spirit of revenge which they indulged later on.

It was arranged for the third and last day's shooting that we should walk up partridges, going to the place of rendezvous by a field-path, as the road was too bad for driving. We started after a hearty breakfast, the *Waldmeister*, the Head-Forester, and I, but we were soon forced to stop at the house of the small old gentleman whom we had left behind on the *puszta* when the pole broke. He had been watching for us, had prepared a dainty meal, and would be broken-hearted if we

did not partake of it; so perforce we must sit down again and do what we could with his roasted goose liver, his schnaps, and his wine.

That day we walked for many hours, six or eight of us, backwards and forwards, wheeling to the right, wheeling to the left, over the remains of many kinds of crops. There were great numbers of partridges, but so wild that they continually rose out of shot, and our bag was poor. The birds should have been driven, but beaters were not available that day. On the way back to Bács I was invited by one of the company to take a steam-bath at his house—a new experience, and a tempting one after our long walk.

We undressed and, having donned bathing garments, entered together a dark chamber full of steam that came up through gurgling boiling water which we heard but could not see. An attendant then vigorously massaged our limbs, and we next went down into tepid baths to cool before standing under showers of cold water.

That night there was a fish *paprikas* at the casino, followed by many other good things. Wine flowed, and was always drunk with some little ceremony that was explained to me. Any breach of etiquette, or ignorance of the rules, had

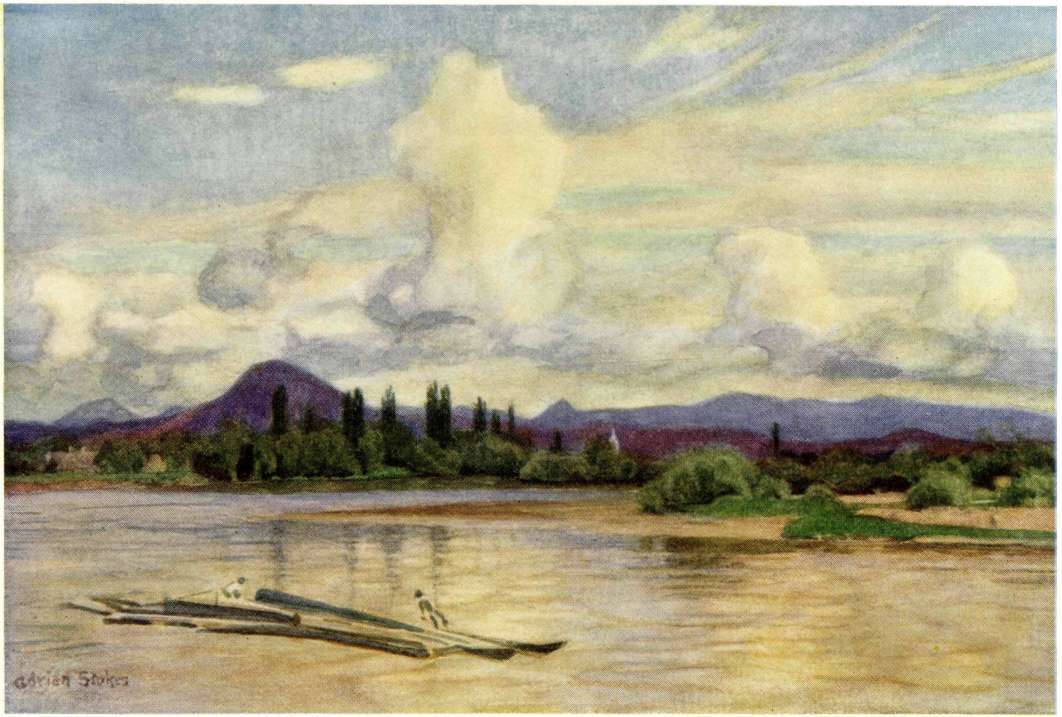
to be paid for by drinking extra wine. After supper I noticed that I was receiving marked attention, and that one after another of the guests singled me out to empty a glass with him; and when I observed that my victims at the billiard-table were even more assiduous than the rest of the party, it occurred to me that they had formed a plot to make me drink more than I should. By skilfully diverting attention at crucial moments I, from that time, contrived to pour, undetected, glass after glass upon the uncarpeted floor; thus when at last, all standing, the toast of Szent János was given as the signal for departure no one was more sober than I. 'But stop,' I said, as the guests were about to leave the table: 'you gallant people, perhaps Szent János was married? Here's to his wife.' 'Bravo! *Angol-ur*, bravo! That is truly Magyar,' they cried; and 'to his wife' was drunk with all honour. 'And they may have had daughters,' I continued, 'so here's to the Brunette!' 'Bravo! bravo! the Brunette.' 'And the Blonde!' 'Bravo! the Blonde.' And before separating we drank also to the one who might have had bright red hair.

