HUNGARY

9760 AND

TRANSYLVANIA;

WITH REMARKS ON THEIR CONDITION,

SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMICAL.

BY

JOHN PAGET, ESQ.

Beata Ungheria! se non si lascia
Più malmenare.

DANTE.

From the New London Edition,

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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TO HER

FOR WHOSE PLEASURE THIS WORK WAS UNDERTAKEN,

BY WHOSE SMILES ITS PROGRESS HAS

BEEN ENCOURAGED,

AND AT WHOSE DESIRE IT IS NOW PUBLISHED,

I DEDICATE IT,

IN TESTIMONY OF MY AFFECTION

AND ESTEEM.

J. P.

PREFACE.

BEFORE proceeding with this work, there are one or two matters which I may as well explain to the reader. Such a mark of my confidence will, I trust, incline him not only to treat me more leniently, but enable him also to judge of me more fairly, and so accuse me only of those faults of which I am really guilty.

I would not willingly deceive him in any thing. I am deeply interested in the welfare of Hungary, and I have thought that one great means of promoting it would be to extend the knowledge of that country in the west of Europe, and more especially in England. But, although I naturally wish that others should partake of the interest which I feel, I have not thought it either just or wise to conceal, or to gloss over, faults existing either in the country, its institutions, or its inhabitants. I know there are those who think that "to write up a country," a traveller should describe every thing in its most favourable light; I am

not of that opinion,—I do not believe that a false impression can ever effect any lasting good.

On the other hand, I must guard my Hungarian friends against the suspicion that I have "set down aught in malice." I know that many of them will feel sufficiently sore at seeing national defects held up to the gaze of foreigners; but I think the wiser of them will easily forgive me, when they reflect that others would have been sure to find out these defects if I had not, and might perhaps have discussed them with less charity. I do not anticipate that my opinions will find favour in the eyes of any party or any sect, but they have been independently formed and honestly expressed: if correct, they may be of some use; if erroneous, they will pass away and be forgotten, without doing much harm. To one merit I may safely lay claim—I have not, in a single instance, betrayed a private confidence, nor, as far as I am aware, written a line which can give just cause of pain to any private individual. I have been admitted into a great number of houses, I have observed the habits and customs of many families; but if any obnoxious remark was to be made, I have always removed it so far from the real scene of action as to render it impossible, even for the most malicious, to trace it to its source. That I have attacked parties and sects, that I have criticized bodies of men and national institutions, and that I have spoken freely of public characters, is true;

but, in having done so, I consider myself responsible to no one; such matters are public property, and fair subjects for public animadversion.

That I have fallen into many errors, I feel certain, —not that I have spared either time or trouble to avoid them; but seeing how many other travellers have committed, which I can detect, I cannot hope that I shall be able to escape clear from their scrutiny. Instead of asking them to spare me, I invite them to correct me. I may smart under the lash, but my object, the elucidation of truth, will be advanced, and if their remarks are made in a fair spirit, I shall not complain.

With respect to the means I enjoyed for acquiring information, I may state that I have visited Hungary on several occasions; that, in all, I have spent about a year and a half in the country, and that, during that time, I have travelled over the greater part of it. Without being able to speak any of the three or four languages properly indigenous to Hungary, I was sufficiently master of German, which is spoken by every one above the rank of the peasantry, and often by them too, to enable me to converse with the Hungarians without difficulty or restraint. From many of them I received the greatest marks of confidence and friendship, and to them I owe it, that I have been able to enter so fully into the present position of Hungarian affairs. That I do not acknowledge these

favours more particularly, by naming those to whom I am obliged, the reader must not suppose the result of ingratitude on my part, as I am silent solely from a wish not to involve any one in the disagreeable consequences which might spring from his supposed agreement with the opinions which I have expressed.

As I have always felt that written descriptions of the physical characteristics of a country and people convey, after all, but imperfect notions of them, I thought myself very fortunate when Mr. Hering agreed to accompany me for the purpose of illustrating whatever might be distinctive, or curious, or beautiful. On my return to England, circumstances occurred which rendered it so doubtful when I should be enabled to complete my work that, anxious that Mr. Hering should have an opportunity to make known his talents, and willing in any way to spread an acquaintance with Hungary among the English, I placed the sketch-book at his disposal, and requested him to make use of it in any way he saw fit. The result has been, the beautiful volume of "Sketches on on the Danube, in Hungary and Transylvania." The reader must not accuse me of plagiarism if he finds strong marks of similarity between some passages of these volumes, and the introductory pages of the "Sketches." At Mr. Hering's request, I wrote for him those short notices of the subjects of his engravings; and I have preferred repeating them here

to breaking the thread of the narrative by referring the reader to another work.

To save the trouble of quoting in the body of the work, the authors from whom I have derived information, and to indicate to such as are desirous of a farther acquaintance with Hungary, the means by which they may acquire it, I add a list of those authors, with the titles of their books, in this place.

Geschichte des Ungarischen Reichs, von Johann Christian von Engel, 5 vols., 8vo., 1834.—Die Geschichte Ungarns, von Dr. J. F. Schneller, 12mo., 1829.—Gemälde von Ungarn, von Johann von Csaplovics, 2 vols., 8vo., 1829.—Neuste statistisch-geographische Beschreibung des Königreichs Ungarn, Croatien, Slavonien und der Ungarischen Militär-grenze, 1 vol., 8vo., 1832.—Erläuterungen der Grundgesetze für die Militär-gränze, von Mathias Stopfer, k. k. Gränz-Werwaltungs-Oberlieutenant, 1 vol., 8vo., 1831.—Ungarns gesetzgebende Körper auf dem Reichstage zu Pressburg im Jahr 1830, von Joseph Orosz, 2 vols., 8vo., 1831.—Terra Incognita, Notizen über Ungarn, von J. Orosz, 1 vol., 8vo., 1835.—Ueber den Credit, vom Grafen Stephan Széchenyi; aus dem Ungarischen übersetzt von Joseph Vojdisek; 2d ed., 1 vol., 8vo., 1830.—Malerische Reise auf dem Waagflusse, von Freyherrn von Mednyánsky, 1 vol., 4to., 1826.—Erzählungen, Sagen, und Legenden aus Ungarns Vorzeit, von Freyherrn, von Mednyánsky, 1 vol., 8vo.,

1829. As guide-book, I always used Rudolph von Jenny's Handbuch für Reisende in dem österreichischen Kaiserstaate, Zweite Auflage, von Adolf Schmidl, 1835. The second volume treats of Hungary, and is a work of great labour and wonderful accuracy. To the English traveller down the Danube, especially if he does not read German, Mr. Murray's "Handbook for Southern Germany," will be found exceedingly useful.

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HUNGARY AND TRANSYLVANIA.

CHAPTER I.

PRESBURG.

Viennese Reports of Hungary.—Presburg.—Castle.—Inhabitants.—Members of the Diet.—Dinner party.—Youth of Hungary.—Theben.—Theatre.—Promenade.—Booksellers.—Journals.

It was about the middle of June, 1835, that we shook the dust of Vienna from our feet, and bent our steps towards the confines of Hungary. Full of the hope of adventure, with which the idea of entering a country familiar only in history or romance fills even older heads than ours, we had been for some days impatient at the dull delays of the Austrian police, and were commensurately rejoiced at their termination, and the actual commencement of our journey.

The reader would certainly laugh, as I have often done since, did I tell him one half the foolish tales the good Viennese told us of the country we were about to visit. No roads! no inns! no police! we must sleep on the ground, eat where we could, and be ready to defend our purses and our lives at every moment! In full credence of these reports, we provided ourselves most plentifully with arms, which were carefully loaded, and placed ready for immediate use; for as we heard that nothing but fighting would carry us through, we determined to put the best face we could on the matter. It may, however, ease the reader's mind to know that no occasion to shoot any thing more formidable than a partridge or a hare ever presented itself; and that we finished our journey with the full conviction, that travelling in Hungary was just as safe as travelling in England.

Why or wherefore, I know not, but nothing can exceed the horror with which a true Austrian regards both Hungary and its inhabitants. I have sometimes suspected that the bugbear

with which a Vienna mother frightens her squaller to sleep, must be an Hungarian bugbear; for in no other way can I account for the inbred and absurd fear which they entertain for such near neighbours. It is true, the Hungarians do sometimes talk about liberty, constitutional rights, and other such terrible things, to which no well-disposed ears should ever be open, and to which the ears of the Viennese are religiously closed. Worthy people! How satisfied must the old emperor, *der gute Franzel*, have been with you! When a certain professor once remonstrated with him on the censorship of the press, and represented it as the certain means of checking the genius of his people, he was answered: "I don't want learned subjects—I want good subjects." As regards the first part of his wish no man had more reason to be contented than the late Emperor of Austria; for a more unintellectual, eating and drinking, dancing and music-loving people do not exist, than the good people of Vienna. As long as they can eat *gebackene Hendel* at the Sperl, or dance in the Augarten, and listen to the immortal Strauss, as he stamps and fiddles before the best waltz band in Europe, so long will they willingly close their ears to all such wicked discourses; and, despite the speculations of philosophers or the harangues of patriots, nothing will ever induce them to desire a change.

Our party consisted, beside myself, of my friend Mr. S——, and Mr. H——; the latter, a young artist. Of ourselves I need say nothing more, as our personality will have little place in our travels. We were provided with a good strong carriage from Brandmeyer's; a preliminary to a journey through Hungary, without which I should recommend no one to attempt it, at least for pleasure. An Italian servant, who had accompanied me through Italy, I was obliged to dismiss; for he was not only useless from his ignorance of the languages of the country, but an absolute incumbrance from his unfitness to put up with the various inconveniencies to which an Hungarian traveller is subject. An Hungarian was soon found to supply his place.

In this guise, after a few hours' posting on the dusty road between Vienna and Presburg, we approached the boundary of Hungary. I proffered my passport, as usual, to the guard who opened the barrier; but it was declined with a polite bow, and an assurance that I was in Hungary and had no longer need of it. I appeal to those who have travelled in Italy and Germany for sympathy with my delight at being once more free from the annoyance of passports, a system of impediment to the honest

traveller, and of protection to the rogue. An efficient police does not require it—a bad one is only rendered more inefficient by its fancied security. My heart beat more gaily in its prison, my blood flowed more freely through my veins, as I blessed the land where some trace of personal liberty still existed.

As we approached Presburg, the huge square castle came in sight; and before long, we were crossing the bridge of boats over the Danube and entering the town.

Presburg is prettily situated along the banks of the Danube; and, for a town of its size, offers a greater number of handsome buildings than are often seen. Our first object after making our arrangements as comfortably as possible at the Goldene Sonne, was to visit the castle. A large square mass of building without architectural ornament, and little relieved by the ill-proportioned towers which protrude themselves from each corner, cannot in itself have much to interest the lover of the picturesque; but from the esplanade before it, a magnificent view opened on us. As far as the eye can reach into Hungary, extends a vast wooded plain, through which the gigantic Danube spreads itself wild and uncontrolled. Sometimes dividing itself into several branches, nearly as wide as the parent stream, it forms large islands of several miles in extent; then collecting its scattered forces, it moves forward in one vast mass of irresistible power, till division again impairs its strength. At our feet lay Presburg itself, and we could distinguish the remains of the gates and walls which marked its former boundaries; these, however, it has long outgrown, and its straggling extremities remind us of the school-boy's arms and legs, which the garments of an earlier age would in vain restrain within their narrow limits.

Of historical association, the castle had little to interest us; indeed, in its present form, it has existed scarcely one hundred years. As late as 1811, it still served as a fortress and barrack for troops, but being unprovided both with wood and water, except what was carried there upon the backs of its occupants, it struck the Italian regiment, by whom it was then held, how very ill it was adapted to the purposes it served. They were just employed in laying in a store of wood, when the idea, equally patriotic and philanthropic, came into their heads of setting fire to the castle, and thus ridding the country of a bad fortress, and saving themselves and their successors from any further trouble in carrying wood and water to such an unreasonable height. So strongly did the idea seize upon their imaginations, that it was no sooner conceived than put in execution, and

its blackened walls still stand a monument to the wit and laziness of the Italian soldiery.

As for sights, few places have less of them than Presburg. In the great church we could discover nothing of interest save a bronze font of elegant workmanship, bearing the date of 1409. The object pointed out with the greatest care to the stranger's notice, is an insignificant elevation on the banks of the Danube, called the Königsberg. It is to this spot that the King of Hungary, at his coronation, clothed in the very dress formerly worn by St. Stephen, and bearing the apostolic crown on his head, rides up his charger; and, striking the sword of state to the four quarters of the world, swears to defend the country from enemies on every side.*

The delivery of letters of introduction, and the consequent formation of acquaintance, cost us but little time, for every where we were received with a kindness which at once forbade us to consider ourselves strangers. The hospitality of the Hungarians is almost proverbial, and, I doubt not, that every foreigner feels its welcome influence; but I am inclined to think that the name of Englishman was not without its recommendation in our favour. I must not, however, anticipate: future events, I think, will prove that I am right.

It was a constant source of amusement for us, during the first days of our arrival, to watch the groups of peasants collected under the windows of the hotel. The neighbourhood of Presburg is chiefly occupied by Sclavacks and Germans, two of the many distinct races by which Hungary is peopled. The reader must not imagine that he is about to visit one people on entering Hungary, but rather a collection of many races, united by geographical position and other circumstances into one nation, but which still preserve all their original peculiarities of language, dress, religion, and manners. The Magyars,† or Hungarians proper, the dominant race, and to whom the land may be said to belong, do not amount to more than three millions and a half out of the ten millions at which the whole population is estimated. The Sclavacks may be reckoned at two millions; other members of the Sclavish race, but differing in religion and dialect, at two

* In Mr. Spencer's work on Circassia, it may be observed, that a similar ceremony is performed by a Circassian prince, who is sent to receive and conduct home his brother's bride; an interesting fact when connected with the Hungarian claim to a Caucasian origin.

† It may be as well to remark at once, that the word Magyar should be pronounced Mŏd-yŏr.

and a half; the rest of the population being made up of Wallacks, Jews, Germans, Gipsies, &c. There is scarcely less difference of religion than of origin in this motley population. The Catholics are predominant, as well in number as in power; but the two sects of Protestants, the Lutherans and Calvinists, and the members of the Greek Church, both united and non-united, are numerous, and enjoy nearly the same rights as the Catholics. The Jews are tolerated on the payment of a tax, but cannot exercise any political functions.

It is easy for an experienced eye to detect these differences at the first glance, though to us they were a puzzle which we were some time in unravelling. We soon became accustomed to the slow, heavy look of the Sclavack peasants as they sauntered about in the sun, with all the lazy nonchalance of the lazzaroni of Naples.

Their women, too, were distinguishable from the white kerchief folded neatly over the head and neck, and the gay blue petticoat with its deep edge of bright red, as they incumbered the street with their baskets of fruit and vegetables. It was curious to see how unconcernedly the generality of them stood to be sketched. One old man, whom H—— caught as he was resting from his labour on his awkward long-handled spade, allowed a limb to be replaced in its former position, when accidentally moved, just as tranquilly as an artist's lay-figure would have done, though he did not seem to have the slightest idea of what was going on.

Another stout fellow, who had been persuaded to sit for his portrait, did not take the affair quite so easily. He grew very much alarmed when he saw the pencils and paper fairly at work, and at last burst into tears, and would fain have run away; he was sure they were "writing him down," to send his description to the Emperor, that he might make a soldier of him. Probably, the poor fellow had run away and hid himself during the last levy of troops, and it may have been a bad conscience that now pricked him. The smart peasants, in tight blue pantaloons, embroidered jackets, and broad hats, ornamented with artificial flowers, we found to be chiefly Germans, who had adopted the Hungarian costume.

As we were leaning out of the window, and amusing ourselves with the picturesque groups formed by these curious figures, and their no less curious teams of four or six small lean horses, and light crazy wagons, a loud knock at the door interrupted

our observations, and in marched a hussar in a very gay uniform and making such martial music in the jingling of his sabre and spurs, that we could scarcely comprehend that he was merely a servant sent to announce the visit of his master, who was waiting below, to know if we were at home. In a few minutes, however, appeared the master himself; and if his servant had astonished us, I leave the reader to guess what was the impression produced upon our minds by a tall, very handsome man, dressed in the most becoming uniform of green and gold, with a mantle richly lined with fur hanging over his shoulders, and which he bore with a grace and elegance of manner rarely to be seen. It was the Baron V——, to whom we had a letter of introduction, and who had called in his uniform of Chamberlain on his way to the palace, to return our yesterday's visit. This was the first time we had ever seen the modern Hungarian costume, and it was impossible not to be struck with its beauty and elegance.

The luxury which many of the Hungarians display in the liveries, or uniforms of their servants, is far beyond any thing of which we can form an idea. Almost every gentleman has a hussar fully armed and equipped as his valet de chambre, and some have all their footmen in the same dress. These uniforms are not unfrequently covered with gold or silver lace. It is startling to a foreigner to find himself served at table by a smart looking hussar, be-whiskered and be-spurred as fiercely as if he were handling a sabre instead of presenting a knife and fork.

We had soon a sufficient number of acquaintances to induce us to fix ourselves for some weeks at Presburg. The diet also was sitting, and many of the most remarkable men of the country were in consequence congregated within the town. A great number of young men, too, either attached to the deputies as secretaries, or terminating their legal studies at the courts, were in Presburg, and gave us a good opportunity of becoming acquainted with the rising generation, the future hopes of Hungary.

Very few of the members of the Diet keep house at Presburg, and, although they have now been nearly three years here, they have contented themselves with the lodgings afforded by the town; for whatever place has the honour of receiving the Diet, has the burden also of quartering its members gratis. We called on one of the magnates the other day, and found his habitation to consist of two very indifferent rooms, the outer serving for antechamber and servants' room, the inner, for his own bedroom and saloon. On the outer door a rude likeness of a sabre was

chalked up, as a sign that a member of the diet lived there. The deputies mostly dine at one of the many restaurants of the town, where a very tolerable dinner may be had for about two shillings. If I may venture to speak of their appearance in general, from what I have observed in these places, and before I confuse myself with individual peculiarities, or become blinded by private friendship, I should say they are a fine manly body; composed in their demeanour, careless in matters of dress, and rather too regardless of those little elegances of manner which distinguish good society in the rest of Europe. Though rather rough, however, they have mostly something *distingué* in their bearing and general appearance.

One of the first dinner parties to which we were invited at Presburg, was at the house of Herr Von P———, and I must not hastily pass it over, for it introduced us to some trifling peculiarities in manner, which, although of such little importance in my eyes, that I seem to require an apology to myself for noticing them, are of a character so vastly interesting to that numerous class of English society, the gentry of the silver fork school, that I feel confident they would never pardon me were I to omit them.

As is the custom, the invitation was verbal, and the hour two o'clock. The drawing-room into which we were ushered was a spacious uncarpeted room, with a well polished floor, on which, I am sorry to say, I observed more than one of the guests very unceremoniously expectorate. Uncarpeted rooms, it may be remarked, though bare to the eye, are pleasant enough in warm climates; indeed, in some houses, where English fashions predominate, I have seen small stools of wood introduced to protect the pretty feet of their mistresses from the heat of the carpet. It is not an uncommon thing for a second-rate French dandy to carry a little *brosse à moustaches* about him, and coolly arrange those material appendages in the street, or at the café; but I was a good deal surprised to see the exquisites of Presburg drawing well-proportioned hair-brushes from their pockets, and performing those operations usually confined in England to the dressing-room, in the presence of a party of ladies, and within the sacred precincts of the drawing-room. But these were trifles compared to the solecisms committed at the dinner table. One of the guests occupied a little spare time between the courses in scraping his nails with a table knife, talking at the same time to the lady next to him, while his *vis-à-vis* was deliberately picking his teeth with a silver fork!

The dinner was most profuse; and, as is usual here, the dishes were carried round to every one in turn, the table being covered with the dessert. I can neither tell the number nor quality of all the courses, for it was quite impossible to eat of the half of them; and many even of those I did taste were new to me. Hungarian cookery is generally savoury, but too greasy to be good. Some of the national dishes, however, are excellent; but the stranger rarely finds them except in the peasant's cottage. The Hungarians, like ourselves, run after bad foreign fashions to the neglect of the good wholesome dishes of their forefathers.

We had abundance of Champagne and Bordeaux, and, as a rarity, some Hungarian wines. I say as a rarity, because in many houses, not a glass of any thing but foreign wine can be obtained. Unfortunately, Hungarian wines are not only good but cheap, and that is enough to prove they cannot be fashionable. After dinner we adjourned to coffee, when pipes were introduced, without a word of remonstrance from the ladies, as if they were the common conclusion of a dinner party: at five o'clock we all left. In more fashionable houses (this was one of a rich country gentleman) the dinner is rather later; the spitting confined to a sand-dish, set in the corner for that purpose; the cookery more decidedly French or German; the guests more stiff and correct, but, perhaps on that account, less agreeable; and the smoking banished from the drawing-room to the sanctum of the host.*

I think I may say, without exception, that of the young men whom I met at Presburg, there was not one who did not hold liberal opinions on politics. There are many peculiarities, however, in the present circumstances of Hungary, and the position of the nobles, to which class these young men belong, which render their liberalism, in some respects, very different from ours. Without any very accurate knowledge of the political or commercial position either of their own country or of that of their neighbours, they are fully persuaded that Austria is at the root of all the evils they suffer, and they consequently regard that power with fear and hatred. No radical in England can inveigh more violently against taxation than do the liberals of Hungary; but they mix up their invective so strangely with the privileges of nobility, that it would be difficult to recognise any thing like

* I do not allude to such houses as those of the princess G——, or the Baron O——, where the manners are European, not national.

the same principle in their opposition to it. In fact they do not distinguish very clearly between the words right and privilege.

It is difficult even for the strongest conviction to overcome the habits and feelings of early education. I am sure these gentlemen are anxious for the freedom and education of the peasantry, and yet it often appeared to us that they spoke of them, and to them, as though they belonged to a different class of creation from themselves; in short, all of them are reformers, but many of them seem eminently impractical in the ideas of reform.

Not that I saw any thing of that revolutionary spirit at which Austria seems so terribly alarmed, and which German strangers often attribute to the Hungarians, because they talk loudly and openly of matters which their neighbours dare not even whisper; on the contrary, I believe there is among them a stronger feeling of loyalty to their king, and love for their institutions as they are, than is to be found in almost any other part of Europe. Among a considerable number, though equally liberal with the more noisy, a tone of moderation prevails, which argues well for the future. These seem willing to obtain all that is possible, and make the most of that, leaving the desirable but unattainable for other times and more favourable circumstances.

Most of those we have met here, have been educated entirely in Hungary; indeed, have never been from home except for an occasional visit to Vienna. They all speak Hungarian and German, and some of them French and English. In manners they are more simple, perhaps less polished, than Englishmen of the same rank and age. In scholastic learning, at least as far as Latin is concerned, they are our equals, and our superiors in a minute knowledge of the laws of their own country; for the Corpus Juris forms an essential part of every Hungarian gentleman's education. In general literary acquirements, in scientific information, in an acquaintance with the fine arts, and, above all, in a knowledge of the first principles, even of political economy, I think they are our inferiors. There is a friendly warmth in their manner, an air of sincerity and frankness in all they say and do, and a total absence of affectation, which rendered their society truly agreeable to us. As for that fear of speaking out their minds, which the Englishman so often sees and regrets among other nations of the Continent, the Hungarians are quite as free from it as ourselves. They may be surrounded by spies and police, but they certainly take very little heed of them.

The amusements of Presburg, at least in the summer, when

most of the ladies have retired to the country, are confined to the theatre, the arena, and the promenade in the Au. This latter is a large piece of ground, on the opposite side of the river to Presburg, formerly overflowed by the Danube, but which has been drained and planted in the English style, and now forms a really pretty park. I cannot say that the promenade is pleasant, at least to those with tender skins; for the swarms of musquitoes with which we were covered whenever we attempted to walk there, quickly drove us away.

On the other side of Presburg, however, nothing can be more beautiful than the walks and rides among gentle hills, covered with orchards and vineyards, which extend for many miles towards the north and west. A few miles up the river lies the pretty village of Theben, with its romantic castle; a common Sunday's resort for the good citizens of Presburg. As some of our Hungarian friends offered to accompany us to Theben, a party was made up, and we started on foot one fine morning to spend the day there. The weather was excessively hot, and it took us two hours, as we sauntered along the banks of the river —now stopping to examine the rocks, now to get a view of some beautiful bend of the Danube,—before we reached the village. We passed several stone quarries, from which a fine-grained granite is obtained for paving-stones, which are chiefly sent to Pest; and we were told that at a little distance excellent slates are found, which are used for house-tiles. Nothing can wear a more happy appearance than Theben; the cottages look clean and comfortable, and the principal street is shaded by a fine avenue of walnut trees. The peasants are generally vine growers, holding their land of the Count Pálffy, for which they pay a rent partly in money and partly in kind.

After ordering our dinner at a little inn near the river, we mounted the hill on which stand the ruins of the old castle. These are finely situated on a rock of black limestone, overlooking the Danube and the March, which unite their waters just under the crumbling walls. A castle of such strength as Theben once was, placed on the borders of two countries so often at war as Hungary and Austria, must have played an important part in the history of former times. The upper part of the castle is now a mere ruin; its destruction is said to have been the effect of wanton mischief on the part of the French troops in 1809.