Bács at that time was an island in a sea of mud, from which escape was difficult. Is it to

be wondered at if its well-to-do inhabitants fell at times to feasting?

There had been a farmer's wedding shortly before we arrived, and details were given me of what was consumed during the festivities in that, the richest, part of the Alföld. I neglected to make notes, but they were somewhat as follows: A dozen oxen, a score of calves, thirty swine, fifty sheep, a thousand fowls, and more eggs than were ever fresh at one time anywhere else.

THE RIVER MAROS, AND THE 'HILL OF THE MAIDEN'


Adrian Stokes

CHAPTER XII

TRANSYLVANIA, THE GREAT PUSZTA OF HORTOBÁGY, AND LAKE BALATON

IT was autumn when we left Kolosvár, the capital of Transylvania, to stay at the country-house of a nobleman who was one of the largest landed proprietors in the country.

Our journey—a very beautiful one—lay for several hours along the winding course of the River Samos. Mountains and hills, with purple shadows, already showed signs of the turn of the leaf; the maize, tufted with feathery tops of warm grey, had become a tender russet; and the air was charged with diffused sunlight which was reflected from the shining water. Now and again a slanting dam led to a little mill, where, below the wheel, there was for a space a rushing stream that soon dispersed itself in reaches smooth and apparently motionless as a mirror. Black buffaloes stood in the water—

often all but their heads immersed—and cattle on the sandy islets. The bridges were of timber, and sometimes we saw a peasant paddling a dug-out canoe. In the villages the buildings were white-walled and thatched, excepting little wooden churches, with tapering spires, which were grey; and at the stations many people looked as smart as those to be seen at Marlow or Maidenhead on a fine summer day.

On leaving the train we were driven through a pretty village, where the people were Rumanians, and on through a green park well wooded with trees of many kinds, to a large square buff-coloured house—or *castel* as it would be called in Hungary—with a broad round tower at each angle. Our Host and Hostess—whom we then met for the first time—came from the garden, where they had been entertaining friends, to receive us.

His Excellency was a tall active-looking and remarkably handsome man with finely-chiselled features, and that courtly perfection of manner which, in some subtle way, conveys to the least important of guests that they are regarded with the same consideration as those of far higher rank and position in the world. The Baronin was a beautiful lady of middle age, most gracious and winning, who,

like her husband, had a delicate taste in literature and art, and unfailing tact which enabled her to guide the affairs of her large household with the lightest of reins.

Besides the *castel*, there was a long building, separated from it by a space of lawns, which contained a chapel and many guest-chambers, three of which were allotted to us. Breakfast was brought at the hour we chose, a carriage and pair was always at our disposition to take us wherever we wished to work or to see the romantic country, and we made our first appearance at the midday meal. At luncheon there were usually other guests, and I remember one when there was a large party, and the whole company joined in conversation, with equal ease, in four different languages, but always changed it from Hungarian—when it had slipped into that—out of politeness to us. When we arose from table the young ladies went to the Baronin, curtsied, and kissed her hand—a most graceful and pretty custom.

As a young man His Excellency was among those who hunted in the high mountains of Transylvania with Crown Prince Rudolf and the, then, Prince of Wales; but he talked little of such exalted personages. He was always interesting when he could

be persuaded to relate hunting adventures, or to speak on any subject. When questioned about bears, I remember the vividness with which he described the intensely wicked expression of hate and evil intention in the eyes of a wounded bear which stood up and charged, until only five paces separated them; 'but I was better armed than he, poor beast,' he concluded. I mentioned a gentleman I knew who had lately gone up into those same regions, twelve years in succession, without seeing a bear alive, though many of his companions had been more fortunate. For instance, he had invited a friend unaccustomed to big-game shooting to accompany him, and four bears—two full-grown and two young ones—passed close to his friend, who was so overawed that he dared not shoot. Our Host said that was very easy to understand. A relative of his, an officer and a hardened sportsman, had once—for some reason inexplicable to himself—failed to shoot at one great bear that approached him. On being rallied afterwards by his comrades in camp his temper was aroused, and he addressed them thus: 'I admit that for a moment I lost my nerve; but if you doubt my courage, I am prepared to fight you in duel, one after another, with any arms and under any conditions you may choose.'

'SEGESVÁR (SCHÄFSBURG)'

One day, on the conclusion of a beautiful walk—where from a hill-top we saw eleven ranges of hills and mountains one behind the other—he took me to the house of an old keeper, who had been in his service for twenty years, and there showed me two skulls of very large bears which the keeper had been instructed to shoot because they had taken to raiding farms. One of them killed a cow and then retired. The keeper climbed up into a tree close by and waited until it returned, when he wounded it. He then returned home, armed his wife with a gun, and the two together bravely tracked the animal, and found it dead.

His Excellency related the following ghost story: When his uncle—a man of few words and the sternest veracity—was in the army, his regiment was quartered near a castle at which a ghost was said to appear. The officers all requested that they might be allowed to sleep in turn in the haunted chamber. Several of them, including the uncle in question, saw a figure shrouded in white pass through the room. At last an officer addressed it, asking: 'Why do you come here? Do you desire anything?' 'Dig thirty paces northwards from the eastern tower,' clearly replied the mysterious visitor. The following day men were set to work, and dis-

covered the skeleton of a young woman with hands chained together and skull placed near the feet. These remains were buried in a Christian cemetery, with the usual rites, and the ghost never afterwards appeared.

And, again, he told of a marriage market for girls which takes place every year, on St. Peter's Day, in a mountain village a day's ride from Bánffy-Hunyad. Rumanian peasants who wish to marry come great distances over the mountains from remote places where they have few opportunities of meeting other young people; the girls being always under the care of elder women. He rode up one year with the old painter whose acquaintance we made in Kolosvár, and observed the proceedings. A girl, standing with her mother, was approached by a young man; conversation took place, and blushing on the part of the maiden; the youth produced three florins and held them out to her; she hesitated and seemed to refuse them, on which he put them back in his pocket; he then took out four florins; the girl opened a yellow handkerchief to receive them, folded them up, and put them into her pocket. She was then engaged to be married, and if she changed her mind must return the money. His

Excellency said he wanted to go and offer her ten florins to see what would happen, but the painter, much alarmed, dissuaded him from doing so.

Two years in succession, during the early autumn, we enjoyed staying in that most delightful of country houses; and it is a sad thought for us that the great distance separating it from our own land will, in all probability, prevent us from ever being able to visit it again.

About a mile from the *castel*, on a parched and bare hillside, was a Gipsy settlement which had existed for centuries. Irregular hovels hardly distinguishable from the surrounding clay, their features were, a few upright posts thatched with reeds forming a scanty porch, or an old stove-pipe protruding from a bare mound. Coloured garments were hung here and there to dry, swine and buffaloes wallowed in a shallow stream below the hill, and lithe people—more or less clad, according to age and sex—moved about in the sunlight. The Gipsies there were the cleanest we had seen, especially the very young ones, who went naked—brown little people with merry faces and well-formed limbs. One quite small one, who could hardly walk, yielded to his already developed instinct by cleverly stealing a strap

which my wife had left on the ground before her; but it was brought back by his mother before we left. A boy of nine years wore his only garment, a shirt, in such a way, with one arm free, that it looked like classical drapery, and my wife began to make a study from him. The next day he could not at first be found, and when he came did not know what had become of his shirt. He was posing without any, his beautiful young figure looking like an exquisite bronze, when his mother arrived, bringing a chemise belonging to his sister, and insisted in clothing him in that—not from any feeling of propriety, but because she feared the sun would do him harm. We heard some of their names, but the only one I can recall is the pretty one belonging to a girl with flashing eyes and perfect teeth—Lingora Flori. By way of paying rent for the ground they occupied, the Gipsies kept the park drives in order; and though they came and went as they would, they were never known to steal anything on the property.

During our last summer in Transylvania we also stayed at a charming country house not very far from Déva—chief town of Hunyad county. It was a low building with two wings. The garden front, which was almost covered with creepers and

was bordered with beds of bright flowers, looked on to lawns sloping down to the River Maros, and the groves of well-grown trees that bordered them. The main portion of the building was composed of a series of handsomely furnished and lofty salons, opening from one another; bedrooms occupied the wings, and the kitchens, etc., were in a building apart. Shooting, fishing, riding, driving, even bridge, all had their respective votaries; and life in the Hungarian houses we had the pleasure of knowing very much resembled that in English country homes.

The River Maros, where we saw it, was broad, rapid, and sinuous. Green trees grew along its banks, and, beyond them, blue or purple hills gave variety to the skyline. The highest of those was known as 'the Hill of the Maiden,' and the following legend is related concerning it: At a certain village on the opposite side of the river people were given up to dancing, and the dancing led to licence much to be deplored. Nothing could induce them to amend their ways until the Devil himself appeared in their midst, seized one of the gayest of the young women, and, in the sight of all, flew away with her to the top of the mountain, whence she never returned. From that

day to this no one has ventured to dance in that place.

A far prettier story was told in connection with the ruined castle of Malomviz, at the foot of the mountains near Hátszeg, where we were taken for a picnic. Once upon a time a young Count lived there with his Countess, and they loved each other very much, and were very happy until the Count was taken prisoner by the Turks. Then the lady, broken down with grief, cried all through the long days and nights. At last an angel appeared to her, and told her that in work only would she find consolation. So she began to spin, and as time went on she became happier. One night she dreamt that all she had spun turned to gold, and that a butterfly carried her golden thread far away over forest and mountain, and settled on a heavy door with a great lock. The door opened and her husband appeared, and, following the golden thread, seemed to approach ever nearer. Suddenly she felt someone put hands on her eyes, and when she opened them he stood before her.