An interesting legend is connected with the slender tower still remaining perfect, and which hangs over the river, and commands

the narrow passage cut in the rock beneath. A gay young knight, who dwelt in Theben many years ago, fell in love with one of the nuns of a neighbouring convent, carried her off, and made her his wife. To protect himself from the vengeance of the Church, whose rage this act of sacrilege had roused, he shut himself up in his strong castle, determined to defend his lady-love to the last extremity. Though unable to take the castle by force, the troops of the Church continued their blockade till starvation rendered it impossible to hold out longer. Unwilling to be separated from her he loved, and by whom his love was returned,—for the nun was no unwilling bride,—and too well acquainted with the character of his enemy to expect mercy or forgiveness,—the knight of Theben led his mistress along the narrow ledge of rock which connects the solitary tower with the castle, gained its narrow stair and ascended to the battlements. One moment the lovers, locked in each other's arms, were seen to linger on the precipice,—the next, and the Danube had buried in its thick waters two as fond hearts as ever beat. If cruel bigotry forbade that they should live together, its power failed to separate them in death.

Having examined the castle, our party separated in pursuit of their different tastes and occupations. H—— sat down to get a view of the ruins; Professor S—— shouldered his geological hammer, and set off for a fossiliferous rock* in the neighbourhood; and I submitted myself to the guidance of young Count S—— and M——, the deputy for W——, who conducted me along the banks of the March to Schlosshof.

The imperial palace of Schlosshof is a large building, very plainly furnished, and remarkable only as having been formerly the residence of Prince Eugene, and more recently of the Duke de Reichstadt. On our return we found H—— with a sketch of the solitary tower, the professor with his bag stored with specimens, Prince H—— P——, who had promised to spend the day with us, already arrived, and the whole party well prepared, though scarcely past mid-day, to do full justice to the

* The geological character of these rocks is curious. The range of the little Carpathians, which runs north from this point, is composed of granite, in which large gangs of mica slate, chlorite slate, &c., frequently occur. At Theben, a black limestone is seen mixed with slate and quartz which is not stratified, and bearing strong marks of being an igneous production. At a little distance occurs a soft new limestone, containing fossils of mammalia, reptiles, and shells.

roast fowls and pancakes, of which our dinner was composed. A row down to Presburg in the evening in one of the clumsy boats, which serve for wherries on the Danube, concluded a very pleasant day's excursion.

The theatre of Presburg is as essentially German as any of those at Vienna. Though the regular company is but indifferent, we were fortunate enough to be there at the same time with Madame Schroeder,* the best tragic actress on the German stage. This lady is now far from young: some say she is sixty years of age, though I can hardly believe it, for she seems still possessed of all her power: we saw her in Lady Macbeth, Medea, Schiller's Braut von Messina, and other pieces, and I do not think it possible that the representation of strong passion can be more perfectly given than by Madame Schroeder. The scene in the Braut von Messina, in which she first sees her dead son, is perhaps the very finest piece of acting I ever saw.

Near the Au is an arena, or theatre in the open air, which, as the price of entrance is very low, and the gentlemen are allowed their pipes, is a fashionable lounge in the summer evenings. It requires all the attractions of the open air to render this place tolerable; for the pieces, half farce, half pantomime, are coarse and stupid in the extreme. I was struck by the observation of a sturdy patriot, near whom I happened to be standing, when some indecent innuendo drew from him a long puff of smoke and a "——*Terem-tette*," that "if the government would occupy itself with restraining such exhibitions as these, which stultify and demoralize the spectators, and substitute something better for them, it might find plenty to do without instituting processes against every man who wishes to raise the people to the common rights and privileges of humanity."

As we returned from the arena, and were quietly discussing an ice at one of the cafés on the public walk, our companions pointed out to us some of the most important personages then in Presburg, who were enjoying the cool evening air, after the feverish debates of the morning in the chambers. There they were, simple deputies, proud magnates, and stately bishops, passing and repassing under the pleasant shade of the acacias, as their names, titles, and dignities, were made known to us. The most part of them soon escaped our memories, for the public men of Hungary, as well as the affairs of the country, are so little known

* Madame Schroeder, the tragic actress of Vienna, must not be confounded with her daughter, Madame Schroeder Devrient, the well-known prima donna of Dresden.

in England, that almost every name was new to us. One person, however, particularly arrested our attention: he was a man of about the middle height, but formed in an Herculean mould. A large quantity of black hair and beard almost concealed his features, but a strongly marked nose, and a deeply sunk, yet most brilliant eye, were sufficient to indicate no ordinary character. It was the Baron Wesselényi Miklós, the leader of the ultra-liberal party, and then under trial for high treason. I never saw a countenance more expressive of serious thought, high moral courage, and determined resolution. If there be any truth in physiognomy, the government will gain little by persecuting such a man as Baron Wesselényi. We were much struck with the respect with which every one seemed to regard him; scarce a hat but was raised as he passed; and among the young men it was easy to perceive looks of the deepest interest and admiration.

It was curious to listen to the different salutations of the promenaders. There was every variety, from the simple "*wie geht's*" of the German trader, to the pompous "*servus, domine spectabilis*" of the Catholic priests. The Hungarian generally contents himself with a "*servus, barátam;*" a mixture of Latin and Magyar, from which, though he makes the greatest efforts, he cannot quite escape. Among the churchmen, Latin is still sometimes the medium of conversation; among the nobles, Magyar or German is most common; and among the ladies, German or French. The trading classes, of course, speak the language of the people amongst whom they happen to be, but I believe all commercial correspondence is carried on in German.

I have often thought that a glance at the booksellers' shops gives a more correct idea of the state of education in a country, than the most profound disquisitions on its schools and universities. If my notion is correct, Presburg ought to rank pretty high in literary estimation; for in a tour which we made one day through the warehouses of five or six of the chief booksellers, we were astonished at the number and excellence of the books they contained. They were not only rich in Hungarian and German works, but contained almost every thing of any great merit published in London and Paris. A fair library, both of the French and English classics, might easily be formed in Presburg. Of the English standard works, we found editions of London, Paris, and Leipsic, but chiefly the latter. There appeared to be a great want of children's books, though Miss Edgeworth's "Moral

Tales," and "The Boy's own Book," were among the few we observed.

It is but lately that the Hungarian publishers have ventured to undertake works in the Hungarian language, but they do so now with considerable boldness. Politics and political economy are the subjects of greatest interest to the Hungarians at the present moment, and therefore those most written on. Count Széchenyi's works are among the most popular. A "Penny Magazine" has been established, but I believe it has not answered so well as was anticipated. There are two political newspapers published at Presburg, which appear twice a week; one in German, the "Presburger Zeitung;" and the other in Latin, the "Ephemeredes Posoniensis," chiefly supported by the Sclavack priesthood. In the latter of these I was much amused to find one of Joseph Hume's pounds, shillings, and pence speeches translated into flowing Latin. Neither of these journals enjoys a very high reputation.

At Pest, there are two political journals, each accompanied by a sheet dedicated to literature and the arts; the best is the "Jelenkor" (Present Time,) which is got up in a very creditable manner, and is said to be conducted with considerable talent. It has a circulation of four thousand. Count Széchenyi writes frequently in the literary sheet "Társalkodó," (Converser) of this paper. Besides these there are two literary periodicals, one monthly, and one quarterly; and also a journal of fashions, and a German paper published at Buda. The leaden hand of the censor, though less heavy here than at Vienna, weighs down the free expression of opinion in these journals, and is regarded by the Hungarians as a most unjust and oppressive imposition.

CHAPTER II.

THE DIET OF 1835.

Ball-room Studies.—Chamber of Deputies.—Deák.—Debate on Wesselényi's Process.—Kossúth.—MS. Journal.—Prorogation.—Tour to the Neusiedler Lake.—Posting.—Bauern Post.—Lake.—Ruszt and its Wine.—Prince Eszterházy's Palaces.—Eisenstadt.—Eszterház.—Haydn.—Wild Boy.—Castle of Forchtenstein.—Eszterházy Jewels.—Watchman at Œdenburg.

"WHAT, not yet ready?" said young S——, as he entered our room at Presburg, and found us still occupied with dressing and coffee, operations which our German travels had taught us to unite: "it is ten o'clock, and the lower chamber has been sitting this hour past: you must be quick, for they rarely remain later than one."

The fact was, we had been persuaded the night before by some of our wilder friends, whose philosophy taught them, that to know all, one must see all,—forgetting that it was still a question whether all was worth knowing,—to visit one of those balls in the suburbs of Presburg, where a few kreutzers give entrance to the gentlemen, and the ladies pay nothing. This fashionable re-union for wicked 'prentices and gallant artillery men—the latter always the most esteemed on such occasions, in spite of their ugly uniform, because their extra pay gives their fair partners a better chance of a supper,—was held at the sign of the *Hechtel*, where we found a motley ring of dancers hard at work—I say hard at work, for such it was; no mincing delicately-paced quadrilles, but honest hard waltzing and gallopading, such as fully to excuse the gentlemen for dispensing with their coats, and to afford ample cause for the ladies resting, because they were "*ganz nass!*" as they elegantly expressed it.

Except some variations—rather marked ones it is true,—in the conventional modes of society, there is little difference between the drawing-room and the *Hechtel;* the same flirtations are to be witnessed in the former as in the latter place, and they are scarcely more decent or less interested; the dresses, too, are

equally low; the dancing often worse; and the whole thing, if possible, less rational, because less amusing. The women were pretty, but apparently rather more addicted to flirting than their beaux seemed willing to permit; and as some of our party were more gallant than wise, I am not sure but we might have had rather a disagreeable proof of Hungarian mettle had we not beaten a timely retreat. And so our philosophical studies at the *Hechtel* had detained us till late in the evening, and we found ourselves next morning somewhat behind-hand in keeping our appointment to attend a sitting of the Diet.

Making, however, every possible haste to suit the hours of these early legislators, we arrived in pretty good time at the gates of a large plain building, where the meetings of the upper and lower chambers of the Hungarian Diet are held. As we ascended the stairs, the hussars—the town police of Presburg—on guard, presented arms to our friend, as he wore the national uniform, and gave us admittance to a small gallery which runs half round the building. The lower chamber, which we had now entered is a long, plain hall, traversed in nearly its whole length by two tables covered with green baize, at which the deputies were seated with pens, ink, and paper before them. At the upper end, there is a raised part occupied by the president, or Personal,* the vice-president and secretary, and behind these sit the judges of the royal table. The chamber had rather a sombre appearance; the bare white-washed walls and the black dresses of the members,—they were all in mourning for the Emperor—rendering it much more like our St. Stephen's than the brilliant Chambre des Députés of our gayer neighbours.

As we entered the chamber, not a sound was to be heard except the deep impassioned tones of Deák, who was listened to with the greatest attention. Deák is one of the best speakers, and has one of the most philosophical heads in the Diet. Heavy and dull in appearance, it is not till he warms with his subject that the man of talent stands declared. He spoke in Hungarian, and I was much struck with the sonorous, emphatic, and singularly clear character of the language. From the number of words ending in consonants, particularly in *k*, every word is distinctly marked even to the ear of one totally unacquainted with the language. I cannot characterize the Hungarian as either soft or musical, but it is strong, energetic, manly; the intonation

* Personalis presentiæ regis, locum tenens.

with which it is uttered, gives it in ordinary conversation a melancholy air, but when impassioned, nothing can exceed it in boldness.

The subject of debate was a remonstrance proposed to be presented to the Emperor against the illegal proceedings of the Government in the case of Baron Wesselényi, or rather as to the manner in which such remonstrance should be presented, whether immediately from the Diet, or through the mediation of the Palatine. The prosecution of the Baron had excited throughout the whole country, as well as in the Diet, an intense feeling of indignation, as it was considered the most daring attack Government had ever ventured to make upon the right of liberty of speech enjoyed by the Hungarian nobles, and not even the voice of the most unblushing sycophant of the court was raised in defence of its legality.

Baron Wesselényi Miklós is a man of great talent and energy, and gifted with the most impassioned eloquence; he has distinguished himself chiefly as the leader of the opposition in Transylvania, and acquired the hatred of Government from the victory he gained over them in a chamber more than half of which was nominated by themselves. On the sudden dissolution of the Transylvanian Diet, Wesselényi passed into Hungary, and appeared, when least expected, at a country meeting held in Szatmár, where the electors were met to frame instructions for their deputies, as to the vote they should give on the important question of granting equal rights before the law to the oppressed peasantry. The jealousy felt by the lowest of the nobles against the extension of any of those privileges to the peasants, by the enjoyment of which alone they are distinguished from them, had been fomented to the highest degree. Aware of the vast importance of this question to the future happiness of his country, Wesselényi used his utmost power to convince the electors how closely the true interests of peasant and noble are allied, how certainly the acquisition of just rights by the one would increase the wealth and power of the other, and more than all, how the union of both would consolidate the discordant interests by which Hungary is divided, into one strong and powerful nation. In the name of eight millions of their oppressed countrymen he called on them for justice, he demanded that equal rights before the law should be extended to all, and that the burdens of the State should be borne by them equally with the peasants. In the course of his speech he alluded to the policy so universally

charged against the Austrian Government in Hungary, of exciting the nobles against the peasants, and the peasants against the nobles; of teaching each other to regard the other as their natural enemies, in order by division to weaken both, and thus strengthen herself; and he stigmatized in strong terms so treacherous a policy, the ultimate object of which could only be the degradation and slavery of the whole country. His words were received with cheers; and, excepting the Vice Ispán, (an officer equivalent to our Sheriff,) who objected to such language as too strong, no one dreamed of contradicting what all felt to be true. Such, at least, is the account of the matter as it was related to us.

Two months after this meeting,* when Wesselényi had taken his seat as a Hungarian magnate, Government commenced an action against him for these words as treasonable, and put him upon trial for his life. From one end of the country to the other a universal cry of shame arose against so unprecedented an injustice. Remonstrances were prepared in every county; all business was interrupted at the Diet; Balogh, the member for Bárs, declared in his place, "that he should not consider himself guilty of any great crime if he adopted the very words of Wesselényi;" with thoughtless precipitancy he was included in the prosecution; the whole Diet protested against such an invasion of the freedom of speech; the county of Bárs declared that Balogh had done no more than express the sentiments of his constituents, who took on themselves all the consequences of his speech; Government knew not which way to turn; private overtures were made to Wesselényi of immediate pardon if asked, and were indignantly rejected; the chamber drew up a strong remonstrance, and all which the followers of Government dared to do, was to hope that it might be presented to the throne through the mediation of the Palatine.

This remonstrance was the subject of debate during the sitting at which we were present. When Deák finished speaking, and the cheers had subsided, a tall loud-voiced man arose, who was very differently received: a half laugh, half sneer, and a return to private conversation among the deputies, declared him a person not only unpopular, but unrespected by his opponents. It

* Wesselényi disputes the right of Government to proceed against him at all, as by law nothing said at a public meeting can be carried before another tribunal unless the president or some member of that meeting objects to the expression and commences a verbal process, as it is called, at the time the words are uttered.

was the renegade from liberalism, P——, who, a few months later, was recalled by his constituents and dismissed from his post for not having expressed their sentiments or obeyed their instructions.

Kossúth, a young man of considerable promise, spoke next. He was content with two or three sentences, declaring strongly his opinion, and the side on which he should vote. It is often the case that a man rises, expresses in a few words the wishes of his constituents, and sits down, leaving the debate to the more experienced orators.* Indeed it is in this manner the votes are taken, every member's name being called over in turn, when he simply announces his opinion, or speaks at length, as he pleases. Long speeches, however, are by no means the fashion, and I have heard a man who had spoken for two hours, accused of having committed a most unpardonable offence. What most struck me, and later observations have proved the truth of the remark, was the extraordinary fluency with which every one spoke. Of the higher qualities of their oratory, of course, I cannot speak, for no translation can convey the spirit of the original; indeed, I am quite sure the best parts were always lost to me, for every now and then my interpreter's eyes glistened, his attention was doubled, and in vain I asked him what was said; he was too deeply interested to hear me.

Kossúth has been most usefully employed during the Diet. Government, in spite of the law of Hungary, in spite of the protests of the Diet, forbids the publication of the debates, and maintains here, as elsewhere in the Austrian dominions, a strict censorship. That the represented might have some idea as to how their representatives performed their duty, Kossúth undertook to report the debates, which are copied out by innumerable secretaries, and thus circulated in manuscript over the whole of Hungary.† It is extraordinary that none of our newspapers, greedy

* The most distinguished speakers in this Diet were Deák, Nagy, Beöthy, and Kölcsey.

† Since the dissolution of the Diet, I regret to say, that this gentleman has been thrown into prison. It is one of the privileges of the Hungarian noble, that he cannot be imprisoned before trial, except in case of high treason; but, in spite of this, M. Kossúth has been deprived of his liberty. I believe his chief guilt, in the eyes of the Government, was his having circulated in MS. in the same manner as he formerly gave publicity to the transactions of the Diet, reports of the county meetings in various parts of Hungary. The additional strength which this plan would have conferred on the municipal or popular power, by the union and combination it would

as they are for information, should ever have given any report of these debates; nor, indeed, ever have had a correspondent in Presburg; as for trusting to one in Vienna, it would be as reasonable to expect news of Poland in St. Petersburg: none can be more ignorant of what takes place in Hungary than the Viennese.

Unruly as the meetings for the election of members are said to be, nothing can be more orderly than the meetings of the members themselves. Their uniform gives them an air of considerable dignity. Personal altercation is almost unknown; and although a tribunal exists for settling at once such cases, should they arise, no instance has occurred for more than forty years. I would not have it understood that the debates are not animated; it would be difficult they should be otherwise with an enthusiastic and warm-blooded people like the Magyars. But if the Diet is not enlivened by those yells, coughs, shufflings, and catcalls, by which certain senators we know of are accustomed to express their dissent to a proposition, or their impatience for dinner,—there is still sufficient difference between the reception of a Nagy, or an A—— to declare to the merest stranger which is the most heeded and respected, although the other is allowed to speak, however little he may be attended to.

I need scarcely say that the question was carried in favour of the liberal party by a triumphant majority. At one P. M. the sitting was closed, and the deputies retired to their lodgings, changed their uniforms for an ordinary civil costume, and half an hour later we met many of them again round the dinner tables of the Goldene Sonne.

On the morrow, we heard that the Diet was not likely to meet again for some days, or perhaps weeks; for the strong opposition which had been offered to the measures of Government had produced a considerable sensation in Vienna; and it was

have produced, is immense, and probably alarmed the higher powers. Kossúth is accused of having reported the proceedings of the meetings incorrectly; and he answers, that not having been present, he only copied what was reported to him. The whole proceedings in this case are considered as arbitrary and unjust in the highest degree, and have excited the greatest indignation throughout the country. Government wished to make the lawyers employed to defend Kossúth promise not to divulge the circumstances of the trial; not a single member of the bar could be found so base as to obey their behests. Kossúth has been condemned to four years' imprisonment in addition to two years passed in prison previously to trial! (1839.)

supposed some time would be taken for the consideration of what measures it would be politic to pursue in consequence.

In the mean time, the weather was too fine to be lost; and we, therefore, determined to make some excursions into the country, and see what we could of this part of Hungary before troubling our heads any further with politics.

It was at six o'clock in the morning, that the smart Presburg post-boy sounded his bugle, to express his impatience at the half hour we had already kept him waiting ere we started for the Neusiedler Lake, in the neighbourhood of which we intended to pass a few days. The journey to the end of the lake might be some sixty miles, and we reckoned to accomplish it by post within the day.

Of all the modes of travelling in Hungary, the post is the most expensive, and to me, at least, the most disagreeable. The supply of horses is too scanty, and if the traveller happens to arrive before or after the *post wagen*, he must generally wait some time before he can obtain the number he requires. There is an awkward rule, too, which it is well a stranger should know. If he arrives at any place with post, he can oblige the post-master to send him on with the same number of horses he arrived with; but should he, as occurred to us on the present occasion, feel a wish to leave the post-road, and for that purpose hire private horses, at the next post-station they may refuse him a supply, or oblige him to take as many as they choose.

It was at Gschies we learned this rule; for the post-master stoutly refused to send us on with a pair of horses, which was all we had previously required, and declared we should either take four or remain where we were. Entirely ignorant as I then was of any other means of getting forward, I at last consented, and desired him to give us the four horses. "But I have only three in the stable at present," was his cool reply; "and you may either take those and pay for four, or you may remain where you are till to-morrow, when the others will come home." Nor is this the only instance of gross imposition I could relate. The worst of it is that there is no redress; in one case I applied to the judge and notary of the village, and though they had the best will to protect me, all they could do was to give me peasants' horses, and so enable me to avoid the like treatment for the rest of the journey.

For the matter of speed, you get on by post at about the rate of five miles an hour, with strong large horses, and post-boys

wearing huge cocked-hats, each with a plume of feathers worthy a field-marshal, and a red coat with purple facings. But if ever the reader should have occasion to go from Vienna to Pest, and is an amateur of driving, I recommend him to what is called the *bauern post*, that is, if steamboats and rail-roads have not, ere this, entirely destroyed it.

The peasants between the frontiers of Hungary and Pest, on the great high road from Vienna, combined to supply relays of horses at a cheaper rate and better than the royal post; and though at first opposed by Government, they eventually succeeded so well that at present the whole line is supplied by them almost exclusively. The pace at which these men with their four small horses take on a light Vienna carriage is something wonderful, especially when the length of some of their stages is considered. The last stage cannot be less than forty miles from Pest, and with a short pause of about a quarter of an hour to water, they do it for the most part at full gallop, and with the same horses, in four hours. It is glorious to see the wild-looking driver, his long black hair floating in the wind as he turns round to ask your admiration when his four little clean-boned nags are rattling over hill and hollow in a style which for the first time since he left home shakes an Englishman's blood into quicker circulation. There is certainly a pleasure in rapid motion which has on some men almost an intoxicating effect.

But to return to our five miles an hour. We passed through a well cultivated country chiefly inhabited by Germans, who have crept in upon this side of Hungary from Presburg, nearly to the borders of Croatia. The Neusiedler Lake, or the Fertö Tava Hungarian, which we soon came in sight of, is about twenty-four miles long by twelve broad, varying in depth from nine to thirteen feet. In parts, particularly at the north end, its shores are hilly, and pretty, but on the eastern side they are flat, and terminate in a very extensive marsh, called the Hanság.

It is supposed to be this lake which the Emperor Galerius drained into the Danube, and which has been allowed to re-form by the destruction of the Roman works. There is little doubt, I believe, as to the practicability of draining the lake again if it were desired; but, as a neighbouring proprietor observed, it would spoil some glorious snipe-shooting. The water is said to have a salt taste, though I must confess I could not perceive it, and to contain sulphate, muriate, and carbonate of soda. It is well supplied with fish, chiefly carp and pike. From the Hanság bog a

considerable number of leeches* are obtained which are exported to France.

About midway down the lake, and close upon its shore, is the little royal free town of Ruszt, a venerable Hungarian Old Sarum. The poor inhabitants of its one hundred and fifty-two houses send their deputies to the Diet as well as Pest or Presburg. The small hill which rises behind the town constitutes its chief wealth; for it is here the celebrated Ruszter wine is grown, one of the best of the many good wines of Hungary. From what they gave us in the small inn here, or from what I have tasted in other places of the kind, I should not have formed a very high opinion of its excellence; but I once met with a specimen in a private house, fully deserving the highest eulogiums of its admirers. It is a strong, rather dry, pale red wine, and possesses an agreeable flavour quite peculiar to itself. Most of the best Ruszter is said to be exported to Breslau, where it fetches a high price.

A little beyond Ruszt is the Margaretha hill, where the stone, so much used in Vienna for building, is quarried. It is a soft new limestone, much like that of the Paris basin, of a good colour, but somewhat loose in texture. In some parts it is quite filled with an Ostrea and Pecten, the latter peculiar to this place, and named from it. It overlies the granite on which the vineyards of Ruszt are formed. The same formation occurs in several parts of the little Carpathians beyond Presburg.

At Eisenstadt, some short distance from the lake, is a palace of the first of the Hungarian magnates, Prince Eszterházy. This palace, though not remarkable for its beauty (it is in a heavy, though florid, Italian style,) is well fitted for a princely residence. We walked through suites of apartments, innumerable; but by far the most striking of them was the great ball-room—an elegantly proportioned hall of great size, and richly ornamented in white and gold. This room was last used when the present prince was installed Lord Lieutenant of the county of Œdenburg,—an office hereditary in his family; and great is still the fame of the almost regal pomp with which he fêted the crowds of nobles who flocked around him upon that occasion.

* Leeches are found in some other parts of Hungary, but the chief supply of the European markets is obtained from Bessarabia, Servia, and Bulgaria. The leeches are collected in the immense bogs of these countries, and from thence sent to fixed stations, where they remain in tanks till the French and German leech-merchants arrive and transport them by post-carriages to Paris and Hamburg.

The gardens, laid out in the English style, are very fine, and the hot-houses larger than any I remember to have seen; even Alton must bow to Eisenstadt. They contain no less than seventy thousand exotics, and are particularly rich in New Holland specimens. One can hardly help lamenting that so much luxury and beauty should be wasted; for except the inhabitants of Eisenstadt, to whom the gardens are always open, it is rarely the palace or its grounds receive a visiter.

Great as is the splendour of some of our English peers, I almost fear the suspicion of using a traveller's license, when I tell of Eszterházy's magnificence. Within a few miles of this same spot, he has three other palaces of equal size.

Just at the southern extremity of the lake stands Eszterház; a huge building in the most florid Italian style, built only in 1700, and already uninhabited for sixty years. Its marble halls, brilliant with gold and painting, are still fresh as when first built. The chamber of Maria Theresa is unchanged since the great Queen reposed there; the whole interior is in such a state that it might be rendered habitable to-morrow, but the gardens are already overgrown with weeds, and have almost lost their original form; the numberless pleasure-houses are yielding to the damp position in which they are placed, and are fast crumbling away; while the beautiful theatre, for which an Italian company was formerly maintained, is now stripped of its splendid mirrors, and serves only as a dwelling for the dormant bats, which hang in festoons from its gilded cornices. England is famous for her noble castles, and her rich mansions; yet we can have little idea of a splendour such as Eszterház must formerly have presented. Crowded as it was by the most beautiful women of four countries, —its three hundred and sixty strangers' rooms filled with guests, —its concerts directed by a Haydn,—its opera supplied by Italian artists,—its gardens ornamented by a gay throng of visiters, —hosts of richly clothed attendants thronging its antechambers, —and its gates guarded by the grenadiers* of its princely master,—its magnificence must have exceeded that of half of the royal courts of Europe! I know of nothing but Versailles, which gives one so high a notion of the costly splendour of a past age, as Eszterház.

Haydn was for more than thirty years *maestro di capello* to Prince Eszterházy; and, during that period, lived chiefly with

* Prince Eszterházy has still one hundred and fifty guards in his own pay and uniform, who do duty at his different castles and palaces.

the family. His portrait is still preserved, and it is almost the only picture of much interest the palace contains. Haydn was a very poor and obscure person when he was appointed one of the prince's band; so much so, that no one thought even of giving the necessary orders for his being admitted into the palace. The following anecdote of his introduction to the prince is recounted by Carpani:—

"The Maestro Friedberg, a friend and admirer of Haydn, lived with Prince Eszterházy. Regretting that Haydn should be overlooked, he persuaded him to compose a symphony worthy of being performed on the birthday of his highness. Haydn consented; the day arrived; the prince, according to custom, took his seat in the midst of his court, and Friedberg distributed the parts of Haydn's symphony to the performers. Scarcely had the musicians got through the first allegro, when the prince interrupted them to ask who was the author of so beautiful a piece. Friedberg dragged the modest trembling Haydn from a corner of the room into which he had crept, and presented him as the fortunate composer. "What," cried the prince, as he came forward, "that Blackymoor!" (Haydn's complexion was none of those which mock the lily's whiteness.) "Well, blacky, from henceforth you shall be in my service: what's your name?" "Joseph Haydn." "But you are already one of my band; how is it I never saw you here before?" The modesty of the young composer closed his lips, but the prince soon put him at his ease. "Go and get some clothes suitable to your rank,—don't let me see you any more in such a guise; you are too small; you look miserable, sir; get some new clothes, a fine wig with flowing curls, a lace collar, and red heels to your shoes. But mind, let your heels be high, that the elevation of your person may harmonize with that of your music. Go, and my attendants will supply you with all you want." . . . The next day Haydn was travestied into a gentleman. Friedberg often told me of the awkwardness of the poor Maestrino in his new habilities. He had such a gawky look that every body burst into a laugh at his appearance. His reputation, however, as his genius had room to manifest itself, grew daily, and he soon obtained so completely the good-will of his master, that the extraordinary favour of wearing his own hair and his simple clothes was granted to his entreaties. The surname of the Blackymoor, however, which the prince had bestowed upon him, stuck to him for years after."

The only part of Eszterház at present occupied is the stables,

which had just received an importation of twelve beautiful thorough-bred horses from England, with some very promising young stock. An old English groom had been sent out with them, and bitterly did he complain of the difficulties he had to encounter before he could convince the *beampters*—a race of hungry stewards by whom the estates of the nobles are mismanaged and the revenues plundered—of the many little wants and luxuries requisite for English race-horses.

The estates of Prince Eszterházy are said to equal the kingdom of Würtemberg in size; it is certain they contain one hundred and thirty villages, forty towns, and thirty-four castles! The annual revenue from such vast possessions is said, however, not to amount to 150,000*l*. per annum, though it is capable of considerable increase. The incumbrances at the present time are greater than with most other Hungarian magnates, few of whom are indebted to a less amount than half their incomes.

I remember some years since an anecdote going the round of the papers to the effect, that Prince Eszterházy had astonished one of our great agriculturists who had shown him his flock of two thousand sheep, and asked with some little pride if he could show as many, by telling him that he had more shepherds than the other sheep! By a reckoning made upon the spot, with one well acquainted with his affairs, we found the saying literally true. The winter flock of Merinos is maintained at 250,000, to every hundred of which one shepherd is allowed, thus making the number of shepherds 2,500! But, as a *spirituelle* of the neighbourhood observed when we were discussing these matters, "Les Eszterházys font tout en grand: le feu prince a doté deux cents maîtresses, et pensionné cent enfans illégitimes!"

It is not right to leave Eszterház without mention of Hánystock, or the wild man of the Hanság. The Hanság is a bog about twenty miles long, on the borders of which Eszterház is built. About eighty years since, in some part of this bog, an extraordinary creature is said to have been found, possessing something of the human form, but with scarcely any other quality which could entitle it to a place among our species. It was three feet high, apparently of about the middle age, strongly built, and said to have webbed feet and hands. It was unable to utter any articulate sounds, lived entirely on fish and frogs, showed no signs of any passion or feeling, except fear and anger, and was in every respect in the lowest state of brutality. The most curious part of its history is, that no one ever heard of it till acci-

dentally found by a peasant in the bog, when it was brought to Eszterház; where, after remaining fourteen months, it escaped, and was never heard of again. I believe there is some reason to suspect an imposition; for an Italian adventurer appeared and disappeared about the same time with Hánystock, and, though unable to cite name or place, I feel pretty certain that a similar occurrence took place in another part of Europe soon after.

A few miles from Eisenstadt and just on the confines of Austria, is a yet more interesting monument, of what we should call feudal greatness, belonging to the Eszterházy family. The castle of Forchtenstein, built by a Count Eszterházy, is still in a perfect state of preservation. It is placed on a bold rock, and commands a view of the whole country to the north-east and south. It is now used as a prison for Prince Eszterházy's peasantry,—for he is one of the few who retain the right of life and death, the "*jus gladii*," on his own estates,—and is consequently guarded by a small detachment of very venerable-looking grenadiers.

The castle is sufficiently modern to have been laid out for the employment of artillery,—as may be seen by the heavy bastions and long curtains; and is still sufficiently old to bear marks of the Gothic architect about it,—of which the high watch-tower is not the least elegant. The interior has all the inconvenient straightness of a walled-in castle, and the apartments are for the most part small and simple. The most interesting object after the well, which is one hundred and seventy yards deep, and said to have been worked in the solid rock by Turkish prisoners, is the collection of arms. Besides arms sufficient for a regiment of foot and another of horse, which ere this an Eszterházy has equipped and maintained at his own cost, there is the gala equipment of a troop of cavalry which attended one of the princesses on her wedding-day, thirty pieces of artillery, suits of plain black armour for several hundred men, many curious specimens of early German matchlocks, and a quantity of Turkish arms of almost every description.

One suit of armour is interesting from the tale of rude courtesy attached to it. It formerly belonged to a Count Eszterházy who fell in a battle against the old enemies of Hungary, the Turks. A ball from the Pasha's own pistol had already pierced the Count's cuirass, but, anxious to make more certain of his death, the Moslem leaped from his horse and beat the helmet of the Christian till he broke open his visor, when he discovered in

the fallen foe an old friend by whom he had been most kindly treated when a prisoner in Hungary. Faithful to his friendship, the Turk made the only reparation in his power, for, after treating the body of Eszterházy with every possible mark of respect, he collected the armour in which he had died, and sent it, with the arms, which had caused his death, as a present to his family.

A great number of banners as well those taken from the enemy, as those under which the followers of Eszterházy fought, are hung round the walls. It is characteristic of the times that most of the Hungarian flags bear a painting of the Cross, with a figure of Christ as large as life.

In one room we noticed the genealogical tree of all the Eszterházys, in which it is made out, as clearly as possible, that beginning with Adam, who reclines in a very graceful attitude at the bottom of the tree, they pass through every great name, Jewish as well as Heathen, from Moses to Attila, till they find themselves what they now are, magnates of Hungary. What is still more extraordinary, there is a long series of portraits of these worthies, from Attila inclusive, with their wives and families dressed in the most approved fashion, and continued down to the present century.

It is a pity the noble owner of Forchtenstein does not imbibe a little of that Gothic mania so often ill-directed in England, and restore this castle to its former state. As a national monument of the taste of the middle ages in Hungary its restoration would be very desirable, and it would possess peculiar attractions, not merely from being the only castle of the kind here, but as a specimen of that mixture of the Asiatic and Gothic, which, in those days, so strongly characterized the habits and customs of the Magyars, and the remains of which even yet distinguish them from the rest of Europe.

The only purpose for which it is at present used, except as a prison, is to contain the treasures of the Prince. Of these I can only speak from report; for previously to my visit, I did not know that in order to see them it is necessary to have two persons present who live at a distance, each of whom has a key, without which the other is of no use, and therefore had not provided against the difficulty.

The splendour of the Eszterházy jewels is no secret in England; and it is in this good castle those heaps of treasure, which so tempted her Majesty's fair lieges at her coronation, are commonly preserved. It is said that each Prince is obliged to add

something to these jewels, and that they can never be sold except to ransom their possessors from captivity among the Turks. When the French entered Hungary, a small party presented themselves before Forchtenstein and demanded its surrender. The grenadiers, however, shut the gates, cut the bridge, and set them at defiance; and, as the enemy had no means of enforcing obedience, Prince Eszterházy saved his jewels. Besides the jewels, there is an extensive collection of ancient Hungarian costumes: among others, if I recollect rightly, one worn by King Mathias Corvinus.

How far the privileges of the Eszterházys, as hereditary Lords Lieutenant, may be constitutional, or how far the right of primogeniture—the *majorat*—has been wisely extended to a subject of such vast wealth, we leave for others to consider; but it is impossible to be witness of it, and not to regret that duties, however important, should detain one possessed of so much power away from his country. No country has a greater claim to the exclusive right of her children's services than Hungary at the present moment. Just struggling into notice among the states of modern Europe, exerting all her energies to preserve her liberties and nationality, and at the same time labouring to cast off the chains in which the institutions and laws of a more barbarous age have long bound her, she has full need of the moderating influence which a liberal aristocracy might exercise on her councils, and a just demand on all the support which the wealthy and powerful can afford her. At present, too, a strong suspicion pervades the country, that the highest of her nobles are the most indifferent to her welfare; a suspicion which, whether just or unjust, ought to be removed at any sacrifice, for one more dangerous to the security of a country can scarcely take possession of a people's mind.

In the course of our journey back to Presburg, we passed the little town of Œdenburg, where a huge watch-tower, the only remains of its fortifications, is still kept in repair. Owing to the wooden tiles with which the houses are commonly roofed in Hungary, the danger of fire is very great; and, in almost every town, a watchman is consequently employed to give the alarm, and as a sign of his vigilance he is obliged to blow a shrill whistle every quarter of an hour, day and night.

CHAPTER III.

VALLEY OF THE WAAG.

Valley of the Waag.—Hungarian Travelling Wagons.—Freystadtl.—Country Houses.—Erdödy Horses.—Vorspann; its origin—advantages and disadvantages.—Haiduk.—The River Waag.—Pillory.—Pistjan.—Numbering the Houses and Kaiser Joseph.—Csejta.—Murders of Elizabeth Báthori.—Betzko: its origin.—The Fate of Stibor.—Trentsin.—Stephan; his virtues and vices.—St. Stephen's day.—Peasant Costumes.

Before we enter upon any of those interesting but weighty questions which Presburg and the Diet naturally suggest, I invite the reader to accompany me in another country excursion, in order that we may become better acquainted with the face and form of this noble land, and thereby prepare ourselves to take a more lively interest in its politics and institutions. We were strongly recommended to visit the Valley of the Waag, as being one of the most picturesque and romantic parts of Hungary. And, if the reader has half the passion I have for following up the course of a river,—now sunning himself on its banks, now reposing in the shade of its hanging woods,—if he can lend a credulous ear to the legends of its old castles, and please himself with the quaint and simple customs of its secluded denizens,—then let him accept the invitation, for he will find much that is to his taste in the Valley of the Waag.

For some miles before it falls into the Danube at Komorn, the Waag winds slowly over a rich plain, presenting no object more interesting than a continued corn-field, extending almost as far as the eye can reach. Omitting, therefore, this part of its course, we shall transport ourselves direct from Presburg to Freystadtl, where the beauties of the valley and our tour commence.

We may remark, however, in passing, the kind of travelling equipage common to the middle and lower classes in Hungary, of which we met a great number on our road. It is a low four-wheeled wagon, exceedingly light, sometimes furnished with a

seat hung on leathern springs, at others stuffed only with a heap of straw, on which the master sits with an air of considerable dignity, and always smoking. The hinder part of the wagon is commonly filled with hay for provender on our journey. The number of these wagons with two, or four horses, which one meets in a day's drive is really astonishing. Every peasant seems to possess one.

Freystadtl presented an imposing appearance as we approached it. After passing a stately wooden bridge over the Waag, we entered a long avenue of poplars, with pleasure-grounds, laid out in the old-fashioned park style, on either side; while above us stood the Château of the Erdödys, with its woods and gardens extending a considerable distance in every direction. Though itself a square barrack-looking building, roofed with bright red tiles, and far from ornamental, Freystadtl possesses an advantage exceedingly rare in Hungarian country houses—its situation is most beautiful. Placed on an open platform, crowning a hill high above the Waag, and backed by still higher mountains, sheltered from the cold, yet commanding a view up and down the valley of rare beauty, it has all the advantages one could desire. I notice this circumstance the more from its excessive rarity in Hungary. It is wonderful, in some instances, with what perversity a poor low site has been chosen, from which nothing can be seen, and where neither health, comfort, beauty, nor any other cause can be assigned for the selection, while perhaps, only a few hundred yards off, nature has formed the most lovely position imaginable,—the very spot which an architect of taste would search a whole country for.

And then the sort of country houses they commonly build! long, one-storied, high-roofed places, only one room deep,—as uncomfortable and inconvenient as possible. As for the luxuries of halls and passages, they are rarely to be met with; a long suite of apartments communicating by folding doors, with a very large entrance room,—which serves as dining-room and ball-room when required,—form the general plan of the building. On one side is, perhaps, a drawing-room; beyond that, the lady's room, dressing-room, children's room, &c. On the opposite side to the drawing-room are the gentleman's apartments; among which is always a smoking room: and, beyond these, the strangers' rooms, of which there are often a great number. As there are no passages, one is either obliged to pass through other rooms, in going from one part of the house to another, or to cross the court ex-

posed to all the inclemencies of weather. The kitchen is almost always separate from the house, to avoid the smell of cooking; a great refinement, though inimical to hot dishes. What becomes of the servants I never could make out satisfactorily; the grooms, I know, always sleep in the stable, for an Hungarian does not believe that his horses would live through the night if the groom were not there to take care of them. Fire-places are rare, except, perhaps, in the billiard or smoking room; the whole house being heated by stoves, or, in new houses, by warm air. The high rooms and folding doors of the Hungarians certainly give a handsome air to an interior, and, in large houses, are indispensable to beauty; but, for comfort, I do prefer our little snug parlours, well closed and well carpeted.

I do not know why I should have been led to speak of Hungarian houses just now, because these general remarks are by no means applicable to Freystadtl, which is a well-arranged house, two stories high, and furnished with passages in abundance,—in fact, a very comfortable residence for a very grand seigneur.

The wonders of the house are, the fine library, the collection of engravings, and the chapel, with its miracle-working altar-piece. This altar-piece is a fine specimen of the wood-carving of the old German school, and contains a considerable number of figures painted in imitation of nature; among others, is one of the Virgin as large as life, ornamented with pearls and brilliants in profusion. The altar-piece was a present to a Count Erdödy from Mathias Corvinus, and is in great repute among the superstitious Sclavacks. The whole chapel is hung round with silver offerings in the forms of legs, arms, and eyes, in gratitude for cures performed on similar parts of the bodies of those who have solicited Our Lady of Freystadtl's good offices.

To me, however, the stables were more interesting than books, pictures, saints, and all: thirty black horses, of the size and form which we may imagine our knights of old to have mounted, were something to wonder at. This breed has been maintained —one may almost say created—by several generations of Erdödys. It is of Neapolitan origin, and still possesses the faults of that race,—the hollow back, low croup, and large head; but instead of the pony size, common in Naples, these horses range from eighteen to twenty hands in height. We drove out with a pair of them, one of which was eighteen and a half, and the other nineteen hands high, in a low and very heavy carriage; but they trotted with it over the roughest places, through the

deepest mud, up hill and down, as though it were merely sport to them. For use, these horses are of little value; but they are in demand for royalty, and are employed as procession steeds.

The present Countess Erdödy, a widow, is obliged to keep up the stud by the will of her husband. We spent a day very agreeably in seeing the establishment of Freystadtl. The theatre, riding-school, gardens, orangeries, dairies, &c., enabled us to form a pretty good conjecture how some of the rich Hungarian magnates of the old school get rid of their vast fortunes.

I must not omit to notice a sign of the times which the little town of Freystadtl presents. The inhabitants are all Sclavacks, but the names of the one or two streets it boasts of are conspicuously painted up in Hungarian, by order of the Diet, as we were told in hopes of thus Magyarising the Sclavacks.

We had ordered the horses to be ready for starting early the next morning, but we were doomed to wait much longer than we had expected. This waiting for horses is so important a feature in Hungarian travelling, and will occur so frequently in the course of these volumes, that I may as well at once explain the causes thereof.

We were now travelling with what is called Vorspann. It has long been one of the Hungarian peasant's duties to furnish horses to the government officers, civil as well as military, when travelling on duty through Hungary, at a certain rate fixed by law. A stage of about ten English miles, with four horses, is paid for at the rate of five kreutzers, *c. m.** (two pence English) a horse, which amounts to just eight pence for four horses the ten miles. An order, or "*assignation*," signed by the Vice Ispan, or some other authorized officer, gives the right to demand relays of these peasants' horses at certain indicated places, and, on showing it, it becomes the duty of the village officers to see that the demand is attended to.

So convenient an arrangement, in a country where in many parts no regular post is established, was very often extended to others besides those for whom it was originally intended. In fact, almost all the travelling in Hungary was effected with peasants' horses, and it soon became one of the greatest grievances of the peasantry. To check this abuse, the counties increased

* Sixty kreutzers, *c. m.* (*Conventions Munze*) make one florin, *c. m.* or silver florin, which is worth two shillings English. The florin, *w. w.* (*Wiener Wahrung*) or paper, or *schein* florin, is worth only about ten pence English, and the kreutzer *schein* bears the same proportion.

the charge to non-official persons, from eight pence to two shillings per post; and, in seasons when corn is dear, it is raised even beyond that amount. The payment, however, is still small; and it is therefore commonly made up by a handsome *trinkgeld*, often as much as the original sum itself. A shilling a horse for ten miles is still not dear. Except in harvest time, the Vorspann has ceased to be an oppression; and in winter, when the peasant has little for his team to do, it is eagerly sought after, and a good supply of horses is consequently at the traveller's command. In summer, on the contrary, it generally happens that an hour or two at least elapses between the changes; and very often the horses are brought up from work a distance of five or six miles, when they must be fed and rested before they can be used.

Although four horses may sound rather grand to the English reader, I must warn him against the idea that there is any superfluity in it; for, with a light carriage even, it is quite as much as they can do to get over five miles within the hour on good roads. Whether from early starvation or from peculiarity of race, the horses of the Hungarian peasants are among the smallest, and lightest, of any in Europe. They seem to have little life, poor things! or little courage to show it, for a kick or a prance is an excess unheard of. H—— says he has seen them lean against each other, to keep upon their legs. The harness is on a par with the horses: except a strap across the breast, it is entirely composed of thin cord, which generally breaks and requires tying three or four times between every station. Collars are unknown, and the reins are reduced to a single piece of string tied round the necks of the leaders. The whip, however, has a power of virtue in it! In length, strength, and sharpness, it is, beyond comparison, the prince of whips; and, to listen to its awful crack or the hollow thwack with which it falls on the drum-like sides of the horses, one can understand how it raises a gallop out of the veriest Rozinantes that ever crept.

If tiresome to the impatient, however, Vorspann is not without its conveniences, especially to lazy, sketching, geologizing travellers like ourselves. If the peasant makes us wait for him, he never objects to waiting for us in return. He will remain quietly for a whole morning, if we oversleep ourselves, without more grumbling than a feed of corn, and a glass of slivovitz—Hungarian whiskey—will satisfy; and should we wish to sketch a ruin or hammer a rock, his horses doze away for an hour or so without the slightest objection.

To those afflicted with delicate noses, the proximity into which that organ is brought with the not overclean peasant, as he is seated on the box, is not very agreeable. In addition to other filth, his long flowing hair is generally covered with hog's lard, which, although it produces the most beautiful heads of hair I ever saw, yields such odours under the influence of a hot sun as are even yet painful to think of.

It not unfrequently happens that the Vorspann money is taken by the Haiduk before starting; for the peasant is generally behindhand in his taxes, and, except in this way, it is difficult to get hard cash from him.

It would not be right to conclude a notice of the Vorspann without mentioning the Haiduk; at least in my mind they are so closely associated that I cannot conscientiously separate them. The Haiduk is a town officer, answering pretty much to our constable, but instead of a simple civil dress he wears a very smart hussar uniform, and when in full dress has a sabre by his side and a long feather in his schako. But his usual ensign of office is a stout hazel stick, of which most of the peasants under his influence know the weight and force. Like other petty officials, these Haiduks have all the humble subservience to superiors, all the insolence and cruelty to inferiors, which characterize the race every where else.

We had been fortunate enough to obtain an *assignation* for the whole of Hungary, and thought that all further trouble about horses was off our shoulders. At Freystadtl, however, we were undeceived. The servant presented the *assignation* to the Haiduk, who called his assistant, and after some colloquy, informed us that he would send off immediately, and he doubted not, that, in two or three hours, horses would be forthcoming.

At last the horses came, and we started on our journey up the valley. The fortress of Leopoldstadt, which is intended to command something or other, which those who pretend to know say it does not command, was passed without stopping, and, continuing our route through a forest of wild pear-trees, we followed the Waag on to Pistjan.

This Waag is a strange inconsistent wandering stream,—as its name *Vagus* implies, fantastically changing its bed at every instant, and resisting man's best efforts to restrain its lawless course. Rarely a year passes that some village does not see a large portion of its finest land washed away, and a bed of sand and stones left in its stead; and occasionally, as in 1813, the

whole valley is overflowed, numbers of the people carried away and lost, the crops destroyed, and the smiling valley left a mere desert. It is only with the greatest hazard that any thing can be built or cultivated on its banks. It is said to be more subject to sudden floods of late years than formerly, and the superstitious peasant finds abundant reasons for it peculiar to himself: others attribute it to the cutting down the woods, and the increased cultivation in the higher valleys, which causes the water to run off more suddenly than formerly, and thus to inundate the country below. A commission of engineers have examined and reported on the means of preventing future dangers, but no effectual method has yet been considered.

The depth of water is in many places not more than one foot and a half, so that this river is of little use for navigation, although valuable for the transport of the wood, of which we shall say more hereafter. Taking its rise in the valleys of the Krivain, it becomes first navigable for small floats at Hradek, from which place to Komorn, where it falls into the Danube, is a distance of about one hundred and eighty English miles.

It was in the centre of some village, the name of which I have now forgotten, but which we passed during this morning's drive, that we spied a picturesque pillar, which H—— at once transferred to his sketch-book. It is a common ornament to the chief streets of the villages, in this part of Hungary. The handcuffs, heavy leg-chains, and ring for the neck, to which is suspended a massive iron ball, may all probably have been employed for the punishment of offenders in former days, but their rusty state is a sufficient proof that they are now exhibited rather *in terrorem* than applied in actual use.

Pistjan is a collection of small houses, with a large hotel, a large coffee-house, and large baths—excrescences, as it were, rather than the natural growth of the simple valley of the Waag. The waters are derived from springs which rise near the river, and are so hot as to require cooling before they can be used. Some of the springs are situated in the bed of the river itself, and are sufficiently warm to prevent its freezing at this place. The water contains a variety of salts,* and is in very high re-

* The temperature of the water is from 44° to 49° of Reaumur. In 26·50 grains of the salt deposited on cooling, are found 10·00 of sulphate of soda, 3·00 sulphate of magnesia, 7·00 sulphate of lime, 1·54 muriate of soda, 2·20 carbonate of lime, 2·00 carbonate of magnesia, 0·50 silex. It is particularly recommended in cases of gout, chronic-ulcer, and certain other chronic affections.

pute. Here, as well as in many other bathing places, we are told that bathing in society is the established mode. The peasants follow the example of their betters, but in a ruder fashion, for they dispense with all covering on these occasions. The poor despised Jews are not allowed to bathe with the other inhabitants; but they are more decent in their arrangements, and separate the sexes.