Close by the thriving town of Déva there is a high conical hill, on the top of which are the ruins of a fortress which was destroyed in the troublous times 1848-49. It was occupied by Hungarian

soldiers, when its magazines were secretly mined by the Austrians. An Austrian soldier lit the fuse leading to them, and returned to Déva, unaware that at the same time his wife and child had carried up food to the Hungarians. There was a terrific explosion, and soldiers, woman, and child were blown to atoms. The unhappy Austrian was so horrified by the awful effect of his act that he immediately went mad.

In that neighbourhood several true Magyar families, whose ancestors lived for centuries in Rumania, are now settled among the Rumanian peasants. They were encouraged by the State to return to their own country, where they have prospered exceedingly. We found them to have retained the characteristics of their race, and to be as charming in manners and the costume they wore as any Magyars we had seen.

Among the towns of Transylvania, Brassó (Kronstadt), in the south-eastern extremity of the country, was always highly recommended to us. It is finely situated among mountains where several valleys meet, and is an important industrial and commercial centre, with nearly forty thousand inhabitants. Founded by Saxons in the thirteenth century, its German character was, for the most

part, lost in a fire which occurred in the seventeenth. There still remain a few very picturesque old houses in the outskirts of the town, and a grand old church—known as the 'Black Church'—which was blackened by the fire; but the main streets appear to be quite modern, and the principal buildings to have been built but yesterday. Outside the choir of the Black Church are statues of the twelve Apostles—much damaged by fire and Protestants—and, in a porch, the remains of a beautiful fresco of the Madonna and Child attended by two angels. A most interesting feature of the interior is the great number of ancient Oriental rugs, many of them Persian, which are of very beautiful and rich tone, and hang over the backs of the pews.

There are several pleasant summer resorts in the neighbourhood of Brassó, where pretty villas lie embowered among the trees and grassy slopes which clothe the foothills. We were surprised, when making excursions, to find that in a district which has been German for seven centuries the tramway-conductors, and even the station-masters, could speak only Hungarian, and that the names of such thoroughly German places as Neustadt and Rosenau should have been changed, in the railway guides, to the much less simple ones Keresténfalva

CATTLE ON THE PUSZTA OF HORTOBÁGY

Adrian Stokes.

and Barczarozenyó. We climbed the hill near Rosenau—a formal and rich German village, with red-roofed houses, very different from the untidy and irregular ones inhabited by Rumanians in the same district—and at the top found the ruins of an old fort, where we rested among wild thyme, and delighted in fresh breezes and the light and shade playing over the far-reaching landscape before us.

The prettiest and quaintest of the German towns we saw in the country was Segesvár (Schäfsburg). It was founded long ago by Saxons, and still retains very many of its picturesque medieval features—tiled towers, pinnacles, etc.—which appear as a pleasant surprise when the train, rounding a hill, brings them into view.

We stayed there, and then at the Armenian town Erzsébetváros, having been attracted by a fortified Gothic church in the neighbouring village, Sarós; but rain, unfortunately, prevented us from sketching it.

Churches, dating from the thirteenth century, built on eminences by the Saxons and surrounded by walls and turrets for defence, are characteristic of Transylvania.

On leaving Transylvania we went to bid farewell to our ever kind and protecting friend the Bishop,

and then on to the great *puszta* of Central Hungary, which remains a vast tract of level grazing-land five hundred square miles in extent.

The *puszta* of Hortobágy belongs to the important town of Debreczen—often called in Hungary the Calvinist Rome—but is situated at some distance from it, about an hour and a half by slow train.

The Bishop's secretary had written to recommend us to the care of a friend in Debreczen, who called soon after our arrival to say that the *Burgermeister* would be glad to see us at the town-hall. We accordingly went there, and a Senator kindly interpreted—as the *Burgermeister* spoke no foreign language—with the result that rooms adjoining a *csárdá* (country inn) in the centre of the *puszta* were placed at our disposal, and a young lawyer was deputed to conduct us there on the morrow.

On the following morning he arrived before our hotel with one of the town carriages, the coachman in blue and gold livery, and we drove in state to the railway-station, saluted at every turn by dustmen and other servants of the Corporation.

When we left the train we were taken in a springless carriage with seats slung on straps along a sandy road to the well-known, but very primitive,

csárdâ, where we were to stay for more than a week. A large low building, one half of it was an inn for the entertainment of *csikós* (horseherds) and *gulyás* (cowherds), and the other contained rooms occasionally used for business purposes, or by guests of the town of Debreczen when invited to shoot wildfowl or to see the *Fata Morgana* which is often visible thence in fine weather.

Strangers are sometimes taken to Hortobágy, where all things—herds, customs, costumes, *csárdá*, etc.—are reputed to be purely Magyar, as they have been for ages; and it is not improbable that more than one thrilling romance of the *puszta* which we have read was founded on the experience of half a day there.

We were given the use of a spacious room, were waited on by a clever little Magyar maid named Terka (Theresa), aged fifteen, and obtained our meals, such as they were, from the landlady in the *csárdá*.

The first afternoon we drove out with the lawyer over the vast plain, which, level as a calm sea, extended all around us. Our track was hardly discernible in the sandy soil tufted with short sun-burnt grass. Two or three small light-coloured huts, each with a tall draw-well near it, could be

seen far away in the distance, and a few low clumps of trees, wide apart, like ships out of sight of land.

When, at length, we saw a herd of brown horses and, turning aside, approached it, we found it to consist of about fifty animals under the charge of a young *csikós*, aged thirteen, whom my wife afterwards painted. His dress was composed of a jacket and short divided skirts of light blue linen; a short mantle, which had once been white, and was sparsely embroidered with red patterns; and a broad brown felt hat with one side turned up. His legs and feet were bare. He was holding a large bay horse by a cord when we came up, but immediately drew it to him, sprang or climbed on to its bare back, and, flourishing his long-lashed whip, galloped away after some horses which had strayed. A born horseman, he and his mount were in perfect sympathy. When, a day or two later, he came a distance of four miles to be painted, and dismounted before the *csárdá*, he patted his horse, waved his hand, and it galloped away to rejoin the herd.

We drove on for miles, passing flocks of sheep and long-cloaked *juhász* (shepherds) on the way, to three wells, close together, where many hundred

white cattle with long grey horns had come to drink from troughs filled for them by the *gulyás*. Several *csikós* were also there, one wearing an old white felt overcoat embroidered with faded green, which was fastened across his chest by an ornamented strap, the sleeves having been sewn up at the wrists so as to form long pockets. (Hungarian peasants seldom or never put their arms in the sleeves of their overcoats or mantles.) He rode with a perfect seat, worthy of the statue of a Roman Emperor, and soon raced off, cracking his whip, to some horses he was driving away. For the rest, he was dressed like the boy we had first seen.

As we returned homewards the sun sank red in a glowing haze, and on the brown plain, far away, a carriage with five horses appeared but a tiny speck surrounded by a cloud of golden dust.

The wide *puszta* fascinated us. The mysterious charm it exercises is, in kind, similar to that of the ocean, and yet is all its own.

In October the general colour of the land had turned to varied tones of warm ochre—subtly modified by cooler reflections—fading to a line of violet on the horizon which led into a sky of almost the same colour, until high up, where it

became bluer, with warm clouds softly defined. From eleven till one o'clock the *Fata Morgana* was clearly to be seen, woods and buildings which at other times were invisible below the horizon rising above it, and seeming to be reflected in a still lagoon.

We made several studies out on the *puszta*, and as we sat at work a herd of white cattle, in the middle distance, would move slowly over the plain. A little later they were nowhere to be seen, but in another direction two mounted *csikós* and several hundred brown horses had appeared. Wild geese —a long line bent towards the centre in an acute angle—passed overhead, and we heard distinctly the whirring of their wings. If we watched them, or continued working for a time, and then remembered the horses, they too had vanished; yet somewhere else, instead of them, a shepherd, a flock of sheep, and two white dogs had come into view. Again—having been absorbed in our work for a while—if we looked around no living thing was to be seen as far as the eye could reach—only the dry *puszta*, a pool or streak of silver water, and, over all, the immense palpitating sky.

The *csárdá*, and the station for mounted police close by it, are the only dwelling-houses on the

part of the *puszta* we explored except the group of buildings, a mile away, occupied by the veterinary surgeon. The lawyer, before returning to Debreczen, introduced us to him, and he spared himself no pains in trying to obtain models for my wife; but even with his aid, though everyone knew and respected him, that proved to be an almost unsurmountable task.

He accompanied us one afternoon on a long drive to a *tanya*, or cowherds' hut, and described the habits of the men. Four or five of them share the use of a *tanya*, in which each keeps a small wooden chest and other property; but they do not sleep in it. They wear heavy cloaks of sheepskins with the wool left on them—six or eight whole fleeces being required to make one—which close round the neck and reach to the ground. When it rains the cowherd turns down the brim of his felt hat, and stands, waterproof, leaning on his stick. At night he simply rolls himself up in his cloak, and lies on the bare ground wherever he may happen to be; in cold weather having turned the wool inside. The fleece of a small black lamb hangs down from the back of the neck by way of ornament.

Near to a *tanya* there is always a *vasaló* (open-

air kitchen, in plan like a flat-iron, which the word signifies), formed of a close wind-proof fence of tall reeds, about eight feet high, which are bound together by three horizontal bands. The floor is of brick, with a hollow place in the centre where a fire is always kept smouldering, the fuel used being dried cow-dung. Three feet from the fire a short upright post with a long horizontal arm revolves in a socket. The pot or pan used when cooking hangs from the arm, which is turned above the fire. A low round table, with a hole in the centre into which the bowl of food fits, is brought from the *tanya* at meal-times, and small wooden stools are placed around it. Everything is kept scrupulously tidy and clean.