Every little cottage in Pistjan is distinguished by a sign over the door. Some of them are droll enough, but not more so than the reason our Cicerone assigned for their presence, "That is because Hungary is a free country," said he, "and won't allow the Emperor to number the houses; so the visiters, instead of saying, 'I live at No. 10, or No. 20,' say 'I live at the Blue Hussar, or the Golden Duck.' Oh! that would have been a terrible thing if Kaiser Joseph had numbered the houses as in Austria." It was not till some time after, that I received an explanation of this constitutional privilege. Joseph, it appeared, as the groundwork of his reforms, required the destruction of the municipal constitution of the Hungarian counties, and their reorganization on an entirely new principle; for while they remained self-governed, he found it impossible to carry out his police and taxation systems. The numbering of the houses* was one step towards this end; and the people, with a people's instinct, seized on the outward sign of subjection presented to their eyes, and resisted it without being aware of its own innocence or the dangers it concealed.

About two hours from Pistjan (that is, by the road our peasant coachman took us, across the ploughed fields) lies the castle of Csejta, a place so celebrated in the history of the horrible, that we willingly deviated a few miles from our tract to visit it. I know not why, but one always feels less incredulous of the marvellous when one has visited the scene of action and made oneself at home in the whereabouts of dark deeds—as though stone walls had not only the ears so often attributed to them, but tongues also to testify to the things they had witnessed. The history of Csejta, however, requires no such aid to prove its credibility; legal documents exist to attest its truth.†

* I have seen it hinted somewhere, that the more ignorant were made to believe that the red streaks on the houses were to mark those families who should be sent to some foreign country, while foreigners were to be brought to Hungary in their stead.

† For fear I should be suspected for a moment of appropriating what

The ruins of a once strong castle still remain on the summit of a hill which can be ascended only on one side; for, like many old Hungarian castles, Csejta is built on a limestone rock, forming an abrupt precipice on three sides. About the year 1610, this castle was the residence of Elizabeth Báthori, sister to the King of Poland, and wife of a rich and powerful magnate. Like most ladies of her day, she was surrounded by a troop of young persons, generally the daughters of poor but noble parents, who lived in honourable servitude, in return for which their education was cared for, and their dowry secured. Elizabeth was of a severe and cruel disposition, and her handmaidens led no joyous life. Slight faults are said to have been punished by most merciless tortures. One day, as the lady of Csejta was adorning at her mirror those charms which that faithful monitor told her were fast waning, she gave way to her ungovernable temper, excited, perhaps, by the mirror's unwelcome hint, and struck her unoffending maid with such force in the face as to draw blood. As she washed from her hand the stain, she fancied that the part which the blood had touched grew whiter, softer, and as it were, more young. Imbued with the dreams of the age, she believed *accident* had revealed to her what so many philosophers had wasted years to discover,—that in a maiden's blood she possessed the *elixir vitæ*, the source of never-failing youth and beauty! Remorseless by nature, and now urged on by that worst of woman's weaknesses, vanity, no sooner did the thought flash across her brain than her resolution was taken; the life of her luckless handmaiden seemed as naught compared with the rich boon her murder promised to secure.

Elizabeth, however, was wary as she was cruel. At the foot of the rock on which Csejta stands, was a small cottage inhabited by two old women, and between the cellar of this cottage and the castle was a subterranean passage, known only to one or two persons, and never used but in times of danger. With the aid of these crones and her steward, the poor girl was led through the secret passage to the cottage, where the horrid deed was accomplished, and the body of the murderess washed in virgin's blood! Not satisfied with the first essay, at different intervals, by the aid of these accomplices and the secret passage, no less than three hundred maidens were sacrificed at the shrine

does not belong to me, I must again acknowledge how much I am indebted to Mednyánsky for the history, authentic as well as legendary, of the valley of the Waag.

of vanity and superstition. Several years had been occupied in this pitiless slaughter, and no suspicion of the truth was excited, though the greatest amazement pervaded the country at the disappearance of so many persons.

At last, however, Elizabeth called into play against her, two passions stronger even than vanity or cunning—love and revenge became interested in the discovery of the mystery. Among the victims of Csejta was a beautiful maiden who was beloved by and betrothed to a young man of the neighbourhood. In despair at the loss of his mistress, he followed her traces with such perseverance, that, in spite of the hitherto successful caution of the murderess, he penetrated the bloody secrets of the castle, and, burning for revenge, flew to Presburg, boldly accused Elizabeth Báthori of murder before the Palatine, in open court, and demanded judgment against her.

So grave an accusation, so openly preferred against an individual of such high rank, demanded the most serious attention, and George Thurzo, the then Palatine, undertook to investigate the affair, in person. Proceeding immediately to Csejta, before the murderess or her accomplices had any idea of the accusation, he discovered the still warm body of a young girl whom they had been destroying as the Palatine approached, and had not had time to dispose of before he apprehended them. The rank of Elizabeth mitigated her punishment to imprisonment for life, but her assistants were burned at the stake.

With this tale fresh in our minds we ascended the long hill, gained the castle, and wandered over its deserted ruins. The shades of evening were just spreading over the valley, the bare gray walls stood up against the red sky, the solemn stillness of evening reigned over the scene, and as two ravens which had made their nest on the castle's highest towers came towards it, winging their heavy flight, and wheeling once round, each cawing a hoarse welcome to the other, alighted on their favourite turret, I could have fancied them the spirits of the two crones condemned to haunt the scene of their former crimes, while their infernal mistress was cursed by some more wretched doom.

The castle, though once strong, particularly towards the village, is now fast falling to decay. It is loosely built of unhewn stone, held together by mortar, and crumbles away with every shower and blast.

As we returned to the village we visited the cellar in which

the horrid butcheries took place, now bearing no marks but of the simple peasant's toil.

It was deep night before we reached our quarters at Neustadtl, a small and poor town on the Waag.

The next day we had a beautiful drive along the valley in which we now continued. About half way between Neustadtl and Trentsin, we passed the village and castle of Betzko. Situated on the summit of a rock which rises perpendicularly from the valley, Betzko presents a mass of picturesque ruins which have few equals. Placed so near the frontiers of Poland and Bohemia, it was a point of great importance in the wars, which almost constantly raged either between the government or the individual nobles of the neighbouring countries.

Like almost every castle in this valley,—for the Waag is the favourite region of legendary lore,—Betzko has its tale of mystery and wonder. It is said to owe its name and origin to a fool. Stibor, a Polish knight of great bravery, who had done good service in the cause of Hungary, received from King Sigismund large gifts of lands and castles, among which was included a great part of the valley of the Waag. In one of those intervals of peace which left the knight of the middle ages without his wonted occupation and excitement, Stibor was one day trying to while away the tedium of his hours in the company of his household, when Betzko, his favourite jester, succeeded so happily in his sallies of wit, that his delighted master offered him a wish. "Build a castle on that great rock before us, and give it to me." "Truly a fool's wish, to ask an impossibility," said those who stood round, in mockery of the jester's ambition.

"Who says it is impossible?" cried the knight: "what Stibor wills, Stibor does; ere the year be told a castle shall be there, and Betzko shall be its name."

From every side workmen now crowded up the steep ascent, and one after another the rugged crags bore walls and towers. Still more aid was needed, and according to the rude law that might is right, all travellers who passed the valley were stopped by Stibor's order, and their horses and servants made to afford a week's labour to the building. The year elapsed and Stibor kept his word, for the bare rock was crowned with as proud a castle as any in the land. It has ever since borne the name of the jester, who in lieu of the castle received a good estate from his wealthy master.

From the steep precipice which overlooks the valley, the same

Stibor is said to have met his death. Enraged that a favourite hound had been injured by an old servant, he ordered the gray-headed man to be thrown from the rock, where he was dashed to pieces as he muttered a curse on the cruel tyrant. Not long after, when Stibor had been feasting a great company of knights, and had retired to the beautiful gardens he had constructed with so much cost on the top of the rock, to sleep off the effects of intoxication on the cool grass, an adder bit him in the eye. Blinded and mad with pain, the wretched Stibor flew along the ramparts, heedless, ignorant of the danger he incurred, till at the very spot where his servant had been thrown down, he fell over, and striking on the rock yet red with his victim's blood, met the death his cruelty had so well merited.

Beyond this the valley became wider and less interesting till we approached Trentsin, where the mountains assume a bolder character, and that glorious castle is seen towering above the little town. As we passed the bridge and gained the outer walls—for Trentsin was once fortified,—we observed a mark on the corner-stone recording the extraordinary height to which the Waag had once risen, at least twenty feet above its ordinary elevation.

The entrance to Trentsin promises little, but its narrow double gates with "barbican and tower" once passed, and a wide long street opened before us composed of good houses with colonnades and parapets, which reminded me of Italy.

As Stephan was carefully preparing our beds while we were at supper, an extra glass of wine, which the old fellow had tasted in order, as he said, to see if it was fit for his master's palate, so far worked upon him as to loosen his tongue, and he broke out into some comparisons between the comforts we were enjoying, and the hardships he had endured in the long campaigns against the French, in which he had served as a hussar, and for which, as he said with a low grumble, "the Emperor has paid me with a bit of ribbon and an iron cross!" "A bad world for us poor peasants," he continued: "in war we do the fighting and others get the honour and reward; in peace, we labour and others reap,—and after all, these counts and barons are not much better than we are. Most of their ancestors have got rich by robbery or treachery—Count —— betrayed and sold the friends he fought with; Baron —— did not get his large estates by his honesty,—and it is my belief that all the great people that go to Vienna now-a-days and look so proud, would sell their father-

land for a diamond cross, or a golden key to hang upon their coats." But let me introduce Stephan to the reader in person. A short and strongly built though meagre frame, supporting the very sharpest, hardest, and most weather-beaten face, is a description of his outward man. His character was fully as angular as his features; he could not bear the sight of a woman, at least if she had any pretensions to youth or comeliness, and I have rarely heard him say a civil word to any one but a child,—and their innocence softened even Stephan's heart. He was not naturally cruel; I remember his telling how in a night *sortie*, when they once took the French unawares, he poked a young lad of about sixteen with his sword, and told him to get away and hide himself: "I could not kill a man asleep who had done nothing against me." But ill-treatment or disappointment seemed to have soured him and rendered him suspicious of every one.

Such an obstinate fellow as old Stephan I never saw in any land: he would listen with the utmost patience to my directions, and then without caring for a word I had said, coolly follow his own devices; and if perchance I remonstrated, he would as coolly assure me that he was an old man, had travelled much, and knew what was best. For personal service few men could be more uncouth; S—— used to compare his assistance to that of the friendly bear who scratched his master's eye out, in knocking a fly from his nose. As a valet, Stephan knew his deficiency, and till he had learned that I did not require him to aid in putting on my clothes, and that I did require much water for lavation, he was obedient, but that once learnt, and the laws of the Medes and Persians were not more fixed than Stephan in his routine. In all other matters he thought himself decidedly a better judge than his master.

An Hungarian servant in travelling has a very difficult task to perform. It is his duty to watch the road, to direct the peasants where to drive, and at every moment to jump from the box and hold the carriage up on one side, or to hang on the steps on the other to prevent its overbalancing. In all this Stephan was excellent, and it was quite useless my objecting to take a particular road as too dangerous, or declaring that I would alight at any place for fear of an overthrow: "Only do you sit still—drive on coachman. I never had a carriage under my care overturned yet, and your grace (an Hungarian servant never addresses his master by a lower title) need not fear that I shall begin with yours."

One evening, before arriving at the village where we had determined to pass the night, we had lost the road in coming over the corn-fields, and found ourselves on the wrong side of the river and some miles from a bridge. Stephan got down to reconnoitre, and without informing me of the danger locked the wheels, hung on by the steps, and told the peasant to drive forward; but even he was frightened, when the carriage rushed down the steep and nearly perpendicular banks into the shallow bed of the river. For my part I could see nothing but the horses' tails, and I fully expected to roll over them; nor can I tell yet by what miracle we escaped.

I believe Stephan looked upon us as a packet of goods of which he had taken charge and was bound to deliver safe, but of whose will he thought as little as of that of any other packet. With Vorspann he was most useful, for he never had his ferret eyes off the driver, whom he alternately abused, encouraged, and directed, with the most persevering industry. None could surpass him in flogging horses, making beds, and foraging for a dinner. I remember he looked very reproachfully at me one day when I refused to let him shoot some geese that had strayed from a neighbouring farm-yard:—"It would not be the first time I have done it, and shared it with my commanding officer, and who knows if your grace may get any thing so good at the next place." At night he wrapped himself in his old cloak,—I never could persuade him to wear his new great coat except on very fine days,—and slept under the carriage on the ground, partly for its security, and partly, as he said, "because he felt it cooler and more comfortable out of doors than in those hot beds." Thanks to his early life, spent in the Banat, and his later travels, he could speak Magyar, Sclavackish, Ratzish, (a kind of Sclavish,) Wallachian, German, and a little Italian. Like many other old soldiers, Stephan was what in the Austrian army is called a "quartalsäufer," that is, a man who every now and then will get most immoderately drunk, remaining during the intervals very sober and steady. I received some hint of his devotion to the jolly god before I engaged him, but he protested so strongly against the insinuation, and desired me so cordially to throw him out of the window if ever such an event should happen, that I was fain to believe him. Alas! poor Stephan, I fear it was thy besetting sin.

Grinning a grim smile as he saw us rather struck by his reflections on the various fortunes of the rich and poor, and per-

ceiving that he had caught our attention, Stephan turned the conversation to a subject of more immediate interest, and told us that we must positively remain at Trentsin for the morrow; it was the fête of St. Stephen, the patron saint of Hungary, and the peasants would come in from all the country round; there would be a great procession to the church, and every one as gay as possible. Warning the old fellow to keep himself sober in the early part of the day,—I never like to interfere with any one's scruples of conscience, and as I once had an Irishman in my service I know how conscientiously a man may get drunk on his patron saint's day,—I agreed to stay and leave Stephan to have as glorious a night as he chose.

The next morning the firing of the guns and the ringing of the bells warned us that the festival had commenced, and roused us up just in time to see the long procession of priests and choristers chanting their hymns, preceded by those emblems of ecclesiastical pomp, the floating banner, the robed attendants, and the rich ornaments of gold and silver which the Church of Rome so well knows how to employ, entering the large church, followed by a train of town's people and peasants, of whom three-fourths at least were women. During the whole morning, groups of peasants, in an endless variety of costume, nearly filled the little town. We were surprised to hear that almost every village in this mountainous country has its peculiar costume, and should by chance a girl of one village marry and live in another, she still keeps the dress of her native place. The most striking costumes among the women, were those chiefly composed of white linen, with white worsted boots on the feet: I call these latter articles of dress, boots, rather than stockings; for having persuaded one of them to take them off, we found them soled with leather, and so thick that they stood upright like leather boots. Occasionally the white skirt is relieved by a red or blue bodice. They all wear a little white cap at the back of the head, but the unmarried girls are distinguished from the matrons by a small red roll which just peeps out below the white of their caps.

Stephan persuaded two very modest and good-tempered girls to come and stand to us for a sketch. They were evidently quite as much satisfied with the attention their appearance excited as the vainest of their sex in Paris or London.

The men have less variety in their costume. It usually consists of thick, white cloth pantaloons often embroidered with black worsted lace; short woollen boots of the same colour, and

ornamented in the same manner, slit at the sides and slouching; with a dark short coat or cloak with sleeves, but worn, at least in summer, like the Spanish cloak, and embroidered with red or light green lace.

As we are now fairly in the land of the Sclavacks, and are likely to continue among them some time longer, it may be as well to let the reader more fully into the light as to who and what these Sclavacks are before we proceed any further.

CHAPTER IV.

VALLEY OF THE WAAG.

The Sclavacks; their History, Character, Habits, and Appearance.—Monastery of Skalka.—Philosophy of Drunkenness.—Imaginary Dangers.—Castle of Trentsin.—The Legend of the Lovers' well.—Travelling Expenses in Hungary.—Trentsin Bath.—Hungarian Tinkers.—Castle Architecture.—Vagh-Beszterce.—Ennobled Jews.—Traveller's Troubles.—Lipsky's Map—Szulyon.—Hrisco.—Szolna.—Teplitz.—Sophia Bosnyák.—Catholic Priests; their Hospitality.

The Sclavacks* are a branch of that great Sclavish family, which seems, at one period, to have occupied nearly the whole east of Europe, from the Baltic and Adriatic to the banks of the Wolga. There can be little doubt that the greater part of Hungary was peopled by them, till the fierce Magyars drove them from the fertile plains to the barren mountains, which they still hold. The chief part of that mountainous district between the Danube, the Theiss, and the most northern range of the Carpathians, is peopled by Sclavacks, who still retain their original language (a dialect of the Sclavish, though different both from the Bohemian and Polish,) their national customs and characteristic appearance. Other portions of the same race occupy, in the south of Hungary, the countries now called Croatia and Sclavo-

* It is very desirable, that the reader should distinguish carefully between the names Sclave, Sclavack, and Sclavonian. The name Sclave is given to a whole family, of which the Sclavacks and Sclavonians are only two insignificant members. The first of these—the Sclavacks—occupy a portion of the west and north of Hungary, not distinguished by any particular name; the second, the Sclavonians,—occupy a district between the Danube and Save, formerly an independent country, and although now a part of Hungary, still retaining the name of Sclavonia. I trust the map will enable the reader to understand this subject more perfectly; it is one of particular interest, because Russia, by exerting the influence which similarity of language, and in some parts, similarity of religion, also, gives her over these populations, has hitherto frightened Austria into doing almost any thing she likes. One of the favourite dreams of Russian ambition is the re-union of the great Sclavish family into one nation under the crown of Russia.

nia, and extend south, nearly to the ruins of Athens itself. In Hungary, they seem to have experienced the same fate as the British in our own country, where the bleak mountains of Wales, the Highlands of Scotland, and the west-coast of Ireland have preserved the pure blood of Britain's earliest lords; while Saxon churls and Norman soldiers appropriated her fairest fields to their own use. Other Sclaves are found among the motley population of Hungary, but of a later origin; for instance, the Rusniacks, in the north-east of Hungary, are probably the descendants of a band of Russians who accompanied the Magyars in their first incursions; and the Serben, and others known under the name of Raatzen, are settlers of a much later date from Servia, Bosnia, and the neighbouring countries. The greater part of the Sclavacks profess the Catholic religion, though a part are Lutherans, perhaps the descendants of some thousand Bohemian Hussites, who fled from the persecutions which all of that sect experienced in their native country.

It is always difficult to describe the character of a people, perhaps presumptuous for a mere passer by, who does not even speak their language. That his opinions should be received with great caution is unquestionable, but no man can remain any time amongst strangers without remarking many circumstances in their manners and conduct from which he cannot help drawing some conclusions; as I pretend to do nothing more, I trust, that if in error, no one will be very seriously misled. In Hungary, however, the stranger has better opportunities of seeing and knowing the lower classes, or, I should rather say the peasantry, than in most other countries where the roguish postillion and lying sight-shower alternately rob and mystify the wonder-seeking tourist. Here a peasant is always the traveller's coachman, and is often his host, his guide, his huntsman, in short, his frequent companion.

The Sclavack is slow in every thing, and until roused by passion or intoxication, nothing can be more humble than his appearance, more slavish, I would almost say, than his manner. No matter how Stephan abused the driver or beat his horses; it was seldom he even remonstrated against such proceedings, but it very rarely happened that he did not repay himself for the abuse by demanding more than the fair charge for his trouble, supported by some false statement; and frequently, after receiving two or three times the usual present, he would still ask for something more. I notice this particularly, because I do not recollect that

I ever once met with such conduct among the Magyars. Wo to the servant who should beat their horses; but I never knew them demand more than was just, and many have with great delicacy avoided looking at the amount of the present till out of sight, or have merely testified their gratitude by a hint to the next peasant to drive his best.

The Sclavack is, after the German, probably the most industrious of the inhabitants of Hungary, and perhaps the only one of whom a manufacturer could be made; but his industry is far from rendering him rich: the soil he labours at is barren, and his small profits are all expended on spirits. Drunkenness is the Sclavack's bane, and leaves him among the worst lodged, worst fed, and worst clothed, of the Hungarian peasantry. Some philosophers would fain persuade us that were wine and brandy cheap, people would no longer get drunk; and a traveller in Norway attributes the sobriety of the people there to the abundance of spirits. I am sorry I cannot say as much for the Hungarians. Wine and spirits are cheap enough, but the peasant, no matter of what race, cannot be called sober by any one who respects the truth. Nor indeed, by those whose position necessarily imposes continued hard labour and forbids almost every luxury, is it probable that the agreeable stimulus of intoxicating liquors will be resisted; not at least till an improved education shall have given them a taste for higher enjoyments. Besides, there is another consideration connected with this subject which never seems to have entered into the heads of these pseudo philosophers,—the real solid pleasure of drinking,—if they would but try it occasionally themselves, I am sure they would grow wiser.

The Sclavack peasant's house is almost always built of the unhewn stems of the pine, covered with straw thatch, carelessly and ill-made; its interior is not overclean, and the pig, oxen, and goats are on far too familiar terms with the rest of the family. It is rare amongst the Sclavacks to see those neatly fenced farmyards, large barns, and stables, and well-made corn-stacks, which are so often met with among the Magyars. How far this may depend on the poverty of the soil it is difficult to say; that it does not depend on any greater severity of the landlord in one case than in the other, as I have heard insinuated, my own observations convince me.

The Sclavacks are in general about the middle size, strongly formed, of a light complexion, with broad and coarse features

half shaded by their long flaxen hair. In some particular districts, however, there are found among them singularly fine and handsome men—as a military friend of mine observed, "ready made grenadiers." The peasant women, when young, are sometimes pretty, but hard labour and exposure to the sun soon deprive them of all pretension to comeliness.

Altogether I do not think I like the Sclavacks, but I really can scarcely say why; perhaps old Stephan infused a little of his gall into my heart. He hated them cordially,—more particularly, he said, because their King sold the country to the Magyars for a white horse. There is some tradition that Swatopluk, the last of their kings, engaged to deliver up the country to Arpád, and a white steed and his trappings were to form a part of the payment:

"For snow-white steed thou gav'st the land;
For golden bit, the grass;
For the rich saddle, Duna's stream;
Now bring the deed to pass."*

But it is time that we returned to Trentsin. We can leave the Sclavacks to show and speak for themselves as we become better acquainted with them in the course of our journey.

In spite of a burning sun, we walked along the banks of the river Waag to visit Skalko, a monastery at some little distance from Trentsin, said to have been the residence of a St. Benedict, one of the earliest preachers of Christianity in Hungary. We mistook the spot, it appears, and only reached the church, erected many years after by a Count Thurzo, on the rock, where the saint met his martyrdom. The monastery, as we found, next day, when we passed it on the opposite side of the river, was concealed from our view by a small wood, under which we lay to rest ourselves; we lost nothing, however, for it is a plain white-washed building, without any pretension to architectural beauty. The object of our walk was answered; we had a beautiful view of the valley, and were not a little amused with the groups of peasants which every pot-house afforded us. True Sclavacks, they were most of them by this time glorious; even some of the fair sex seem to have yielded to the soft temptation. The fiddle or the bagpipe was hard at work; and though I may have seen more elegant, I never saw more earnest dancing. The Scotchman must not flatter himself that bagpipes, any more than the

* Bowring, Poetry of the Magyars.

shepherd's plaid, are peculiar to the "land o'cakes;" the latter, we shall find common among the Wallacks, and the former is never absent from a Sclavack festival; and I can assure him that it is quite as grating in the mountains and valleys of Hungary, as among the rocks and rivers of bonny Scotland.

Now had I the brilliant imagination of some travellers, I have no doubt I might make out an interesting story of terror from this simple walk; might fancy that the knot of rough-looking men who spoke together, and whose eyes seemed to follow us, had intended some dreadful crimes; and this coquettish-looking girl had some treacherous meaning in her pretty salutation and side-long glance; or that the man who joined us and spoke German, had some sinister design in offering to show us the nearest way to the town. But I have no imagination, and with the best will can see danger neither in rough-looking peasants, smiling village girls, or civil citizens. The rough peasant has always the good manners to raise his hat to you as you pass him; the village girl offers you with a smile the Sclavack's greeting, "Praised be Jesus Christus;" and the citizen, in return for answering all your questions about his town and its neighbourhood, has no more sinister object than that of knowing who you are, where you come from, and what you are doing, a curiosity that I was always very willing to gratify; yet from such sources do travellers weave wonderful stories of the dangers of travelling in Hungary,—at least I never saw any better sources for them.

Towards sunset we ascended the castle hill, following the stairs cut in the rock which lead down almost to the town, and which are defended by towers and gates in every practicable part. It is not very long since the castle of Trentsin was in part habitable, but uncovered walls soon yield to wet and frost in a climate like this, and much has fallen and more is fast tottering to decay.

Fortified by the Romans, the Magyars found the castle of Terentius a strong fortress when they first arrived in the country; since then it has at times been a garrison of the crown, at times the seat of its worst enemy. Sometimes its possessors have proudly assumed an almost independent state, under the title of Counts of Trentsin, and lords of the Waag; and often has its importance, by exciting the ambitious hopes of its masters, led to their shame and destruction. Under John Zápolya it was besieged and burnt, but having been rebuilt by Alexis Thurzo,

it fell a second time into the hands of the Transylvanian leaders. Its most severe trial, and its last, was in 1707; when held by the troops of Rákótzy, it was besieged by the royalists, and its garrison reduced to such extremities that they ate up even the dogs, cats, and mice, rather than yield to their opponents. Since that time Trentsin Castle has been dismantled and left in the possession of the Counts Illyesházy, to whom a great part of the county of Trentsin belongs.

To me, the most interesting part of the old ruins was the lovers' well, sunk through the solid rock, four hundred and fifty-six feet,—and that too by the force of true love. But I must tell the tale as Mednyánsky has recorded it.

It was in the reign of Mathias Corvinus that Trentsin was in the possession of Stephen Zápolya, a powerful chief, who added much to the strength and magnificence of the noble pile. Like many other castles, however, placed on the summit of rocks, Trentsin paid dearly for the advantages of its situation, by having no supply of water but what was afforded by cisterns, evidently insufficient to enable a large garrison to support a long siege. To Zápolya this deficiency in his favourite castle was a source of deep disappointment, nor had any one been able to propose an effectual remedy for it.

"Musing one day on this mortification, as he saw his new works nearly completed, he was roused by the announcement of his attendants that a Turkish merchant had arrived, who wished to treat with him for the ransom of some prisoners whom he had captured in the last war, and brought home with him in slavery. As a soldier alive to the courtesies of war, Zápolya at once expressed his willingness to take ransom for all such as still remained in his hands: 'as for those I have given to my followers, they are no longer in my power, any more than the young girl whom my wife has chosen for her handmaid; for the former, you must treat with their present masters; for the latter, she is become such a favourite with her mistress, that I am sure no sum would ransom her.'—'But might I not see this maiden?' anxiously demanded the young Turk. The girl was sent for, 'Omar!' 'Fatime!' burst at the same moment from their lips as they rushed into each other's arms.

"Fatime, it appeared, was the daughter of a Pascha, and the affianced bride of Omar, who lost her in the night when Zápoyla had attacked the Turkish camp, and her lover, disguised as a merchant, had undertaken this journey in search of her.

"Enraged at the Turk's presumption, Zápolya ordered Fatime back to the Countess's apartments, and, deaf alike to the entreaties and high offers of the lover, positively refused to deprive his wife of an attendant she liked. In vain Omar supplicated, in vain he threw himself passionately at the feet of Zápolya and begged of him his mistress. At last, angered at his perseverance, the haughty lord swore he might more easily obtain water from the rock they stood on than compliance from him: 'Try,' said he in scorn, 'and when the rock yields water to your prayers, I give up Fatime, but not till then.' 'On your honour!' exclaimed Omar, springing to his feet, 'you give up Fatime, if I obtain water from this rock?' 'If you do,' said the knight, astonished that the Turk should have understood him literally, 'I pledge my knightly word to release your mistress and all my prisoners ransom free.'

"What is impossible to youth and love? Omar, aided by the captive Turks, set to work, and long and patiently did they labour at the unyielding stone. Three wearisome years were passed, and they saw themselves apparently as far from success as at the commencement, when, almost exhausted with fatigue and despair, the joyful cry of 'Water! water!' burst on their ears. The spring was found—Fatime was free!"

As we prepared to leave Trentsin next morning, a very impertinent waiter—it is a curious fact that whenever the landlord is a rogue, the waiter is impertinent—brought us a most exorbitant bill, at least the double of what we had paid any where else. Old Stephan swore all the Sclavacks were rogues, and not worth the white horse their king sold them for; but as we had no one to appeal to, and had a great horror of a dispute, we paid and started. I find what I then thought so infamous a charge,—and which indeed was so for that country,—amounted to just twenty-four shillings for two days! While on the subject of expenses I may as well remark that, including every thing, we did not lay out more than fifty pounds in the six weeks we occupied in this part of our tour. This includes the servants' wages and living for two persons, and posting constantly with four or six horses. The ordinary price of a dinner for two persons is about half-a-crown. A bottle of indifferent wine about six-pence: supper is the same as dinner. A breakfast of coffee and bread for two, twenty pence; two beds with clean linen—it is rather cheaper if the traveller is less particular—two shillings and four pence. Nor must it be supposed that any thing

was saved by staying in private houses. Stephan, who I rather suspect was anxious that we should leave a good reputation behind us, at least in the servants' hall, always insisted on the propriety of giving something to every servant, however little, and as the number of servants is usually very great, we generally gave quite as much as the inn would have cost us. Nor, on the whole, was Stephan wrong, for in travelling afterwards in company with Hungarian gentlemen, I found them paying nearly at the same rate. I am quite sure the old fellow never kept any of it for himself, though its distribution was left entirely to him: a more honest man I never saw.

From Trentsin our first point was Teplitz,* or the bath of Trentsin, as it is often called. It is situated about ten miles from Trentsin in a valley jutting off from that of the Waag, and ending in a *cul de sac*, at the bottom of which the baths are placed. Like every other bathing-place, Teplitz has the cold, bare, whitewashed look, proper to these places, with a promenade and shops full of useless articles, and old cripples and young cripples, and all the other amusing objects, for the love of which healthy people leave their comfortable homes to pass a month in bad lodgings.

Trentsin is a favourite resort of the Poles and Bohemians, as well as of the Hungarians of the north, and though said to be useful to the sick,† has little to attract the healthy.

Regaining the Waag, we continued our route along the valley amid fine crops of hemp, buckwheat, poppies, and potatoes. We passed, at Dubnitz, a large mansion of Count Illyeshàzy, built like a barrack and placed in the very worst position that could possibly have been chosen, for the valley is here more beautiful than ever, the line of the Carpathians bounding Moravia is within an hour of the river, and the landscape almost perfect; yet is this mansion placed in a flat, dirty village, without a prospect beyond it.

The roads throughout this valley are excellent, and the horses better than usual, so that we were enabled to keep up a trot without intermission. The English reader may laugh at this

*Teplitz is a Sclavish word signifying "warm bath," and is therefore like the German "Baden," scarcely a distinguishing name.

†The most active ingredient in the water is sulphur,—the temperature is 30° R. These waters are chiefly recommended in chronic rheumatism, gout, &c.

idea of good travelling, but to us it was luxurious compared with what we had been used to for the day or two previous.

From the northerly and most mountainous part of this county and from some of the neighbouring districts, are said to come those wandering tinkers,—or I believe I should rather call them pot-menders, for they do not come up to the dignity of tinkers, —who are seen pursuing their poor trade not only in their native country, but in every part of the Austrian dominions. Their chief talent lies in repairing broken earthenware, by binding it together with the wire which they always carry about with them. At certain seasons they return to their own settlements, where the women and children remain during their absence. Excepting the gipsies, these men are the very poorest and most miserable of all the motley population of Hungary. Their language would declare them to be Sclaves, like the rest of the inhabitants of this neighbourhood; but I must say I think there is something in the expression and in the form of their features which distinguishes them, and seems to indicate some difference of origin.*

Although very fine men, their tight dress hanging in rags about their spare forms, and their long, shaggy, dark hair escaping from under the broad hat over their wild features, render them, without exception, the most savage-looking beings I ever saw, and to the casual traveller who meets them among the scenes of more civilized life, and hears them spoken of as Hungarian peasants, they must convey a strange idea of the country they come from. It may be as well to inform these travellers at the outset, that such is not the state of the mass of the Hungarian peasantry.

At Bellus the road leaves the Waag, and crossing a cold highland district, joins it again at Vagh Besztercze, where we arrived towards evening. As we got out of the carriage a miserable beggar presented himself, and welcomed us in tolerable Latin, and in reply to some kreutzers returned a "Do gratias, Illustrissime!"

About half a mile beyond the village is another of those ruined castles which are so numerous on the Waag. It is placed on

* These are the same people of whom Mr. Gleig speaks under the name of *Torpindas*. Where this writer obtained this name I know not; I have never heard it used in Hungary, nor can I find it in any Hungarian author. Has he not mistaken it for *Topf-binder*, pot-mender? At Presburg they are called *Trentsiner*, *Drahtflechter* (wire-workers,) or sometimes *Drotari*

the summit of a sugar-loaf-shaped mountain, to which access seems almost impossible, and except by sudden surprise or hunger it was probably never reduced. As a ruin, excepting from its fine position, it has less to attract the artist than many of its fellows. In most of the castellated structures of Hungary, though fully equalling those of any other country in the strength and beauty of their position, in the vastness of their extent, and in their value as military posts of the age to which they belong, I observed few of those delicacies of architecture—coquetries of barbaric taste—with which the Norman and Teutonic knight loved to adorn his favourite stronghold, and which, like the stiff collars and stately dress of his "ladye faire," might serve to defend as well as to ornament the fortress they surrounded.

The Hungarian castle has a solid and somewhat heavy appearance; the walls are rarely parapeted; the elegant watch-tower, so common on the Rhine, is wanting; the richly mullioned bay-window, the fretted archway and escutcheon-sculptured turret are very scarce; and, instead of the flat roof of England, every tower is commonly surmounted by a wooden covering very like an extinguisher. I am not quite sure that the flat roof belongs to the castle of these times by right; in most of the old pictures of castles, especially the German ones, the roofs are certainly high, and it is probable that they did not disappear with us till knocked down by artillery. Formerly, I believe, the watch-tower, and sometimes, perhaps, the keep, had flat roofs.

Vagh Besztercze was once in the possession of two brothers Podmanin, who, because they chose rather to fight for themselves than for their king, were discourteously entitled robbers instead of valiant knights. Here too there is a tale of love and war; but much as I like these legends myself, I dare not trouble my readers with the tenth part of what I know, for it is scarcely probable that, without the excitement of the scenery and travelling, he should feel the same interest in them that I did when I heard them on the spot.

Below the castle, just at the foot of the mountain, and at the very edge of the water, stands a modern mansion, ugly as a whitewashed stable, liable to be broken in by the falling rocks from above, and to be washed away by the flood below. This house, together with a large property in the neighbourhood, has been lately bought by a converted Jew of immense wealth. The Austrian government does not, any more than our own, allow

the Jews to possess landed estates; but it so happens, that the greater part of the bankers of Vienna are of the Hebrew nation; and, as with wealth comes almost naturally the desire for landed property, the Jew is converted to Christianity,—or, at least, is Christened,—and purchases a large property; perhaps receives a title and becomes an Hungarian nobleman. The Hungarian nobles are extremely indignant that their caste should be thus degraded; and a degradation it is, that what they hold an honour should be conferred as the reward of hypocritical apostacy; but they forget that the blame should rest on the cause which produces it—the unjust laws which render religious opinions the ground of political disabilities.

As for the fear so often expressed in Hungary, that the government, by letting in so many foreign speculators, will destroy the Magyar nationality, and convert the country into a German province, or a new Judea, it is too ridiculous to require an answer. A very little knowledge of human nature is sufficient to teach us that the second, if not the first, generation of those whose origin is not considered too reputable, are certain to forget all about it. The Hungarians may rest assured that it will not be the fault of the newly-made nobleman,—be he of what origin or religion he may,—if he does not very soon persuade himself that his ancestors were of the purest Magyar blood, and if he himself does not become the warmest supporter of Magyarism in all its forms.

Before leaving the inn at Besztercze, to stroll along the banks of the river, we had ordered our supper, and desired them to have the floor well washed, as I felt certain from the dirt which covered it, that little quiet could be expected while it remained as we found it. When we returned, old Stephan had got the table spread and the room washed. Our supper consisted, as usual, of thin soup, roasted chickens, and salad, and on the present occasion, an omelette, flavoured with coarse preserve of the common plum. The wine, though rather sour, was strong, and with sugar and mineral water made no unpleasant summer beverage. And this, reader, is the fare you may almost always get in any part of this unknown, and, as you probably imagine, very savage land.

Before we had half done supper, I found my presentiment was just, though my precaution had been vain,—we were absolutely covered with fleas. In such cases, the only way to escape the tormentors is to go to bed. Yes, strange as it may appear, in a

room full of fleas, you may sleep quite free from them,—that is providing they do not fall down through the ceiling upon you, which will sometimes happen. In the common country inn in Hungary, the bed is a wooden box, about six feet long by two and a half wide, standing on legs two feet high. This box is filled with straw, and thereon is laid a hair mattress. In some places, such is the whole bed; in others, sheets, and all the other *et ceteras*, are provided; but as they are by no means always of that purity which one could wish,—a witty German says, that Hungarian sheets are of every imaginable shade of colour except white—almost every one travels with his own sheets, pillow, coverlet, and leathern sheet.

The first thing to render yourself secure is, to have the straw removed and replaced by a fresh supply. If the mattress is not one of the most promising, reject it also, and spread the leathern sheet over the straw, and the linen sheet over that. The great secret is to have the linen sheet much larger than the bed, and to leave them hanging over on all sides, so that it may be quite impossible for the fleas, even supposing them to remain about the bedstead, to get to you. Over the lower sheet you place as usual your upper sheet and silk wadded coverlet,—the lightest and the warmest covering I know. I once remembered in Moldavia,—a country infinitely barbarous and dirty,—to have slept undisturbed by these means, in a room where all the three insect plagues which have been given to torment humanity and teach it the utility of cleanliness, abounded in a degree I had no previous conception of.

As soon, therefore, as Stephan had completed these arrangements, we turned into our boxes, smoked our meerschaums, and talked over the events of the day in comfort, and with the sweet confidence of a quiet sleep after it. Only those who have wanted it can know how sweet that confidence is.

The next morning saw us again on our pilgrimage and brought us to a small village,—Prevink, I think,—whose modest burial-ground proclaimed the simplicity of its poor inhabitants. The cemetery, in Hungary, is almost always placed outside the precincts of the village, and is generally ornamented by a chapel and a variety of monuments, which indicate the former relative wealth and importance of its occupants; but here there was no church,—a wooden cross with a rudely painted figure of our Saviour served to sanctify the spot—while each grave was marked by a little cross of wood at its head without a sign or letter to distinguish

its unlettered tenant, and many of those crosses were falling to decay and already making place for others, as though willing to incumber the space no longer than was required to fit it for a fresh occupant.

A little beyond Prevink we had ordered the driver to turn off the high road at a given point for the sake of visiting a curious valley we had heard of in the neighbourhood, but he had missed it and gone too far. As I examined the map and made Stephan explain his error, he looked at me with wonder and almost awe. How I a stranger could tell better than he where the road turned off to Szulyon was more than he could conceive. It was one, among many instances I met with, of the extreme minuteness and accuracy of Baron Lipszky's map of Hungary. This map, which would cover the side of a small room, I had got bound up in nine parts of a convenient size, and always carried with me the portion immediately required. By this means I not only gained an intimate knowledge of the geography of Hungary, but was in many instances able to direct those who considered themselves well acquainted with the country. I know no other map equally perfect, except, perhaps, Keller's Switzerland, and when the different extent of the countries is considered as well as the difficulties with which Lipszky had to contend in a region so little known, it must be allowed to be a work of no ordinary merit.

The valley of Szulyon, which we had quitted our route to visit, and which we now entered by a narrow pass which left scarcely room for the road and rivulet, is remarkable for the curious formation of a range of sandstone rocks by which it is bounded on one side. Of a soft and crumbling nature, these rocks have been worn by the weather into a thousand whimsical shapes, which the fancy of the shepherd has endowed with resemblances to men, animals, buildings, and I know not what else of grotesque.

While H—— was sketching, I took my hammer and climbed up some part of the rocks. I found them composed of a very loose coarse sandstone, at times assuming almost the appearance of conglomerate; in some parts crumbling to the touch, in others resisting the efforts of the hammer. It is to this circumstance the peculiarity in their appearance is owing, the soft parts have been washed away, and the harder have remained. These often occur in the form of long pillars, with slender bases; often in isolated masses of indefinite forms; on the whole presenting an

exceedingly curious spectacle, though not quite so striking as some traveller finds it, who says, "that he turns round on leaving the valley to ask himself once more if strange magic has not converted into stone a living city, with all its architectural and living wonders."

In passing to the back of the hill I found the sandstone overlaid by limestone. It is said to belong to the Bohemian sandstone formation; to this I cannot speak.

As we regained the Waag, we observed for the first time a crop of mangel-wurtzel. It is used as with us for winter fodder. In addition to the common white crops—maize, wheat, oats, and rye—we noticed in this neighbourhood potatoes, lint and a few hops. It is much too cold for the vine in the greater part of the valley of Waag.

At Hrisco we were obliged to wait an hour and a half for horses, during which time we might have ascended to the old castle which crowns a very precipitous and craggy rock overlooking the village; but as we did not know at what moment the horses might arrive, and were afraid of being late at our destination, we did not venture. As usual, Hrisco has its legend. Dark deeds are said to have been perpetrated within its walls, after which the whole castle was filled at night with howlings, as of afflicted spirits, till at last a monk who reproved the murderer for his crime and was thrust out for his unwelcome words, turned himself into stone beside the door that he might be a constant warning to the hard-hearted Castellan, and even though now long deserted,—for no one has dared to live in Hrisco since that time,—the stony monk stands there still.

It was late when we reached Szolna, an old-fashioned little town, which we entered over a bridge placed across the former foss, and, passing under a low strong archway, and through a narrow street, arrived at last in a handsome square. This square, which is built round with good stone houses with furnished colonnades, forms just the centre of the town, which consists of one street answering to each side of the square and opening into it at the corners, the whole being enclosed within a strong wall. Almost all the houses in the back streets are built of wood black with age, and are ornamented with overhanging gables towards the street.

Szolna was at one time a place of considerable importance; indeed, the capital of Protestantism in the north of Hungary. A synod was held here in 1610, and soon after an academy was

founded, and a printing-press established, from which issued a number of controversial works, still esteemed by the *bibliomane* for their rarity.

We were put sadly out of temper to-night by the horribly sour wine they gave us to wash down a bad supper. In vain we begged, in vain we offered money for better, the landlady said that the wine was seignoral, and no better dare she sell. As the reader will learn more fully hereafter, the sale of wine and the sale of flesh are rights of the lord of the manor, and here we had a striking proof of the annoyance of this custom. In some cases the inn-keeper pays an annual rent for the exclusive privilege of selling wine in a certain town or village, and of course can then poison the poor traveller with as bad wine, and as dear, as he chooses; in other cases, as at Szolna, the lord provides the wine and obliges the inn-keeper to sell it at a certain price which he fixes, and for which the other is accountable after the deduction of one-tenth for spillage, and a certain per centage for profit. In most instances this is done to obtain a ready and certain sale for an inferior quality of wine of their own growth, but in some also from a desire of protecting the peasant against the extortion of the inn-keeper, and to provide him with a wholesome article at a moderate price. In either case the wine is generally very little to be commended; its consumers are principally the peasants, and what they desire is something cheap and intoxicating: they cannot see the use of drinking what will not make them drunk. The whole blame must not, therefore, be thrown on the privileged order. All this, however, we did not know at the time; they told us the wine was *herreschaftlich* (seignoral,) and that Prince Eszterházy was the *Grund Herr*, whence it followed quite naturally that we most sincerely wished his Highness the misfortune—and no slight one either—of being obliged for one night to drink his own wine.

I have often been surprised that a small quantity of good wine in bottles is not also supplied for the sake of travellers of a better class; for though rarer in Hungary than in many other countries, they are still in sufficient numbers to make it answer. But the spirit of privilege is sadly opposed to speculation and improvement. At present, when a gentleman makes a two or three days' journey from home, he generally carries wine and provisions with him, or makes use of his friends' houses as hotels on the road.

The next morning was Sunday; and as we prepared to quit Szolna, the people were coming out of church, and marching to

their homes with that steady, demure, and somewhat severe look which distinguishes the Protestant, find him where you will.

Some of the women wore curious caps of rich, stiff, black lace; a national dress, now quite out of fashion among the young and gay. I could not help noticing two of these old caps, which met under one of the arcades, and after due salutations commenced a combat of words attended with such mysterious shakes of the head and holding up of the hands, that I am sure nothing but a backsliding of some younger cap could have excited so great an interest.

At a short distance from Szolna we crossed the Waag on a raft of very primitive construction. It was composed of two canoes formed of the trunks of trees hollowed out, much in the manner of that of Robinson Crusoe, between which were placed a row of planks, and on these were launched a carriage, four horses, and about half a dozen people. Forced by necessity and trusting to the knowledge of the peasants who acted as ferrymen, we placed ourselves on this frail bark, and landed very safely on the other side. It must require good nerves to cross this place with a carriage in stormy weather.

Turning a little out of the direct road, we reached the village of Teplitz, tempted by a report we had heard that the body of Sophia Bosnyák, the first wife of the Palatine Wesselényi, was preserved in the church there quite fresh.

The memory of this lady is held by the peasants in almost sacred respect. The castle of Strecsno, about a mile from Teplitz, and placed on a high rock just over the Waag, was her usual residence. Sophia is described as one of those mild and loving wives whose deep affection can suffer in silence more easily than upbraid or resent, and Wesselenyi, as a bold warrior, whose manly beauty and rough virtues had completely won the soft heart of his at first unwilling bride. Often was the young wife left alone in the strong castle to watch for the return of her lord from those wars in which the restless Turk kept Hungary so constantly engaged, and the conclusion of the campaign brought him back the same faithful and tender husband he had left it.

After some time, however, Sophia observed a change in her husband's manner, on his return from absences that became more frequent, and seemed less called for than formerly; till at last the rumour reached even her ears that Wesselényi spent his time more agreeably than in combating the Turks,—in short, that she had a rival in her husband's heart, and that on his next re-

turn he intended to change his religion and separate from her for ever. Alarmed at this news, which her own observation but too well confirmed, the poor wife gave way to the bitterness of despair. One evening, when she had wept herself to sleep, thinking of her misfortunes, a bright vision appeared to her which she at once recognised as that of Our Lady of Strecsno, whose picture hung over the altar in the little chapel on the rock, and smiled consolation and peace on the stricken heart. When she awoke, she hastened with naked feet and pilgrim's staff, in spite of the darkness of the night, and the pitiless driving of a winter's storm, to visit the chapel of the Virgin, and to render thanks to her protectress for the comfort she had sent her.

Next morning saw Wesselényi's return; but the frown had left his brow, the cold look was no longer in his eyes, and as he pressed his Sophia in his arms, she felt herself once more the loved, the happy wife. On the anniversary of that day Sophia ever made her pilgrimage, barefoot and alone, to the shrine of her protectress, and after death she was buried in the little chapel on the rock.

About fifty years later, when the castle and chapel of Strecsno were destroyed in the civil wars of the Tökölys, the body of Sophia was found still whole and fresh. Among the peasants, by whom her memory was revered for her charity and benevolence, the body was regarded as that of a saint, and carefully removed to the church of Teplitz. Here it remains to this day, and albeit unsanctioned by Rome, has as many devoted pilgrims, and performs as many miracles as any saint in the calendar.

We sought out the village priest to obtain permission to see the church and its wonders. In so poor a part of the country and so small a village, I expected a priest of corresponding modesty; but the good father of Teplitz seemed in no way to partake of the scarcity of the land. As we were shown into the house by a naked-footed waiting maid, we found a comfortable dwelling, neat and in good order, while the dining-room was set out for dinner, with covers for eighteen or twenty guests, and that not in any meagre style, but with goodly bottles of wine between every two covers, the table spread with a clean table-cloth, and every plate furnished with a napkin.

The priest himself, who received us very politely and spoke German, was a portly man to whom the pleasures of this world did not seem altogether strange. Since I have known more of Hungary, and of the priesthood in particular, I have not been able to understand why the good father did not invite us to dine

with him, for of all the hospitable Hungarians, no one is more so than the parish priest. I remember that on another occasion, when travelling with two Hungarians, we arrived just about nightfall in a village where there was but a very poor inn; the priest of the parish no sooner heard that strangers were in the village, than he came up to the carriages, and, after merely bowing to us, ordered the coachman to drive into his yard, not supposing that even a verbal invitation was required, so much did he consider it a matter of course that we should remain with him. Now as we were four persons, with two servants, two peasant coachmen and their eight horses; and, moreover, as three of us were quite unknown, we determined to decline the invitation, fearing that so large a party would inconvenience a poor parish priest, though we were certain that the hospitality was heartily offered. Never shall I forget the mournful look of the good man when he clearly comprehended that we declined his courtesy; he argued on the folly of the thing; assured us his accommodations were good; and at last seemed so seriously hurt that we were fain to comply. The English reader may wonder what he did with us all. The horses were turned on the village common, to which all such travellers' horses have a right; the peasants slept in the stable, the servants in the carriages, and we were furnished with two as good double-bedded rooms as I could wish to sleep in. After offering us pipes, the priest conducted us to some object in the neighbourhood, which we wished to see ere it grew dark, and on our return we found the table not only well but handsomely spread; and the supper, consisting of soup, stewed fowls, vegetables, sweets, and roasted venison, with a dessert, was excellent. The wine, of which our host did not partake,—indeed of the whole supper he ate but slightly,—was better than I had met with for many a day before. His smart hussar waited on us as footman. The conversation of the priest showed him to be a man of considerable information, and of by no means a bigoted mind; indeed to me it appeared almost a fault, that he spoke in so slighting a manner of some of the observances of his religion, particularly, I remember, the necessity of performing mass on an empty stomach, which he ridiculed as one of those follies useful only to influence an ignorant people. I believe this tone is not very uncommon among the Catholic clergy of the Continent who wish to pass for men of enlightened minds,—at least, in the company of Protestants; in Italy I heard it more than once. In speaking of persecution for religion, he denounced its injustice with great

warmth, and instanced Ireland and O'Connell as an example of the greater wisdom of the present age. The name of O'Connell, throughout all Hungary, we found a watchword among the liberal Catholics, and many were the questions we were asked about his eloquence, talent, and appearance. He seems to be considered a living testimony that Catholicism and even ultra-liberalism are by no means inconsistent.