Continuing our way over the plain, we observed a series of low mounds, similar in size, and disposed in regular order about half a mile apart. They were ten or twelve feet high, with gently sloping sides, and were flat on the top. Our companion said they are supposed to have been lookout places in the time of the Turkish invasions; but I think that cannot be the true explanation of their origin.

For a time four large rough-coated white dogs seemed anxious to devour us, and followed the

A YOUNG MAGYAR CSIKÓS ON THE GREAT PUSZTA OF HORTOBÁGY

carriage barking and showing their fangs. A small dachshund had come with us, and it cleverly ran along under the pole, quite close to the horses' hoofs, to escape from them. It is never safe for anyone to walk on the *puszta* without a long stout stick.

We put up, near a pond, a large flock of grey wild geese which had remained until we were almost within shooting distance of them. Curlews flew over us formed into equilateral triangles—the enclosed planes being filled with regularly spaced birds, perhaps two hundred in each—and buzzards, wild duck, and plover were occasionally to be seen. It was delightful to watch the flight of the birds. Sometimes they would wheel in flocks which became dark along one edge, then changed to a thin even film, disappeared, came into sight in a different form, and finally faded away. Others, like the tail of a kite, waved in a long ribbon of varied density low down in the distant sky.

At length we came to a second *tanya*, where several *csikós* were guarding a large herd of horses. Except that some of them wore top-boots, the mounted men were dressed as the others we had seen, though their toned white felt mantles were even more richly embroidered, in the usual places,

with scarlet and crimson broken with violet and green. The tops of their short whip-handles were ornamented with rosettes of red leather, as were also the upper parts of the long thongs made of perfectly plaited strips of thin leather. A lasso was wound round the neck of each of the horses they rode, and one of the *csikós* dismounted to show us his saddle. It was simply a doubled square of flannel, without a girth, and the stirrups were hung from it. To remount, the *csikós* flung his right arm well over the horse's back to hold down the flannel on the off-side, put his left toe into the stirrup, and sprang up with perfect ease.

Probably no finer horsemen exist in the world than the *csikós* on the great *puszta* of Hortobágy. They, the *gulyás*, and the *juhász* remain there—where no women ever come—without returning home, for many months at a time. They are strict Calvinists, and their morals are said to be above reproach.

The horses, which show a good deal of breed, are nearly all brown or bay, and are formed into herds often numbering from six to seven hundred. Hungarian horses, in which the State takes great interest, are descended from those that came in with Arpad and with the Turks, crossed with

Arabs. A Prince of Transylvania introduced the blood of showy Spanish horses—high-steppers and poor stayers—but it proved a failure, and the stock was weeded out. English thoroughbreds were then crossed with the Hungarian breed, with the best possible results.

A herd of long-horned white cattle on the *puszta* often numbers as many as fourteen or fifteen hundred head. The cows are not milked—as on an *alm* in Austria, or Tyrol, where many cattle are gathered together—but the calves drink their milk. A cheese-farm was at one time started under a qualified master, and excellent cheese was produced; but it was not advertised and few people knew of, or bought it, and after three years the experiment was abandoned.

Many of the young cattle have never been handled by man, and the Veterinary Surgeon told of the extreme difficulty he had in treating them when ill.

Two-thirds of the *puszta* is capable of cultivation, though on one-third the soil is too poor; and there are two parties in Debreczen—those who own cattle and those who do not—who hold different views as to the expediency of leaving it as it is.

Near to the *csárdá* there is a fine stone bridge, with nine arches, over water which we thought was a river until we had passed around one end of it. It curves away for miles, and in the evening wild-fowl of many kinds come to it in thousands. I sometimes strolled along its banks in the twilight with my gun, but there was no sort of cover, and I seldom fired a shot.

The good Vet. occasionally came to see us, and described the green glories of the *puszta* in spring and early summer, and told how on a summer day he saw the bridge from a great distance, when—as *Fata Morgana*—it appeared to be composed of four tiers of arches, one above the other.

One sunny morning, towards the end of our stay, my wife was painting her young *csikós* model on the *puszta*, and—though it was October—a lark began to sing in the sky. They both looked up to it; then their eyes met, and in the proud expression of his clear blue eyes she read that he would like to say: 'Yes, it is good to be here'—and so it was.

On leaving Hortobágy we spent a day or two at Debreczen, drove in the beautiful woods there, and saw the large church where, in 1849, Kossuth proclaimed the deposition of the Habsburg dynasty—

a proclamation which possibly might have been effective had not the Czar of Russia sent an army of two hundred thousand men to help Austria in her straits.