I believe I must let the reader into a little secret which our night's residence in the priest's family disclosed to us; for it is said to be rather characteristic of the class. In the next room to that in which we slept, we heard the chattering, the stifled laugh, the scolding, and the slap, which declared those mischievous mortals, children, to be not far off. In fact, our host, in his younger days, had yielded to the forbidden temptation; and instead, as he grew older, of patching up his conscience for heaven by driving away the partner and offspring of his errors, he had installed her in the office of his housekeeper, and given shelter to the children under the convenient title of nephews and nieces. This sort of thing is said to be of not unfrequent occurrence; and the prudent guest of the Hungarian priest should never look too admiringly at any pretty handmaid who may chance to serve his supper; nor ask too particularly as to the parentage of any little tale-tellers he may see about the parsonage,—though I believe, of the two, the latter would be the least offensive.

But to return to the priest of Teplitz, who did not ask us to dinner, but conducted us to the church. Service was just about to commence, and the body of the church was crowded with peasants; the married women on one side, with a head dress of white linen, in form much like that of the statues of Nemesis, and the men on the other, while the maidens, with their long bands of braided hair hanging down the back, crowded round the steps of the altar. In a side chapel, built in imitation of that of our Lady of Loretto, which—as the priest observed, with a very intelligible smile of incredulity—came from the Holy Land, we found the body of Sophia. The priest unlocked a painted coffin-shaped box, and there lay the mummy in a modern dress of black silk, the face shrunk, and the extremities dry and hard, but the fleshy parts still retaining their soft and flesh-like feeling. Some of the peasants crowded round to catch a glimpse of their favourite saint—the box was reclosed and locked—we thanked the priest for his attention, and passed on our way to visit the castle.

At Várin, we were obliged to leave the carriage, as the road

by the side of the Waag was no longer passable; and following the course of the river on foot for about an hour, we came opposite Strecsno, where we fortunately found the ferry boats ready to start. These, like the others we had before seen, were only canoes joined together by a cord, and pushed over by two men, one placed at either end. Each canoe, besides these men, contained not less than five or six women, laden with immense sacks. To prevent accidents from the wind, the women knelt down; and holding the sides to keep themselves steady, remained in that position, quite still, till they arrived at the other side and were allowed to rise.

The castle of Strecsno is beautifully situated and very extensive. The rock on which it stands is a black limestone,* rising precipitously from the river. Here, as well as at Csejta, we observed a great quantity of recent bones falling down the sides of the mountain with the débris of the rock; and, in the former instance, we found they proceeded from the interior of the ruins, where we picked some up. They were principally bones of sheep, hares, birds, and other small animals, with a few that might have belonged to oxen or horses. We were quite puzzled to account for their presence; foxes or wolves, we knew, would have eaten the small bones and gnawed the larger, which was not the case; and we did not think that any bird of prey could have carried them; but just as we passed under the ruins, the harsh croaking of a raven caught our ears, and reminded us that Csejta had been similarly tenanted.

As we had left Stephan with the carriage, and the peasants we met spoke only Sclavackish, we were not able to make any inquiries as to the distance to Margita; a narrow and dangerous pass in the navigation of the Waag, not very far from Strecsno, and which we wished to visit. The Margita is a name given to three or four rocks in the middle of the river, so called from a luckless maid, whom the jealousy of a cruel step-mother condemned to an untimely grave in this wild spot. Since that time, the wandering spirit of Margita hovers over these rocks, and demands one life every year for the bridegroom she was robbed of; —nor is it without fear and trembling, that the poor float-men, who fully believe the story, approach the spot which may condemn them to a phantom bride and a watery couch.

*This point is worth the geologist's examination: within two hundred yards I observed two different limestones, followed by grauwacke, and that again by granite.

CHAPTER V.

VALLEY OF THE WAAG.

A Specimen of Vorspann Driving.—The Jew of Tyerhova and Sir Walter Scott.—Diffusion of English Literature.—Valley of Wratna.—A Jewish Landlady.—Sheep and Cattle of Northern Hungary.—The Pupor.—Roads in Arva.—The Alás and the Juden Knipe.—County of Arva.—Castle of Arva.——Peter Varda.—George Thurzo.—Flogging Block.—Rosenberg.—Church of St. Marie.—Inn at St. Miklós.—Cavern of Demenfalva.—Ice Pillars.—Hradek.—Wood Cutting and Floating.

On resuming our journey, we had rather a curious specimen of Vorspann driving. As is very often the case, the horses belonged to two different peasants, and had not only never run together, but one had never before drawn at all. The harness consisted of one thin rope round the neck, and two others attached to the carriage in the form of traces. One of the peasants was upon the box, while the other mounted the near wheeler, seated on his great coat instead of a saddle, and drove the four horses by means of his long whip and the string round the neck of the near leader.

In stopping his horses, the gentlest *wo!*—by the by, *wo* and *gee!* or something very like them, are used in Hungary, as with us—was sufficient for the purpose, but to guide them was another affair. The colt, which was the near leader, did not like drawing, and the others seemed to have different predilections as to the route they should take. As we started out of the village at full gallop,—an Hungarian coachman always starts at a gallop,—we first took off the corner of a cottage roof, then quarrelled with a heap of manure, next rushed up a steep bank, and at last, thanks to the self-willed colt, found ourselves safe in a peasant's court-yard. After some time we regained the road; but it would not do; one would go this way, and another that. The only plan to keep them together was to continue the gallop; but the road was now in the dried-up bed of a river, and respect for the springs obliged us to go slowly, so that I, at last, made the other peasant mount the unruly leader, and we got on rather

better for the rest of the stage. Such travelling may appear dangerous to those who are not used to it, and who do not know what a carriage can do without overturning; but it is much less so than it appears, for these horses are so unaccustomed to be managed by others, that they have acquired a stock of good sense and a knowledge of the ways, which enables them to take care of themselves as well or better than their masters could do. One of our high-bred, high-fed, and well-guided animals, if once he gets his head, runs he knows not whither,—he sees no danger, and heeds no check till a fall brings him to his senses. The Vorspann horse, however, is not troubled with over-breeding or over-feeding; and though he may sometimes prefer a different route to that proposed, or even decline drawing at all, he never plays any of those perilous and foolish tricks which render his English prototype the fear of city aldermen and aged spinsters. The moral of all which is—that the enjoyment of liberty, especially when combined with simplicity and poverty, makes horses, as well as men, wise in the employment of it.

While we were waiting for fresh horses before the little "*Juden knipe*,"—for by this contemptuous epithet, answering to "Jew's pot-house," Stephan always designated an inn kept by a Jew,—at the station next Tyerhova, one of the tribe of Israel came up and asked us if we would like to see some curious rocks, only a quarter of an hour from the village. As we followed him to the spot, he asked those questions, as to where we came from, what we were doing, and whither we were going, so common in most countries except our own, where they are avoided, as though every one was doing something of which he was ashamed, and which he desired to conceal. On hearing that we were English, he asked very earnestly if one Walter Scott was yet living, and expressed the greatest regret when he learnt his death. Surprised at such a sentiment from such a man, and suspecting some mistake, I inquired what he knew of Scott, when he pulled from his pocket a well-thumbed German translation of Ivanhoe,—the very romance of persecuted Judaism,—and assured me he had read that and many others of his works with the greatest pleasure. I do not know that I ever felt more strongly the universal power of genius than when I found the bard of Scotland worshipped by a poor Jew in the mountains of Hungary.

It is astonishing to an Englishman who knows how ignorant even well-informed persons of his own country are of the literature and politics of a great part of the Continent, to find the

names of the best authors of England familiar as household words among nations of whose very existence the greater part of that country is scarcely aware. In Hungary, this fact struck me with more force even than in Germany, though the taste for English literature is there immeasurably more advanced than in France or Italy. But the Hungarians, with very little literature of their own, and generally possessing a knowledge of several foreign languages, are not only entirely thrown on the resources of others for their mental food, but are thus eminently well provided with the means of enjoying it. In many cases I have found the originals in English, but in general, they are read in excellent German translations. With what ecstatic pleasure have they told me of the new light which English literature opened to them? with what admiration have they spoken of the strong and vigorous train of thought which pervades our authors, of that scrupulous decency which they observe, of that warm love of nature they express, and of the universal respect in which religion is upheld by them! A great cause of this extension of English literature, has been the judicious selection and the cheap form in which Galignani and other foreign booksellers have published the standard English works; and, however disadvantageous this traffic may have been to the pockets of British authors, I am quite sure it has been a very important means in establishing and diffusing their own, and their country's reputation. Shakspeare, Byron, Scott, and Bulwer, are the names best known; and though it may startle the English reader to find the name of a living candidate for fame ranked so high among these immortal dead, yet it must be confessed that the reading Continent has generally placed him there. Whether the English public will confirm the award when time shall have removed the clouds of party prejudice and personal pique which so often obscure our judgment of living genius, I dare not venture to conjecture.

The valley of Wratna, to which our guide led us, is a very narrow pass, the opening of which is closed by a mill and a pretty waterfall, formed by a wild little mountain torrent, which, tumbling, roaring, and gushing over broken rocks and down steep precipices, has at last cut itself a way out, while the mountains above are pinnacled in a more fantastic manner even than those of Szulyon. We discovered the likeness of all manner of heads, arches, holes, animals, and I know not what besides, the more interesting from their sharp and clear outlines, which they

owe to the hard limestone in which they are formed. We may probably thank Scott for the pleasure of this scene; for it is rare that the uneducated have a relish for the beauties of nature, and still rarer that they think of leading others to enjoy that pleasure, except where the traveller's gold has disclosed to the greedy mountaineer more beauty in his native rocks than he himself e'er dreamt of.

As we returned to the inn, the Jewish landlady, of whose really uncommon beauty we had obtained a glance before, notwithstanding old Stephan's rebuff,—for, as I said before, he hated pretty women—now came to talk to us. Those large black eyes, spite of their quiet coquetry—Jews, Turks, or Christians, women are alike coquettes,—were not come to waste their battery on us, however, without some hope of turning it to profit; for, after awhile, their fair possessor expatiated on the bad accommodation we were likely to meet with further on, and offered us, as consolation, some champagne, which she assured us was excellent. It is very probable old Stephan guessed the object of her parley,—and, perhaps, suspected his master's weakness in favour of black eyes,—at any rate, he looked most alarmingly cross when ordered to pay what he grumbled at as an exorbitant price for the bottles our pretty Jewess carefully stowed away in the pockets of the carriage.

As we slowly ascended the hill leading from Tyerhova, we picked up a fine salamander, marked with remarkably bright yellow blotches on a black ground.

The sheep in this part of the country are quite different from the merinos we observed in other parts. They are large-boned animals, with a particularly long and coarse wool, and with spiral horns, often turning directly upwards; in fact, just what Bewick has figured under the name of Wallachian sheep.* The cattle are of a poor, small, mixed breed, resembling our worst Irish, and very unlike the large white, or dun ox of the plains, which is equal, if not superior in beauty, to that of Rome.

We had now to cross the Pupor, a mountain connecting the two ridges of the Carpathians, between which we had been travelling all along the valley of the Waag, and which that river itself has cut through near Strecsno, and we were therefore provided with six horses and three drivers; but, notwithstanding the shouting and flogging of the men, which seemed quite as hard

* I believe this name is improperly given; for I have never seen this sheep in Wallachia, nor indeed any where but in the northern part of Hungary.

work as the dragging of the horses, we progressed but very slowly, and, as we gained the summit, we had only light enough just to perceive the beautiful valley we were entering. Before we finished the descent, the moon had risen, and showed us dimly a narrow gorge hemmed in on each side by precipitous hills, black with the solemn pine, except where the rocks broke through and exposed their bare crags, while the bottom was occupied by a river, from which the road had been robbed as it were, so much did it seem to have encroached on the usual bed of the stream. To our surprise, instead of the tossing and jolting we had endured the whole day, we now found ourselves rolling along as smoothly as over a gravel walk. The only explanation we could get from the peasants was, that we were now in the county of Arva. They probably thought that no one could be ignorant of the fact, that though surrounded on all sides by the worst roads in Hungary, and though one of the poorest and most mountainous counties in the land, Arva without exception was in possession of the very best roads. Such is the fact; probably an abundance of material, and a greater unity in the administration of the county than usual, will account for it.

For two hours we continued along this valley, with scarcely a sign of human habitation till we arrived at Parnicza, where we had determined to pass the night, almost sorry to have quitted a scene which the dim moon-light may perhaps have invested with an interest and romance it might want at another time.

Every country inn in Hungary is provided with an *álsá*, or huge barn-like building, which serves as carriage-house and stable, and very often as bed-room too, for the peasants generally sleep in or under their wagons when on a journey. Into this *álás* the traveller is usually driven—if during the day, to protect him from heat or cold till the horses arrive,—if at night, that his carriage may be safely locked up; and here it seemed probable that we must pass the night, for Stephan declared it impossible to sleep in the inn. Knowing the old hussar's horror of a Jew,—and this he had declared was the most miserable *Juden knipe* in the world,—I thought it best to look for myself, and a miserable place I found it. The house consisted only of two rooms, one in which the family lived and slept, and where the peasants drank and smoked, and the other a *gast-zimmer* or guest-room, which they offered us. It had no floor but the hardened clay; no furniture but a table, a bench, and one or two chairs, with two boxes about four feet long, meant for beds. The whole, how-

ever, was not so dirty as I had expected, and I thought it any rate better than the *álás*. And now Stephan appeared in all his glory, for so soon as he found my choice was fixed he determined to make the best he could of it; and stripping the carriage of its cushions, and pressing into the service every convertible object, by the aid of chairs, bench, and table, he constructed two beds, not only comfortable, but with all the neat and bed-like appearance which a poet would say invites one to repose. In the mean time we had been inquiring into the contents of our host's larder; black bread, salt, and spirits, were literally the only articles the house,—or they said the village,—could furnish. Fortunately the pretty Jewess of Tyerhova had pressed a Dutch cheese upon us as well as the wine, and with these and the white bread, of which we always carried a supply, we made a very hearty supper. As glass after glass of the sparkling wine made every thing look brighter and more comfortable, how often did we bless the black-eyed unbeliever for thinking we liked champagne!

The next morning, before mid-day, we arrived at Arva, a little town which gives its name to the most northerly county of Hungary, in which the roads are good and every thing else is bad. The greater part of this county once belonged to the powerful family of Thurzo, whose last male heir possessed out of the ninety-seven towns and villages, which the county contains, no less than eighty-two, and these at his death he bequeathed to his daughters and their descendants. Up to the present day this property has never been divided. The joint heirs now amount to upwards of sixty, from whom one is chosen as director, who administers the estate for the common benefit of all. The annual net revenue, when the expenses of administration are deducted, amounts to only 12,000*l*., of which the share of some of the parties is not more than a few shillings yearly.

The castle, which crowns the summit of a conical rock, on the banks of the pretty river Arva, is composed of three stories, or rather distinct castles, built on three different heights directly over each other.

A steep ascent leads to the outer gateway, which opens on a circular road, strongly defended by pierced casemates, now used as prisons. The first castle occupies a flat platform of rock, and contains the chapel and some other buildings still in good repair, and inhabited. On the second part, which is reached by a flight of broad steps, the greatest care has been bestowed, and it still

bears traces of considerable elegance. Some remains of painting on the outer walls, show that Arva, like many other castles in Hungary, was once painted externally. This part, as well as the upper portion, unfortunately suffered much from fire a few years since; and though the walls are covered with roofing, which will prevent any very speedy decay, it is much to be regretted that the proprietors of the estates have not the spirit to restore the castle to its former condition. It will indeed be a deep disgrace to the descendants of Thurzo, should they allow Arva to fall to decay,—a castle, interesting as one of the best specimens of Gothic castellated architecture in Europe, and intimately connected with the history of Hungary, and with the greatness of those from whom the present possessors derive their property. The upper castle is built on the very point of the rock to which it seems to cling for support, and is said to be the most ancient portion of it, though several of the doorways bear the inscription "Impensis Francisci Thurzo, erectu. an. 1561," which, however, probably refers only to some alterations or additions.

In one part of the castle I was shown a recess, not a yard wide, constructed in the thickness of the wall, and so small that a person could only just sit or stand in it, and with no other opening than a hole through which food might be put; there, it is said, and I believe on good authority, that Mathias Corvinus confined the archbishop of Kalocsa, Peter Várda, for five years. He is said to have been incensed against the churchman, because of a mistake he had committed in drawing up a treaty with the Turks, of which they took great advantage; and on discovering which, the haughty Mathias boxed the blunderer's ears and sent him to prison, with the bitter pun "Petre, Arva (in Hungarian, orphan) fuisti, Arva eris, et in Arva morieris."

On returning to the lower castle, one of the bailiffs opened the chapel for me, that I might see what he evidently considered as the chief pride of Arva,—the marble statue and monument of George Thurzo, Count of Arva and Palatine of Hungary. Among the Protestants of Hungary, the name of George Thurzo is held in the highest veneration; for under his fostering protection the new religion held its synods, elected its superintendents, established its schools, and obtained a degree of power and respect to which it never afterwards reached. Like many other of the early opponents of Roman corruption, however, Thurzo was cruel and bigoted in the support of his own creed, and we

find him refusing to others the liberty of conscience he demanded for himself.

A disgusting sight greeted us as we left the castle. Under the gateway, which was as usual hung with instruments of punishment, the flogging board, a low table on which the sufferer is stretched out and fastened down, was laid ready, apparently for immediate use; two or three Haiduks, in their gay uniform, standing prepared to operate. At this time, the law still allowed the seigneur, on his own authority, or his bailiff's, to order twenty-five blows, as a summary punishment to the peasant. Happily this law is now no longer in existence; and though flogging is still a legal punishment, it can only be inflicted after a regular trial and condemnation.

In our journey through the county of Arva, and indeed generally in the north of Hungary, we were struck with the number of Jews we met; in fact, we began to think the Emperor of Austria had more right than we suspected to his title of "King of Jerusalem."

They are easily recognised, rather by their peculiarly cunning humility of aspect than by their dress, though it is sufficiently remarkable that, instead of imitating the peasants of the country in which they live, they always make themselves conspicuous by a shabby showy attempt at a more civilized costume. It is melancholy to see the degraded state to which this people are reduced; nothing can be more wretchedly humble than the salutation of the Arva Jew, nothing can more eloquently proclaim how necessary freedom is to the ennoblement of man. I know not why, but every where the mass of the Jews appear filthy and poor. No one can deny their greedy desire for wealth, their industry, and their temperance; and yet we find them abounding the most in poor countries, and appearing there the poorest and most miserable. Living by trade, they seem to shun those nations where trade prospers best; almost every where deprived of the rights of citizens, they seek most those countries where they are most despised and persecuted. In England, with the exception of some few great capitalists, the Jews have but little influence on our commerce; in Poland, nothing can be bought or sold without their intervention. Under liberal governments, where they might enjoy protection and justice, they are scarce; but in Turkey, where I have seen an angry Moslem cut off a Jew's ears because he could not bargain with him, every second man you meet is a Jew.

In Hungary, the greater part of the trade is carried on by means of Jews, who, from their command of ready money in a country where that commodity is scarce, enjoy peculiar facilities. The Jew early in spring makes his tour round the country, and bargains beforehand with the gentry for their wool, their wine, their corn, or whatever other produce they may have to dispose of. The temptation of a part, or sometimes the whole, of the cash down, to men who are ever ready to anticipate their incomes, generally assures the Jew an advantageous bargain. It does occasionally happen that the biter is bit, that the noble cheats the Jew—either in refusing to hold to his bargain, or by fulfilling it unfairly, both of which the peculiar state of the Hungarian law allows him to do, with a great chance at least of impunity. I have heard of a case in which the Jew, after waiting some time for the arrival of a quantity of corn for which he had bargained some months before, received the intelligence that the noble had determined not to sell for less than double the sum agreed on, as the current price had increased so much since his agreement was made, but in consideration of his disappointment the Hebrew was considerately offered the first refusal at the double price. Indignant at such impudent roguery, the Jew, forgetting for once his prudence, reproached the noble in no measured terms, and it was thought very fortunate that he escaped without corporal as well as pecuniary damage. Not very long since a Jew was beaten by a noble at Pest, because he complained, somewhat loudly, that the wool which the other had sent him was in a dirty and unsaleable state. Let it not be supposed that these cases are common, they are very rare, and the persons guilty of them are marked with infamy. But such reports, carefully spread by the Jews to keep other dealers out of the market, and the knowledge that the privileges of the noble and the imperfect state of the laws render it extremely difficult to enforce the fulfilment of a contract, have frightened away respectable merchants, and have conspired with other causes to deprive the Hungarians of the advantages which a more regular and direct commerce would confer. It would be as unjust to judge of the character of the English by the reports of fraudulent bankruptcy cases, as of the Hungarians by these tales of the dishonesty of some of their nobles. They will be a warning, however, to the foreign merchant where the law is insufficient for his protection, to trade only with those whose characters are known to him.

The Jews are also employed by the nobles as men of business,

as tenants or middlemen, as distillers and as publicans. From their ability, knowledge of business, and extensive connexion, they are, when honest, invaluable in such situations; but they sometimes deceive the confidence reposed in them, and make away with large sums of money, which are conveyed to some of the tribe in Poland, or other countries, where it is impossible for justice to extract a kreutzer, so close and secret is the connexion they maintain amongst each other.

The Jew is no less active in profiting by the vices and necessities of the peasant than by those of the noble. As sure as he gains a settlement in a village, the peasantry become poor. Whenever the peasant is in want of money, whether from the occurrence of misfortune, or to make merry at his marriage feast, or to render due honour to his patron saint, the Jew is always ready to find it for him,—of course at exorbitant interest. All the peasant has to repay with is the next year's crop, and that he willingly pledges, trusting to chance or his landlord's kindness to support him during the winter. In this way the crop is often sold as soon as it is sown, and for the rest of the year the peasant finds himself bound hand and foot to his hard creditor. On this account I have known many gentlemen refuse to let a Jew live in their villages, and rather lend money to their peasants themselves where they saw the need of it, and allow them to pay it back in labour.

The Jews enjoy the privilege of free worship in Hungary, on the payment of a yearly tax of 16,000*l.*—a disgrace to Hungary as a free and constitutional country, from which it is to be hoped she will soon clear herself. But it ill becomes an Englishman to reproach another land for bigotry in this respect, while he sees the Jews still deprived of political rights in his own country.

We cannot feel astonished at the sentiment of hatred and contempt with which the Hungarian, whether noble or peasant, regards the Jew, who fawns on him, submits to his insults, and panders to his vices, that he may the more securely make him his prey: but we cannot help feeling how richly the Christian has deserved this at the Hebrew's hands; for, by depriving him of the right of citizenship, of the power of enjoying landed property, and even of the feeling of personal security, he has prevented his taking an interest in the welfare of the state he lives in, has obliged him to retain the fruits of his industry in a portable and easily convertible form, has forced him, in short, to be a money-lender, whose greatest profit springs from the misery of

his neighbours,—a merciless oppression, and indeed a merciless retribution.

As we returned to the valley of the Waag we passed the little town of Kubin, behind which appears the imposing outline of the Kolpan mountain. Kubin, with its gable-ended house, built like all the others in Arva of the unhewn stems of the fir, notched into each other at the corners, and plastered over with mud, and whitewashed, is a pretty little place, and H—— gladly availed himself of the delay of the ever-dilatory Vorspann, to transfer a memorial of its chief street and its modest hemp-dresser to his sketch-book.

Although the soil and climate of Arva are any thing but genial, they seem to suit the cultivation of flax and hemp. Of the former, in particular, a large quantity is produced, which is manufactured into linen in the houses of the peasants, and sold over the whole of Hungary, and even as far as Turkey. The hemp harvest was now going on. It lasts a long time; for they only draw out at once those stems which happen to be ripe at the time, thereby allowing the others space to grow up and ripen in their turn. When gathered and dried, the hemp is soaked for a fortnight or three weeks in stagnant water, exposed to a hot sun, that its outer bark may putrefy and fall off. When this process is considered perfect, the women go into the filthy ponds which contain the hemp, where they may be seen by the dozen, standing up to the middle in the black mud, handing it out to others on the bank. After drying in the sun, the hemp is next dressed to disencumber it of its now brittle covering, which is effected by passing it frequently under a wooden chopper, fixed in a small frame. The cost of dressing is so great, that half the quantity is given to the dressers for their trouble. I have heard a person connected with the navy of England declare that the Hungarian hemp is both cheaper and better than that of Russia, and that he was sure it would one day drive the other out of the English market.*

We required no map to tell us where the boundaries of Ar-

* I have heard with very great pleasure that a contract for the supply of the British dock-yards with hemp, is in future likely to be given to an enterprising Vienna merchant, and that the greater part of it will come from Hungary. I hail this as a favourable omen for the commencement of commercial relations between the two countries: and it is not unpleasant to think that our navy will no longer depend for its supplies on a nation which must sooner or later declare itself our enemy, but on one which circumstances and inclination alike induce to be our friend.

va ceased, for the road seemed of a sudden to come to an end, and, from the science of MacAdam, we found ourselves at once literally reduced to the resources of nature; the road was, for the most part, a mere track: sometimes we dashed through the brooks which crossed our path, sometimes trusted ourselves to a few pine trunks, carelessly thrown across the stream, and called a bridge. I am not generally nervous in such matters, and yet I can assure the reader I never crossed one of these bridges, which in other parts of the country are only too common, without a very uncomfortable feeling; nor will he be astonished at this when I tell him that they always tremble, and often crack under the weight of a carriage, and I have even seen holes in them through which a man and horse might easily disappear.

The ruins of Likawa gave additional interest to the wild valley along which we journeyed. This castle was formerly the property of John Corvinus, the natural son of King Mathias, who, though intended as his successor by the father, seems to have yielded, with little opposition, to the accession of Wladislaus; and, like our own Richard Cromwell, to have contentedly resigned his claim to a throne for the privacy of the peaceful subject.

The first object worthy of notice which occurred, on regaining our favourite valley of the Waag, to which a few more hours of travelling conducted us, was the little church of Szent Maria, said to have been the first Christian temple erected in Hungary. Though prettily situated, recent alterations have destroyed much of the interest its interior might formerly have had for the antiquary or artist. It is surrounded by a strong wall with parapets and port-holes, probably not without their use when Christianity was struggling with Paganism for the mastery of the land.

On inquiring at the parsonage for admission, the priest came out; and, addressing us in Latin, brought us the keys and showed us the wonders of this little church. As the good man spoke no German, I was obliged to muster up the recollections of my college days, and was glad to find them fresh enough to enable me to make myself understood, and to comprehend at least a part of his answers in return. The body of the church is by far the oldest part; few distinctive marks of antiquity have survived the many repairs it has been subject to, except three round arches supported on octagonal pillars, with grotesquely ornamented capitals, in a style which I think clearly establishes for it a Byzantine origin. This circumstance is rendered the more interest-

ing, from the fact that the first Hungarians converted to Christianity were baptized in Constantinople; and it has been matter of bitter controversy, whether the glory of Hungary's original conversion should not be ascribed to the eastern Church. Before the nation itself adopted the new religion, there were, however, a great number of Christian prisoners in Hungary, and amongst others, many Byzantine Greeks; and it may have been to some of these that the Church of St. Maria owes its origin.

The chancel, of a much later date, is in the pointed Gothic style, with a small niche of very rich workmanship. There is an old picture here of the History of Christ, in compartments, now much injured, but interesting from the circumstance of its being painted on a ground-work of silver foil, which appears through, as well in the glories of the saints, as in other parts where the colour has fallen off. There are several inscriptions on the tombstones, which form the pavement of the church; but they were so obscured by dirt, that it was impossible to decipher them. At St. Miklós, a few miles further on, we had determined to take up our quarters and to reconnoitre the country round, as we had heard that there was in its vicinity one of those extraordinary caverns which abound in Hungary, and which we wished to visit.

The inn at St. Miklós, notwithstanding its size and promising appearance, was one of the worst we had yet met with. In addition to incivility, we had filth in its worst forms; and in answer to our request for dinner, we got only a sulky reply, that there was nothing in the house. But if the day was uncomfortable, how shall I describe the feverish horrors of the night? Driven from the bed,—for this once I had neglected my precautions,—I in vain sought to repose on chairs or table; and at last I fairly ran away, and wrapping myself in my cloak, slept in the carriage till morning. I make it a matter of conscience to recount these minor miseries, that those who undertake a journey in Hungary, may not feel disappointed if they meet some few disagreeables by the way, though, to say the truth, I am obliged constantly to refer to my note-book, or I should not remember one half of them. So happily is human nature constituted, that mere bodily pains, however they may annoy us at the time, are quickly forgotten; it is this which makes the recollection of our travels often so much pleasanter than the travels themselves.

Having applied the evening before for permission to visit the cavern of Demenfalva, to a gentleman of the name of Kubin,

on whose property it is situated, and having been kindly promised by his lady, who received us in his absence, that she would find us guides, and make every necessary provision for our visiting it, we started for the village of Demenfalva; when being provided with a guide, we drove on to the cavern, about five miles distant. I shall not easily forget that drive. We were in a light carriage of the country, without springs, and had to pass along the rocky bed of a mountain torrent. It is almost impossible for a carriage of this description to fall over, but it required all our care to avoid falling out; for every turn of the wheel brought it over huge masses of rock, from which it fell down again with a shake that seemed to dislocate every bone in our bodies.

At last we came in sight of the cavern's mouth,—a small hole at a considerable height on the side of a limestone mountain, in a very wild and beautiful valley. Here another guide awaited us, both being as savage-looking fellows as I ever saw, and unfortunately ignorant of any other language than Sclavackish. The entrance, not more than three feet high, opens into a high passage, which descends rather suddenly for several hundred feet, and leads into the first cavern, the roof and floor of which are beset with stalactites and stalagmites, though not of any great size. From thence, we descended by a broken and very rotten ladder into a larger cavern, out of which a low archway conducted us to the great curiosity of Demenfalva, the ice grotto. In the centre of this grotto, which is rather small, rises a column of beautifully clear ice, about seven feet high, on which the water falls as it drops from the ceiling, and immediately freezes. The floor is one mass of thick ice. Still lower in the same direction is a much larger chamber, where an ice pillar of several feet in thickness reaches from the roof to the floor. It is formed of small, irregularly rounded crystals of ice, of about the size of drops of water, which reflected most brilliantly the light of our torches as it fell on them.

It is the presence of the ice in this cavern, and the various shapes it puts on, which imparts to Demenfalva its peculiar interest and beauty. We have already seen it forming the slender column and the stately pillar; a little further on it presents in wonderful exactness, the beautiful appearance of a frozen waterfall; in one place it hangs in such graceful and delicate folds, that the statuary might borrow it as the beau idéal of his drapery; while in another it mocks the elaborate fretwork of the

Gothic roof. It was singular to observe the apparent uncertainty as to whether ice or solid limestone should result from the water which trickled through the roof; in one instance, where the roof of the cavern was covered with hard limestone stalactites, the floor was composed of icy stalagmites. It seemed as though the one or the other was indifferently formed. To what this circumstance is owing,—in what respect Demenfalva differs from other caves where limestone deposits take place, but where there is no ice formed, I cannot say. Ice is also found in an old mine at Herrengrund, as well as in one or two other caverns in Hungary. That of Herrengrund is remarkable as having only begun to form on the miners opening an old shaft, and as having proceeded so fast as to oblige them to discontinue their workings. It is said still to go on increasing, though much is consumed in summer by the inhabitants of Neusohl, for whom it forms a common ice-house,—nay, so well does it answer this purpose, that the greater the heat of the summer the more rapidly is the ice said to increase.

As far as I am aware, no satisfactory explanation has been given of this phenomenon. At Demenfalva there was no perceptible draught of air which our lights, if not our feelings, would have indicated; nor, as far as I could judge (my thermometer was broken,) was it at all colder here than in Adelsberg or Aggtelek. The stratum,—a compact limestone,—is the same in all those caverns I have seen, and the quantity of moisture differs but little.

After sketching the second ice grotto, we passed onward into a long cavern with a Gothic arched roof, containing a number of stalactite pillars of beautiful forms. The floor was here no longer of stone or ice, but covered with a very fine dry lime dust. Two more caverns of great size, and so high that the feeble light of our torches lost itself in seeking to define their limits, led us to a narrow passage where the bottom was covered with a soft white mud, common in such places, and called by the Germans *berg milch* (mountain milk,) and which soon became so deep that it was impossible to proceed further. We returned by the same road, which I should think was about a mile long, having occupied two hours in the cavern.

As for the bones which some travellers speak of as being strewed over the floor of this cave, and from which the peasants have given it the name of the "Dragon's Hole," we could find no traces of them; and I am inclined to agree with those who

think the broken stalactites have been mistaken by the ignorant for bones, and thus given rise to the fiction.

It so happened that while at St. Miklós, accident threw in our way the son of a gentleman at Hradek, Herr v. C——, to whom we had a letter of introduction, which, but for this circumstance, might, like so many others, have remained in my pocket-book and deprived me of the pleasure of a most agreeable acquaintance.

As it was, we were no sooner within sight of the village than a person who had been sent out to meet us, for fear we should have gonè to the inn, directed the driver straight to the prefect's house ; and, no sooner were we there, than the servants were ordered to unpack the carriage and take the things into our rooms, and this almost before we had determined whether we should stay there or merely call and pass on. This point was, however, at once determined by the frank and hospitable manner of our host,—it is difficult to resist unaffected and sincere kindness of heart.

Our host, after allowing us time to rest ourselves, offered to conduct us over the establishment of Hradek, of which he is the chief director. Hradek is a small village, important only as the centre of the trade in wood belonging to the Kammer (Exchequer,) and entirely inhabited by officers and people in its employment, who are all engaged in the management of the forests, the felling of the timber, and the transportation of the wood to the Danube. In many parts of Hungary, timber is of no value, from the expense of transportation, and that must have been the case here, till Government erected a number of locks in different parts of the Black Waag—as one of the sources of this river is called—by means of which a sufficient body of water is obtained to float down large timber from the mountains to Hradek. A great part of the district through which this river passes is in the possession of private individuals, who enjoy the same advantages of transporting their wood as the Government. For all this wood Hradek forms a depôt.

The manner in which it is brought to this place is curious nough. The woodman who has been employed during the winter in felling, collects his lot of timber at the water's edge in spring, and, binding with bark or thin branches the end of three trees together, he jumps on to this slender raft and pushes off, leaving the other ends loose that they may the more easily accommodate themselves to the rocks and shallows they must pass

over. When he comes to the flood-gates, he strikes his axe firmly into the wood; and, maintaining his place with its aid, he rushes with his slender craft down the fall produced by the opening of the gates, and so pushing here, and guiding there, floats down to Hradek.

Here, to prevent robbery, the wood is examined, authenticated, and marked; then it is laid up till a purchaser is found for it, or Government requires it for public works.

At Hradek, the wood is arranged according to its size, age, and quality, every piece being marked in such a manner, that the man who felled it could at once reclaim it. The whole of the wood from this neighbourhood is pine, and is chiefly used for building-timber. A considerable part is cut up into planks on the spot by very imperfect sawing-mills, which we visited. These mills produce three hundred thousand planks per year, of five yards in length each. The quantity of timber felled annually in the forests belonging to Government in the district of Hradek, amounts to about fifty thousand trunks. The wood is generally fifty years old.

The most approved system of forest management in Hungary, where they have certainly the advantage of abundant experience, is that of laying out a wood in different portions—if large enough, in fifty—and clearing the whole of one portion every year, so as to leave the land fit for replanting the year after. They replant at regular distances from seedlings. Our system of thinning woods is quite unknown. Which plan is the more profitable I know not, but ours has certainly the advantage in beauty, I suspect also in the formation of finer timber, for I have nowhere seen such magnificent trees as in Old England. The net revenue derived by the Exchequer from Hradek does not amount to more than 6,000*l.* per annum.

When the wood is sold, two floats of three trees each are united; and receiving a load of planks above, they are navigated by two men each, with one large oar fixed at either extremity of the raft. In this way they pass as far down the Waag as Rosenberg, where the river becomes wide enough for two such rafts to be united. They now erect a little shelter of planks, and two of the raftmen returning, the other two conduct the double raft through the rapids of the Waag to the wide waters of the Danube, and so on to Pest, or even Semlin.*

* Some of the English ship-builders employed at Pest, spoke of this wood as of a very good quality; but declared, that from a want of a regu-

As we returned from our walk, supper was already prepared. In Hungary, where people dine at one, supper is still the same cheerful meal it used to be with us, and it has always this advantage over the pompous dinner which now takes place nearly at the same hour, that it is free and unceremonious. As far as the composition of it is concerned, I never could distinguish any difference between supper and dinner; it begins with soup, passes through the half-dozen courses considered indispensable, and ends with dessert and liqueur.

Many were the questions our host put to us about England. Bulwer's "England and the English" is known every where, and Pückler Muskaw has helped to spread an acquaintance with our manners. For politics, the *Algemeine Zeitung* is the authority. It is wonderful how eagerly every one asks for information about our Parliament, and I could not help thinking that if some of the honourable members who occasionally make such melancholy exhibitions there, could guess how far and wide their reputation is spread, they would sometimes think twice before they speak. Many seemed to think the House of Commons must needs be the favourite resort of every one, and I have heard young men declare, that they would toil and slave a life long for the pleasure of once seeing, and hearing the debates of that House. Not a single great name in either chamber, but was familiar to our host. How did lord Grey look? What would the Duke of Wellington do? How could Peel hold with the ultra-Tories? Was O'Connell an honest man? Did Stanley really believe all he talked about Church property? And Lord John Russell, "*der musz è' mord Kerl seyn, der geht vorwarts!*" These and a thousand others were the inquiries we had to answer, and some of them, I must confess, puzzled us not a little.

I cannot help comparing the state of things at Hradek and elsewhere in 1836, with the account Dr. Bright gives of his experience in 1814; premising, however, that we visited Hungary after twenty years' peace had made the most distant parts of Europe know and sympathize with each other as inhabitants of the same country, while he visited it after a twenty years' war had torn asunder every tie, and rendered the nearest neighbours ignorant of every thing concerning each other, but that they existed, and were enemies. Dr. Bright states that a mining officer of Kremnitz believed "Mexico was an English island, and

lar business-like method, they could get it cheaper from Vienna than Hradek.

that other clever and agreeable persons could scarcely be convinced that coffee, sugar, and rice, are not the products of Great Britain." Either knowledge must have made most rapid strides, or the Dr. was unfortunate in his acquaintance; for my own part, I should be less surprised to hear what is considered a well-educated Englishman inquire in what part of Peru the gold mines of Kremnitz are situated, than to find even a moderately informed Hungarian ignorant of such facts as those specified. In truth, our ignorance of Hungary is bitterly complained of by the Hungarians: "You are more interested in England about the cause of the South Sea Islands than about us Protestant constitutional Hungarians; you know more of the negroes in the interior of Africa than you do of a nation in the east of Europe." "This is undoubtedly true, but how can we help it?" was my answer. "Neither your newspapers nor those of Germany dare give us any information on your politics; for if they do, they know that their Austrian circulation is lost, as they are stopped at the frontiers, and besides the difficulties of travelling in the country, it is by no means easy to procure a passport at Vienna for that purpose." We both regretted that between two nations who had each so much that the other required, such mutual ignorance should prevail, and we could only hope that steam-navigation would break down the barrier which had hitherto been found insurmountable.

We spent the greater part of the next day at Hradek, and a pretty little place it is, regularly built, with double rows of trees along the street, and a neat grass plat before every house; nor did we leave our hospitable friends without sincere regret—their kindness and attention to us could not be exceeded.

And now, gentle reader, we must take leave of the Waag; for a little above Hradek it is divided into two streams, called the White and Black Waag, both inconsiderable brooks, which take their rise in different parts of the Carpathians, and here unite to form the river we have so long followed. I know not whether I have infused into you any part of the affection I myself feel for this lovely valley, this wild and wilful stream, these blue mountains, and these legendary castles; to me they offered scenes so fresh, so romantic, and so unexpected, that I hardly know now whether I judge soundly of what I saw. But when I turn to H——'s sketch book, I cannot help flattering myself that he fully justifies my passion for the valley of the Waag. Reader, may you be of the same mind!

CHAPTER VI.

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE HUNGARIAN CHAMBERS.

Function of the Diet.—History of the Diet under Maria Theresa—under Joseph II.—his revolutionary Measures opposed and defeated—under Leopold II.—under Francis I.—Gravamina and Preferentialia.—Reform Party.—Diet of 1832.—Urbarial Reforms.—Chamber of Deputies.—Sessio Circularis.—Petition in Favour of Poland.—Deputies' Salaries.—Composition of the Lower Chamber.—County Members.—Delegate System—its Advantages in Hungary—Borough Members.—Members of the Clergy—of Magnates, and of Widows of Magnates.—Business of the Diet.—Proposed Reforms in the Lower Chamber.—Chamber of Magnates.—The Palatine.—Debate.—Ferdinand the First or Fifth?—Trick of the Government.—Character of the Chamber—composed of Prelates, Barons, and Counts of the Kingdom, and Titular Nobles.—Anomalous Position of the Chamber.—Reforms essential to its Independence and Usefulness.

On our return to Presburg from the Waag, the Diet was again assembled, and we were once more launched on the troubled sea of Hungarian politics. To such as are anxious to know something about these matters or of the institutions with which they are connected, this chapter will not be without its interest; but to such as read only to kill time and to escape the trouble of thinking, we recommend to pass it over.

"To maintain the old Magyar constitution," says Fessler,* speaking of the duties and objects of the Hungarian Diet,—"to support it by constitutional laws, and to assert and secure the rights, liberties, and ancient customs of the nation; to frame laws for particular cases; to grant the supplies, and to fix the manner and form of their collection; to provide means for securing the independence of the kingdom, its safety from foreign influence, and deliverance from all enemies; to examine and encourage public undertakings and establishments of general utility; to

* I quote from the "Terra Incognita" of Orosz; a book from which I have derived much instruction, and which I recommend to the English traveller, notwithstanding some things I do not admire, as the best source for acquiring information in regard to the present state of Hungary.

superintend the mint; to confer on foreigners the privileges of nobility, the permission to colonize the country and enjoy the rights of Hungarians, are the important functions of the Hungarian Diet." How far it has performed these noble functions since the period of its establishment, it would occupy us too long to analyze; but some few remarks on the constitutional history of Hungary from the reign of Maria Theresa are necessary to enable us to understand its present position.

All Europe knows how Maria Theresa, when surrounded by enemies, and driven from every other part of her dominions, took refuge in Hungary; and, throwing herself and child on the mercy of a generous people, was received, as every sabre leapt from its scabbard, with the glorious cry "*Vitam et sanguinem pro Rege nostro Maria!*" All know how faithfully this promise was fulfilled, but few are aware with how much danger to the very existence of Hungary the debt of gratitude was repaid.

The fixed idea of this great Queen's reign was the union of all her heterogeneous possessions under the same institutions and the same form of government. In Hungary she directed her efforts to the introduction of the German language, habits, and manners among the people. The Hungarians were told they were a savage race, who must become Germans to become civilized. This project, however, was so well mixed up with others, for the establishment of useful institutions, the improvement of the state of the peasantry, the education of all classes of her subjects, the better ordering of religious societies, the dismissal of the Jesuits from the kingdom, the removal of such barbarisms from the statute-book as the right of sanctuary, the use of the rack, and the frequency of capital punishments, that the more enlightened of the Hungarians became ashamed of their nationality, forgot their native language, threw off the noble costume of their forefathers, and became as German as their Magyar tongues and Eastern blood would allow them. With so much skill were these changes effected, that Maria Theresa was adored by the people, whose constitutional rights she was undermining. During the forty years she reigned, the Diet was only called together thrice!

Fortunately for Hungary, Joseph II. was less politic—as politeness and custom entitle us to call the infraction of the ruler's faith to the people—than his mother. His first act was to refuse the coronation, because he did not intend to rule according to the laws and constitution to which his coronation oath would

have bound him. During his whole reign he never summoned a Diet, but went forward unrestrained by any thing but his own conscience, to work out what he believed to be the happiness of Hungary. Almost all his objects were great and good,—his means of execution almost always bad. Honest almost to a fault, Joseph committed only one error, but it destroyed the labour of his whole life. He made a revolution when only a reform was needed. Had Joseph been a reformer instead of a revolutionist, how much would have been spared both to him and to Hungary!

The king rushed forward in his course of improvement with blind precipitancy; change followed upon change with the quickness of thought—that is, of Joseph's thought—for it was in vain that the best disposed even of the old-fashioned Magyars attempted to keep pace with him. It was his principle that he would himself see the effect of his labours, not leave all the advantage to posterity. How little did he know of human nature, or human institutions!

So really wise and useful were many of the changes he introduced, that for a length of time the bad were borne for the sake of the good. Monasteries were dissolved, and schools and universities were endowed with their funds; religious toleration, if not absolute equality, was granted to the Protestants; hosts of court retainers and pensioners were dismissed; the civil and criminal jurisprudence was reformed; the relation between peasant and noble was placed on a more equitable footing, and taxation was equally distributed. But, with these reforms, came a virtual destruction of the whole political and municipal constitution of Hungary. The sanction of the Diet was wanting; county meetings were forbidden; the election of county officers declared illegal; local courts abolished; and the whole country re-divided into ten districts, to be managed by royal commissioners. Even these measures met with only a passive resistance, till at last Joseph seized upon the sacred crown of St. Stephen,* conveyed

* It is almost impossible for a foreigner to conceive with how deep a veneration the Hungarians regard this crown as an emblem of national sovereignty, and its removal was considered, as indeed it was intended, to be a mark of the reduction of Hungary to the state of an Austrian province. Pope Sylvester II. sent the crown to Stephen, first King of Hungary, in the year 1000, on the establishment of Christianity in the country, whence it has received the title of "Holy and Apostolic Crown." It has at various times been seized by usurpers to the throne, been hidden for years, removed to foreign countries, but always eventually brought back,

it to Vienna, and soon after issued a peremptory edict that all official business should be transacted in Germany.

As one man, the country now rose in opposition; they felt that their existence as a nation was at stake; the moment for the great struggle had arrived, and remonstrances, firm but respectful, were laid at the foot of the throne from every county. At the first appearance of resistance the spirit of absolutism showed itself; strict commands were given that no opposition to the Royal ordinances should be permitted: no means to repress the rising spirit were left untried; dark hints were even whispered of a servile insurrection excited by Royal emissaries,—but all was vain; a Diet was loudly called for, and both soldiers and supplies were refused. At last the King's eyes were opened, alas, too late!—his early death prevented him from fulfilling his declared intention "to follow that path which the common wishes of the nation pointed out as the best." His last act was to annul by one stroke of the pen all that he had been labouring to effect during his life.*

Most of the German historians who have written on this period of Hungarian history have neither understood nor appreciated it. On the one hand they see only barbarism and factious opposition, on the other an enlightened liberality led on by sincere philanthropy. It is certain that both Maria Theresa and Joseph were far in advance of the people whom they governed; but however ignorant the latter may have been on other matters, they had a keen perception, which the habitual exercise of constitutional rights only can confer, of the danger of innovation in the hands of a King who acknowledges no control. They felt that although Hungary might have become greater by obedience, she would have become neither more happy nor more free. Had the Russians opposed Peter the Great with the same firmness the Hungarians did Joseph, Russia might have been at this day preserved from greatness and slavery.

The wise Leopold's too short reign gave rise to the most important Diet Hungary ever knew. After securing, as far as

and more proudly regarded than ever. It is now placed in the castle of Buda; two of the highest nobles of the land are appointed its guardians; and it is watched and guarded with even more care than the holiest of relics. The reign of Joseph II. is, by Hungarians, regarded as a kind of interregnum, because he never placed this crown on his head.

* The only exception was the decree of toleration in favour of the Protestants.

enactments could do, the national independence, and the ancient constitution of the country, as well as ensuring the religious toleration of the Protestants, they formed a standing committee, or rather a deputation of the nation, to inquire into the *gravamina* or grievances of Hungary, with power to review the whole circumstances of the country, and to propose a general and efficient reform.

The stormy events which shook all Europe during the first part of the reign of Francis, prevented, or rather served as an excuse for delaying, the consideration of reforms to more quiet times; and that foolish romantic generosity, of which the Hungarians as a nation cannot divest themselves, kept them quiet during the period when Austria's weakness would have forced her to grant what Austria's strength now enables her to refuse.

After a long interval a Diet was called together in 1825, but effected very little, nor was it till 1830, that they began to consider the report of the *deputatio regnicolaris*, as revised by a second deputation the year before. Of the *gravamina* and *postulata* of the first, fourteen were chosen out as *preferentialia*, and passed both chambers.

These *preferentialia* may be said to contain the essence of the grievances of Hungary. They demand that Dalmatia, Transylvania, Gallicia, and Lodomeria, should be reincorporated with Hungary; that the military frontiers should be placed under the command of the Palatine and governed by Hungarian laws; that the duty on salt should be reduced; that the edicts of government to officers of justice should be discontinued; that the laws respecting the taxes on the clergy should be observed; that the Hungarian Chancery should be made really, not merely nominally, independent of the Austrian Chancery; that the coinage should bear the arms of Hungary, and that the exportation of gold and silver should be prevented; that the paper money should be abolished, and a return made to a metallic currency; that the Hungarian language should be used in all official business; that the fiscal estates—such as have fallen to the Crown on the extinction of the families to whom they were granted—should, as the law directs, be given only as the reward of public services, and not sold, as at present, to the highest bidder; and lastly, that spies should not be employed and trusted by the Austrian Government in Hungary. These, it will be observed, are in fact but so many demands that the laws, as they at present exist, shall be observed, and yet, with one or two very trifling excep-

tions, they have all been met by evasion or delay, so that it was impossible for the nation not to see that the court was determined, if possible, to refuse its requests, and that nothing but fear prevents its honestly saying so.

In the mean time a party had been springing up in Hungary, which, no longer content with merely requiring that the principles of the old constitution should be fairly carried out, desired that important reforms should take place in these institutions. The men who most strenuously opposed the government of former times, did so for the maintenance of their own exclusive privileges; the object of the present opposition was rather to cede privileges which were incompatible with the welfare of Hungary, but, at the same time, to obtain stronger guarantees for the maintenance of their rights as freemen, and gradually to extend those rights to others. They saw their country, in name possessing a free constitution, labouring under all the evils of a tyranny without its small advantages; and they determined, while retaining the freedom bequeathed to them by their ancestors, to disencumber it from the barbarisms by which it was surrounded. The wild schemes of revolution, which turned the heads of all Europe towards the end of the last century, no longer disturbed them, but they saw that a gradual reform was both useful and necessary. The favourite objects of their desires were—after strengthening the nationality of Hungary—freedom of commerce, and an improved commercial code; the navigation of the Danube, and the improvement of internal communication; increased freedom and education of the peasantry; the repeal of laws preventing the free purchase and sale of landed property; perfect equality of all religions and the freedom of the press. For the greater part of these objects they are still struggling.