We then started for Lake Balaton—with the exception of one or two lakes in Russia, the largest of Europe's inland seas—but stopped at Kalocsa on the way there, to say good-bye to our kind friends. Having mentioned to them whither we were bound, one of the younger priests, to whom we had become much attached, at once pressed us to occupy a villa by the lake belonging to an intimate friend of his, which was then untenanted. He would take no refusal and at once wrote to his friend, who telegraphed in reply that the villa would be ready for us, and that the station-master and his wife, who had the keys and lived close by, would provide our meals.

So are things done in Hungary; and it may be it is largely owing to this extraordinary hospitality of the better-class people that many country hotels and inns are little used, and little prepared to receive visitors of their kind.

We broke our journey at Kaposvár, another town where the old order has made way for the new and every building of any pretension is quite modern

—many, indeed, being still in the hands of the builders—and then went on to the villa which had been lent to us, at Szemes, on the lake. The sun set beyond deep-toned mountains, and the glories of a peaceful evening sky were reflected in still waters as we arrived.

Our first days by the lake were enchanting. The season was over, the villas were closed and deserted, and we had the place to ourselves. Slender birch-trees still held a few golden leaves, the grass was dead, and pure sands shelved, with graceful curves, into the shallow sea. For half a mile the water gradually deepened till it became the colour of chrysoprase; softened lines of red plum-coloured hills lay beyond it, and above was a cloudless sky. From time to time wild duck flew by us, and wild geese overhead.

For three days the weather remained perfect, and the sun set each night a glowing red ball beyond the distant waters of the lake; but then a change came. One morning while we were painting we observed a close bank of clouds, with firmly defined edge, approaching from the north; the wind blew ominously, and the shallow waters on the nearer shore became patterned with small white breakers. In the afternoon it snowed a little, but

though the next day was cold, the clouds had drifted away, and the sun shone for a while. When I went to work I was astonished to see that the breakers did not move. They were frozen, and ice reached out for a hundred yards from land.

A steamer towed a row of fishing-barges to the deep water on the opposite coast, ten miles away, whence they drifted with nets to our shore. Towards evening, under a leaden sky, I saw fishermen in oilskins wading through grey water about their stranded boats, and beating their arms to keep themselves warm. The fish caught in Balaton is renowned for its excellence, but the fishing rights have all been bought up by one or two large companies, who send the catch to the best markets; and when we were there it was impossible to obtain any fish near the lake.

The next night was a wild one; the wind howled and whistled round the house, and when the pointsman brought coffee to our bedroom in the morning, he came in like Father Christmas, covered with snow. Outside, partridges sought shelter in the garden.

The station-master and his wife were the kindest and best of people, the fare they provided was excellent and most admirably cooked, and their

first wish was that we should partake plentifully of it. They had no children, but were devoted to a pug-dog which always barked at us when we entered. They told us that when they had to scold him, he wept—as we should see on the next occasion—and that when a passenger train drew up he always ran out to see who had arrived; but if a luggage train came, he remained quietly in his bed—for the trains whistled in different ways when at some distance from the station, and he could thus distinguish them. One day he mistook the station-master, who entered with us, for me, and barked at him furiously, with the result that he was soundly rated. He at once retired to his bed in a corner by the stove, and we presently observed tears gathering in his large black eyes and falling down his ugly little face. When his mistress came and, gathering him in her arms tried to console him, he not only continued to shed bitter tears but wiped them away with the backs of his paws—first the right one and then the left.

The station-master was our guide during several excursions to the fashionable places on that most exquisite of lakes—then deserted, but which must be gay and delightful when frequented by the

cream of Magyar families—and to a colony of young painters in a village some miles from the shore. Charming young fellows, full of enthusiasm, they were trying to live over again the old days of Barbizon, and to paint in the very latest French manner.

From Szemes, on our way to Budapest, we journeyed long over sunlit snow by the shores of lovely Balaton, and then by a smaller lake, bordered with dead reeds which cast blue shadows on the ice.

Pozsony (Pressburg), on the Danube, was the last Hungarian town we stayed in. It is a most attractive place, more Austrian than Hungarian in the style of its architecture, and the stamp of the great days of Maria Theresa is still clearly set upon it.

When, with sorrow, we began our journey away from the country where so much had been done, by so many friends, to make us happy, the landscape we passed through seemed to be in sympathy with us. It was of that sad kind—seen through dim windows—where half-thawed snow, in ragged patches, partially covers sodden earth; where bare trees bend before a cold wind; where all in the distance is lost in grey mist, and clouds of white

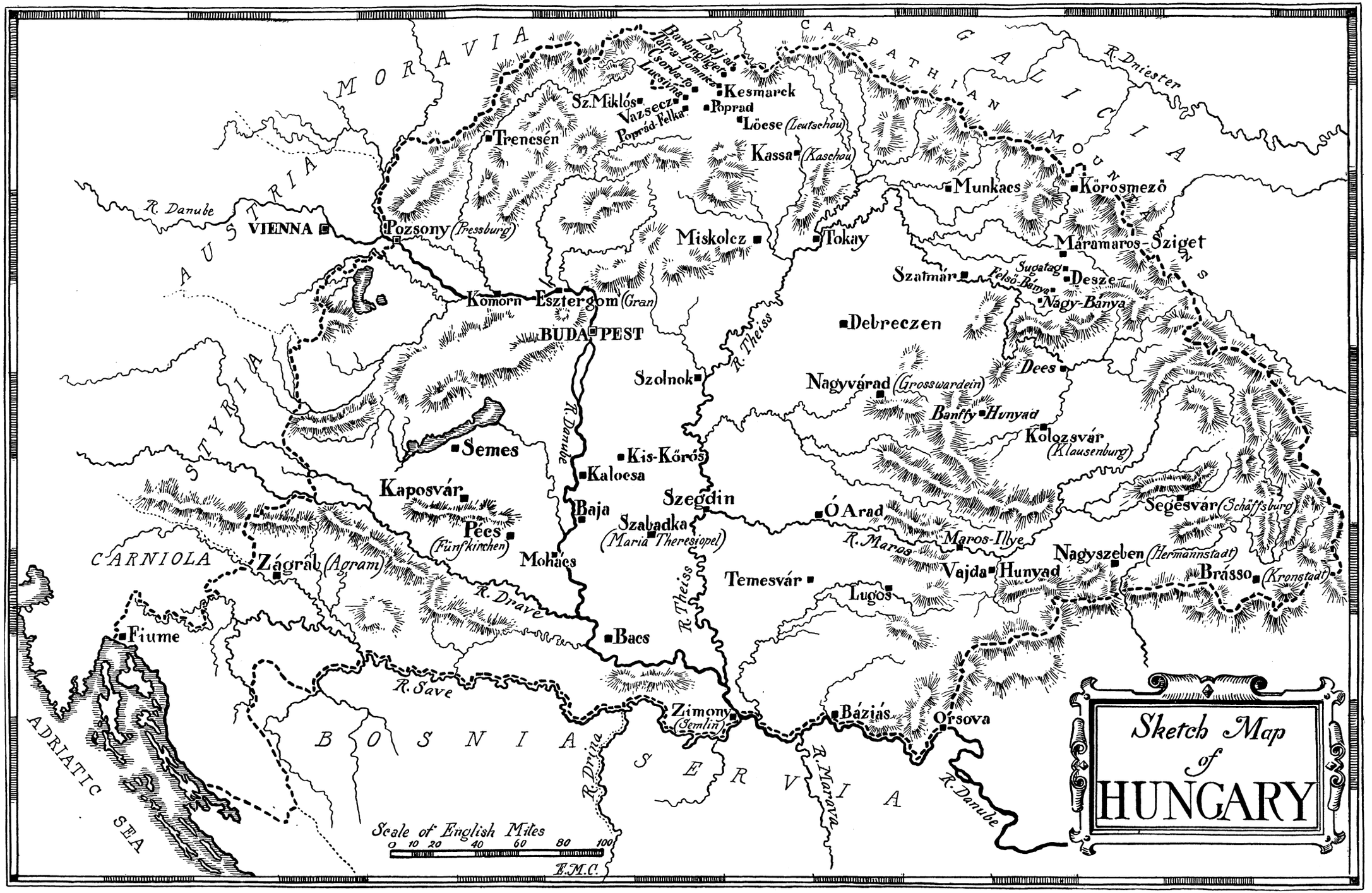
steam from the engine sweep low before they disappear.

In Hungary most men are patriots, all are politicians; but I have not touched on politics in these pages. They have recently been brilliantly discussed—from various points of view—in books by Count Andrássy, Mr Knatchbull-Hugesson, 'Scotus Viator,' and Mr. Geoffrey Drage. My ambition and my wish were but to tell, in simple language, what we saw and felt ourselves in many parts of the country, among people of many kinds. But I would like to state before concluding that, having lived, as few strangers ever have, among the different nationalities, we ourselves heard no complaints of their hard treatment by the Magyars. The general instruction in schools, where we were, was given in their own tongues; and if they were taught Hungarian, that was no hardship, for it is evidently an advantage that all inhabitants of a country should understand one common language; and it is natural that the one chosen should be that of the dominant and most numerous race.

The State takes keen paternal interest in countless matters of vast importance — agriculture, forestry, mining, industries, even art, etc.—and the whole country pulsates with life and energy.

Hitherto the generous Magyars have not been distinguished as a business people; but it is to be feared that, under modern conditions, they may deteriorate in this respect. As agriculturists they cannot be surpassed. We earnestly hope that as many of them as is possible will remain happy on their rich and beautiful land—a brave and splendid people.

We are quite aware that we have only touched on the fringes of limitless fields of interest for artists, and others.



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