In 1832, the Diet was again called together, and it was proposed to begin with an inquiry into and a reform of the commercial system; but these, on the plea of the greater urgency of other measures, were cunningly delayed, and the code of laws respecting the peasants—the Urbarium—was considered and disposed of instead. The opposition say, that the object of Government was here again to make itself appear the friend of the peasant, by putting the nobles in the equivocal position of seemingly neglecting the interests of the poor, and thinking only of their own pockets; or by inducing the more ignorant of their body to refuse concessions, which they would no doubt have ceded had a free commercial system been first introduced, and the material

and moral advancement, necessarily consequent on it, been once felt. As it was, some good, though much less than was anticipated, was effected.

The deputation had strongly recommended, the liberal party united all their strength to carry through, and even Government did not deny the justice of a bill for giving to the peasant the unrestricted privilege of buying and selling landed property, and the enjoyment of equal rights before the law; and yet this great measure, one from which Hungary might have dated a new era in her history, was not carried. Eleven times the Commons passed the bill—eleven times the Magnates rejected it. At last a majority of two voices was obtained against it in the Commons—that is, against its immediate consideration; and it was accordingly put off to another Diet. In the course of this Diet, however, the peasants were relieved from the tax for the support of the deputies; it was thought rather too impudent to make the peasant pay twelve shillings a day to a nobleman whose labours had been hitherto chiefly directed to his oppression. This was, however, only a piece of quasi liberalism of the Tories; the Radicals would fain have left it as it was, and founded a claim on it for the peasants to vote for those they paid.*

I find I have been betrayed into the use of English party names, to express the divisions of Hungarian politicians; but it must not be wondered at, for they are as well known, and almost as commonly used in Hungary as in England; and, moreover, they have none of their own by which I can characterize them.

The second time we attended the sittings of the deputies, we were admitted into the body of the chamber, as it was only a *Sessio Circularis*, a kind of committee of the whole house, in which bills are prepared and discussed; in fact, in which all the real business is done. On such occasions, not only the gallery, but the whole chamber is open to every one who chooses to enter, even without uniform. The gallery, as on our former visit, was

* The principal acts of the Diet between this and the dissolution, which took place in the beginning of 1836, were—an act for the introduction of the Hungarian language in all proceedings at law, public acts, and in the transaction of public business; an act for building a bridge at Pest, with power to make the nobles pay toll; an act for obliging the judges to record the reasons of their decisions, and for the publication of these; and a formal resolution of the Diet, praying the King to summon the Diet to meet in future at Pest instead of Presburg.

in part occupied by ladies, while what we should call the floor of the house was crowded with students and young lawyers. This custom of admitting persons unconnected with the business of the chamber, and who are allowed to cheer and express their disapprobation equally with the members themselves, produces considerable confusion, and detracts much from the solemn character of the debates. To change it, however, would create a violent opposition, for every noble claims the right to appear in person at the Diet, and only submits to be represented, because it is more convenient, but without, in the mean time, giving up his right to a direct share in the legislation.

The subject of debate was the presentation of the petition in favour of Poland, praying the King to interfere to prevent the total destruction of that gallant nation. Poland and Hungary had been so long united in the bonds of suffering, their commercial interests were so nearly allied, the similarity of their institutions and long historical associations, had so blended their names, that, in no part of Europe did the Polish revolution meet with more ardent sympathy or more substantial support than in Hungary. The warmest wishes were every where openly expressed in favour of the Poles: volunteers from Hungary flocked to join the standard of liberty, and supplies of money and provisions were sent from every part of the country. Nor did the Hungarians desert their brave neighbours in the hour of need; crowds of refugees found shelter in Hungary; scarcely a nobleman's house in many parts of the country but had two or three of them concealed for months, and even years, from the search of Russian or Austrian agents. Not a county but drew up petitions and remonstrances against the barbarities of the Muscovite conqueror, and a spirit of hatred against Russia took possession of the breasts of the Magyars which that power may one day rue.

The petition, which was in Latin, was expressed in strong language, and drew forth some energetic speaking. It was no debate, however: for the speakers were all on one side, except as to some verbal corrections, which were all carried in favour of the more liberal interpretation.

The next subject was a motion to ask the immediate assent of the King to the bill for obliging the nobles to pay the deputies' salaries, formerly extorted from the peasants, instead of waiting, as is usual, to the end of the Diet. This was opposed by the liberal party as being a dangerous precedent, for some reasons which we could not make out, and was finally lost. Instead of

dividing the house, the president called over the names of the counties, when the deputies rose and declared the tenor of their instructions; sometimes making speeches, sometimes giving a simple assent or dissent. This is the most common time chosen for speaking, though any one is at liberty to address the chamber before the voting begins.

The lower chamber in Hungary is strangely composed,—a mass of anomalies and inconsistencies, such as old constitutions will sometimes present. Old constitutions, however, are not to be despised. They have been formed to satisfy the wants of those who use them, not to fulfil a theory; and, although they may sometimes exhibit inequalities and inconsistencies, from which the work of many hands is rarely free, it should not be forgotten, that they possess the advantage of adapting themselves to changes which would destroy the harmony and solidity of a more regular structure.

The deputies forming the lower chamber are of different classes. First come the deputies of the counties, then those of the towns, and higher clergy, and lastly, those of the magnates or widows of magnates. The deputies of the fifty-two counties are chosen by the people* or constituent body, two for each county, who have, however, only one vote. They are, properly speaking, only delegates sent up to express the will of their constituents on certain questions, for which they are found in lodging, and receive twelve shillings per day. But if they are paid, they are forced to do their duty; one or other must be present at every decision, and neither can absent himself without permission.

The members communicate to the county meeting the motions about to be brought forward; the constituents debate these questions, sometimes during several days; and then, according to the wishes of the majority, instructions are framed for the deputy, as to the manner in which he is to vote. In case the deputy should act contrary to these directions, he is recalled; obliged to explain his conduct; and, if such explanation is not considered satisfactory, he is turned out and another elected. Many questions, of course, arise on which no instructions have been given, and here the deputy has only his own conscience to guide him: but he is obliged immediately to report what he has

Populus, in Hungarian Latin, means the nobles, clergy, and inhabitants of free towns; *plebs*, to which is usually appended "*misera contribuens*" is applied to the peasants only. Of the constituency of Hungary we shall speak more at large in the chapter on the nobles.

done. Notwithstanding all these checks, a deputy has much power and influence, and his recommendation and advice to his constituents have considerable effect in the framing of the instructions he receives.

In some cases where boldness of speech has brought the deputy into trouble, his county has come forward and declared that he only expressed the sentiments of his constituents, and that they were ready to answer for his conduct. In the instance of Balogh, when Government began the process against him, he immediately resigned his seat, and a meeting was called to elect a new member. The Lord Lieutenant came from Vienna with the avowed intention of persuading them to choose some one more agreeable to Government; and it somehow got wind that he had 3000*l.* with him to aid his eloquence. Some of the lower nobles, who are chiefly Protestants, zealous and not too enlightened, were easily induced by the report that Balogh was an enemy to their religion, and perhaps a little influenced also by the judicious distribution of the 3000*l.* aforesaid, to promise their votes against him. By some chance, this plan became known, and the Protestant clergy,—liberals, because oppressed,—at once undeceived their flocks; when, indignant at the deceit practised upon them, they all, to a man, voted for Balogh, and sent him back a stronger oppositionist than ever. So much for bribery in Hungary.

I know the feelings of an Englishman would be very strongly against this delegate system. I can fancy an old-fashioned county member declaring, "that no constituents should bind him hand and foot, and make him vote and speak according to their fancies instead of his own." "All very right, my good sir," an Hungarian might answer, "in your happy and united country, where a free press and a national government secure to the people a knowledge of every thing that passes, and a certainty that the good of the country is always the chief desire of their rulers, however they may differ as to the best means of obtaining it; but where no free press exists, where the interests of the ruling party may be opposed to the national welfare, where some of a small number of deputies, removed very far from their constituents, might possibly yield to the influence of threats or golden arguments, it is not so much amiss to have a strong and positive check upon them."

But I must not forget to mention the members of the royal boroughs, and the anomalous position which they occupy. They

have the right of sitting and speaking in the chamber, but not of voting. Jealous of the nobles, as possessing rights and privileges superior to themselves, and looking up to the Crown as their immediate and natural protector, they have ever been but little more than obsequious instruments in its hands: at least such is the excuse offered by liberal Hungarians for the violent, and apparently unjust proceeding of the other members of the Diet—namely, that of depriving the free towns of the right of vote which they certainly enjoyed at one period.

One vote among all the towns was insultingly offered by the nobles, and scornfully rejected; indeed, we cannot help lamenting that they did not, as they once contemplated, quit in a body the chamber where their presence was a degradation. Many of these places, it is true, are little better than old Sarums, and ill deserve any political privileges; but this alone is a poor reason for disfranchising all the boroughs of the kingdom. Almost all the liberal members declare themselves ready to restore this privilege to the towns when an improved municipal organization shall have freed them from the dictation of the Crown; and, with reference to the population, as soon as a more fair distribution of representative power can be effected. It is an abuse which requires a speedy remedy, for it begets daily a stronger anti-national feeling amongst a population rapidly increasing both in wealth and numbers.

With another class of complainants I have no sympathy whatsoever: these are the representatives of the chapters of cathedrals,—some very reverend and well-fed prebendaries, who sleep away their time in Presburg, instead of in the country. Though still allowed to speak, neither their talent nor information has been such as to secure for them a willing audience, and custom shuts their mouths, except on subjects interesting to their order.

The most ridiculous position of all is occupied by the representatives of absent magnates, and of the widows of magnates. A magnate, who for any good reason is unable to attend the Diet, or a widow who cannot appear in person, have both the power of sending to the lower chamber,—not to the upper, to which they themselves belong,—a delegate, who has no other privileges than those of sitting in the chamber, twisting his mustachios, and crying, "Haljuk! Haljuk! (hear! hear!) when any thing tickles his fancy. The fact is, this deputy is generally some young student of law, or poor dependant, whom business has brought to Presburg, and who thus gets his lodging at the expense of the town.

The right of summoning, proroguing, and dissolving the Diet, as well as fixing the place in which it shall be held, is, of course, a prerogative of the Crown;* but, according to law, it must be called together once at least in every three years, and that too, within the boundaries of Hungary. Almost ever since the Hapsburg family has reigned in Hungary, the Diets have been held in Presburg, on account of its proximity to Vienna; but it is loudly demanded, that in future they should be held in Pest. The Diet does not assemble like our parliament in annual sessions, but remains sitting till all the business is finished, so that a new election takes place for every Diet. In former times, a few weeks or months were generally sufficient to settle the affairs of the nation; but the present Diet has been already sitting for more than three years, and it is not expected to be dissolved for some months to come.

When the King has issued his royal letters calling on the counties and towns to send up their deputies, within six weeks, meetings are immediately called together, and the elections take place. After the chambers have gone through certain ceremonies, and are legally constituted, they send a deputation to the King to invite him to repair to the Diet. On his arrival in Presburg, the members of both chambers wait on him, and receive from his hands the royal propositions—a royal speech, in which are detailed all the measures recommended by the Crown to the consideration of the Diet. The business of the session commences with the debates in the Chamber of Deputies on these propositions, which are adopted or rejected as seems fit. If adopted, they are sent up to the magnates, and if they pass them also, they are presented together with the other acts of the states for the royal approval or rejection in mass at the end of the Diet. Although the royal propositions in theory ought to

* The prerogatives of the King of Hungary are strictly those befitting a limited monarchy. Among the principal are, the granting of nobility—except to foreigners—and all hereditary titles and dignities. The nomination to all high offices in the church and army, and to most of those in the state—the offices of palatine, sheriff, and county magistrate are exceptions. The prerogative of pardon, the right to coin, and other royal privileges. The command of the regular army, the declaring of war or peace, and the intercourse with foreign powers. The King has likewise the direction of public schools and universities, is head of the Protestant Church, and can admit or forbid the reception of the papal bulls. I believe the Crown has likewise the uncontrolled disposal of the public revenues; the Diet votes the amount, but does not control its expenditure.

constitute the sole objects of the labours of the Diet, they often form but a very inconsiderable part of them; for any member on receiving instructions from his constituents has a right to introduce any other measures he chooses under the title of "grievances." When the acts of the Diet have received the royal signature, they are forwarded to the different chief magistrates all over the country, to be registered and published in the counties, towns, and circles under their administration.

The Personal or President of the lower chamber, at the same time chief judge of the Royal Table, is appointed by the Crown, and in the absence of responsible ministers, to a certain extent answers for the Crown.

Among the most important reforms to be made,—or rather disputed questions to be settled,—with respect to the constitution and privileges of the Chamber of Deputies, are the establishment of the right to vote of the deputies of towns, the exclusion of the deputies of Chapters and Magnates, the election of their own President, the presence of responsible ministers, the presentation of a budget, and the publication of their debates.

On our first visit to Presburg, we had neglected to visit the Chamber of Magnates—the Peers of Hungary. When we returned we hastened to supply this omission.

In another part of the same building where we have already seen the assembled Deputies, the Magnates hold their sittings. As we took our places in the small gallery which overlooks the hall, we were struck with the profound silence which seemed to reign over the place. Through the centre of the room runs a long table, at which were seated some thirty persons, many of whom were ecclesiastics—among others, the bishop of the Greek church, with his long white beard,—all in black dresses, giving a solemn appearance to the place, which was broken only by a few gay uniforms of the Hungarian guard. Though plain, however, the Chamber of Magnates is certainly fitted up with more attention to ornament than that of the Deputies.

About one o'clock the Palatine, the Archduke Joseph, uncle to the present King, took his seat at the head of the table as President, and received the deputation of the lower Chamber, which brought up a bill for their consideration. The Archduke is a tall, very thin person, of advanced age, with that peculiar melancholy cast of countenance so characteristic of the reigning family of Austria, and which may be perceived in the old Spanish portraits of their ancestors just as distinctly as in every one of

the family at the present day. No one who has seen Velasquez's portraits of Charles the Second and his mother, could doubt for a moment from what blood the Palatine of Hungary is descended. Though occupying a position of great difficulty, liable to the suspicion of courting popularity on the one hand, and sacrificing the country to the Crown on the other, he has obtained the respect, I believe, of all parties. His knowledge of business and his devoted attention to it, are said to be extraordinary. That he should be an admirer of constitutional independence, or a warm advocate of popular rights, is hardly to be expected from an Archduke of Austria: but that he is a sincere friend of Hungary, and a zealous promoter of what he believes beneficial to her, even his opponents allow.

The bill now brought up from the Deputies, and to which the degree of importance attached by all parties, appeared ridiculous to a stranger, had reference to the appellation of the new King, and was to settle whether he should be addressed as Ferdinand the First, or Ferdinand the Fifth. The matter, however, was not so unimportant as it may appear; the fact is, he is Emperor Ferdinand the first of Austria, and King Ferdinand the Fifth of Hungary; and unless Hungary had ceased to be an independent country, which the greatest courtier would not dare to insinuate, there could be no question as to his proper title. The Magnates, however, thought otherwise: it was understood, that the Court desired that the style of Ferdinand the First should be used, and the Magnates were too anxious to please not to desire the same thing. The Deputies had now for the fourth time sent up this same bill, insisting on the title of Ferdinand the Fifth, and for the fourth time the Magnates were now about to reject it. Two or three short speeches were made in Latin, the Palatine seemed to sum up the evidence in the same language, and the question was declared decided.

As we afterwards heard, it was in vain the court party exhausted their breath and servility in favour of what they supposed the Court would wish. At the moment when the Magnates were as firm as rocks on the wrong side, the Court took the wise course of showing its contempt for such supporters, by sending down a proclamation:—"We, Ferdinand the Fifth, by the grace of God, King of Hungary, &c. &c."—adopting of its own accord what it knew to be right, and perceived to be the general wish, leaving the odium of having opposed it to its blind satellites. The Court is accused of often playing such tricks:

and why should it not? It has surely a right to use as it pleases men whose want of moral independence makes them exist only in its smiles.

Quiet as were the meetings of the Deputies, the Magnates far exceeded them in this quality; a dead silence seemed to weigh upon their deliberations: not a cheer, not a plaudit, was heard; and, as a young Radical observed, when he heard me remarking the circumstance, "not a sentiment that deserves one." Of the two or three Liberal members who were present, no one spoke; and not a word of Hungarian, therefore, was heard, for the Court party adhere most religiously to Latin. This is said to be in compliment to the Palatine, who once attempted to speak Hungarian, but only got laughed at for his politeness,—the Hungarians are as intolerant of a foreigner's blunders in their language as John Bull himself. But I suspect the Magnates have a still better reason for not speaking Hungarian, than mere courtesy; and that is, simply, because they cannot. So completely has a great part of the higher nobility been denationalized, that they know almost any language of Europe better than that of their native country.

Of the six or seven hundred nobles who have a right to take their seats in this Chamber, only thirty were present; the rest—some thinking it better to leave such matters to Government, some fearing the expense of a residence in town, some egotistically contenting themselves that they could do no good—stay at home, and let things take their course. Others again, not less egotists, proclaim in loud voices their contempt for the whole constitution; declare that nothing but revolution can improve the system, nothing but republican liberty benefit the state; while, in the mean time, they are content to smoke their pipes, and flog their peasants to prepare for the great change. As in England, the Upper Chamber here is considered the representative of the stationary system; and, in a country where the existing evils cry so loudly for reform, it may be supposed that it has not the voice of the country with it. In the commencement of the present session, a strong Liberal party assembled for the purpose of outvoting the churchmen in favour of a proposal for granting increased liberty to the Protestants, but it was carried against them; and, since then, they seem to have left the Chamber entirely. I doubt if, among the whole of the titled nobles of Hungary, a Tory majority would be found to exist; but so many are absent, that the very few Liberals who remain in the Chamber are totally powerless.

The position at present occupied by the Chamber of Magnates is one surrounded with doubts and difficulties on every side; its rights and constitution are every day a matter of question. It may be said to be composed of three classes of members: first, the higher Clergy; second, the Barons and Counts of the kingdom (Magnates by office;) and third, the Magnates by birth and title.

Thirty-five bishops and archbishops of the Catholic Church, and one Greek bishop, have seats in the Chamber of Magnates. Of the thirty-five Catholic bishops, sixteen are only titular bishops; their sees being in Turkey.

The Catholic prelacy of Hungary is commonly said to form a very wealthy, very bigoted, and not very learned body.* In the Diet, they are not only the most strenuous advocates of Protestant exclusion, but are stanch opponents of any reformation in education, or any extension of liberty to the lower classes. It is said that one of them offered a young Magnate, whose youthful follies had placed him in pecuniary difficulties—though it had not corrupted his integrity—to pay all his debts if he would speak against the Protestants on an approaching debate: the answer was one of the cleverest speeches in their favour made during the whole session.

The Archbishop of Gran—the Prince primate as he is entitled—is possessed of wealth and power beyond all example; and, in some things, little below that of royalty itself. Among other remains of a former state of society, is the right enjoyed by the Archbishop of conferring a kind of nobility, which is hereditary, and enjoys nearly the same privileges as that conferred by the Crown. A tenure of service was formerly attached to this right; and it was commonly only given to such as distinguished themselves in war under the guidance of their lord—alike a spiritual and carnal warrior. It is now many years since the clergy ceased to do military service for their lands: but they hold just as fast as ever to the lands themselves, as well as to all the power and

* This may appear a very sweeping and harsh judgment, and I am quite willing to allow that there are many and striking exceptions. I have had the pleasure of meeting members of the Catholic clergy, from the bishop to the parish-priest, who would have been an honour to any country, any religion, and any profession; but the fact stands recorded in history, that the Catholic clergy in the reign of Leopold solemnly protested against that monarch's ratification of the Toleration edict of his predecessor, and all I have heard of their conduct during the present Diet tends to prove how little they have changed.

influence they confer; nay, I doubt if they would not prefer to buckle on the shield, and place a lance in the rest, rather than forfeit their places at the Diet as Magnates of Hungary, or lose their seigneurial rights as lords of the soil.

The second class—the *Barones et comites Regni*, as they are called—is headed by the Nádor or Palatine, the highest, and one of the most ancient dignities of the kingdom. For the office of Palatine the King nominates four persons, of whom I believe two must be Protestants; and from these the Diet—that is, the two Chambers in common—elects one. Since the reign of Maria Theresa, the Palatine has always been chosen from the royal family; but so strong a feeling exists of the inconvenience of this, that it is scarcely probable it will occur again. The exact duties of the Palatine are very difficult to define. He is commonly called a mediator between the King and the people; and it is in this character he is often invited to present petitions. When the nobles appear in arms, he is their natural chief. He is president of the Chamber of Magnates, and of the highest court of justice, the *Septemviral Table*. As *Locum-tenens et Palatinus Regni*, he is likewise President of the Vice-regal Council, which does, or ought to possess the executive power in Hungary; but, of this, more anon.

The other Barons and Counts of the kingdom are the great officers of state, and the lords lieutenant of counties. The first are fourteen in number; and, with the exception of the two guardians of the Crown, who are chosen like the Palatine, they are all nominated by the King. The latter are fifty-two in number, and are likewise named by the Crown, except in a few cases where the office has become hereditary in certain families.

The third class—called Regalists, because summoned individually by royal letters—is composed of every titled Prince, Count, and Baron who has arrived at the age of twenty-five years; and, as the title in Hungary descends to all the sons alike, they have all an equal right to a seat in the Upper Chamber.

There is considerable obscurity as to the origin and rights of the Chamber of Magnates. It is certain that at one time the Two Chambers sat together,* and even yet, when they cannot

* According to Klein, the Two Chambers were not formally separated till the Diet held in 1562 under Ferdinand I., the first monarch of the line of Hapsburg. It is extraordinary that Engel says nothing of this, though he enters at considerable length into the history of that Diet. Tradition attributes the separation to the accidental circumstance of the chamber

agree, they sometimes come together in what is called a mixed sitting (*sessio mixta*,) and decide by acclamation. This, however, has been less resorted to of late than formerly. Since a more compact opposition has been formed among the Deputies, the Magnates would be in the minority; and the mixed sittings, formerly the resource of the Court when in difficulty, are discontinued.

The Upper Chamber has at present no power of bringing forward any measure, nor I believe even of proposing amendments on those sent up from below; the power of veto, or approval, is all that is granted to it: but this it uses most liberally, for, in the present session, the same question has been rejected eleven times, after as many approvals by the Deputies. But the most extraordinary anomaly is the undecided privileges of some of their own body. It is questioned whether the nobles deriving their seats from their titles only, have an equal right to vote with those deriving their seats from their offices and estates. In consequence of this, the Palatine, on some occasions, is said to have decided against the absolute majority: *vota non numerantur, sed ponderantur*, was declared to be the principle; and it was for him to hold the scales.

As it seems to be now a pretty well established opinion, even in the most democratic constitutions, that a second Chamber of a more independent character than the elected one is necessary to curb the first ebullitions of popular feeling, and to give solidity and consistence to a mixed constitution, perhaps the best thing the Hungarians can do is to make their Chamber of Magnates a really efficient and powerful body. The first points to be settled would be, the absolute power of the majority; the equality of rights among all the members; the determination of the manner of voting; and the extension of the privilege of the initiative in all questions not concerning finance.

If it were desired to effect a still more efficient reform, a fair balance of power might probably be maintained by leaving to the King the nomination of the bishops (if it were thought expedient to retain them,) the great officers of the Crown, and the lords lieutenant; and by granting to the Magnates by title, in lieu of seats in the Chamber, the right of electing from among

where they met being too small to hold them both; and lays the scene, I think, at Œdenburg. It is probable that it had often been practised before it was formally introduced.

themselves a number of representative peers for life, equal in number to those nominated by the King. Such a body, alike independent of the arbitrary will of the Crown, or the changing passions of the mass,—powerful from its wealth, and respectable from its talent and knowledge of business,—would soon assume a position which might effectually enable it both to check the inroads of the Crown on the rights of the nation, and shield the throne from attacks on the part of the people.

CHAPTER VII.

DANUBE FROM PRESBURG TO PEST.

Departure from Presburg.—The Danube.—Regulation of its Course.—Mills.—The Islands Great and Little Schütt.—Raab.—Komorn.—Neszmély and its Wine.—Gran.—Crusaders and Turks.—The Dinner.—Contrast with a Voyage on the Danube before the Introduction of Steam.—Miserable Boats.—Company.—Journey.—Spitz.—Sleeping Accommodations.—The Toilette.—Wissegrád, and Wissegrádi Clara.—Beautiful Scenery.—Waitzen.—Approach to Pest.

Long before the sun had well warmed this lower earth, we were summoned from our beds, to prepare for the Danube (or Duna, as it is called in Hungarian) steam-boat, which started from Presburg precisely at five o'clock. A sunrise may be a very delightful thing, and I have almost enjoyed it when stern necessity obliged me to be moving at such a time; but I do most solemnly protest against the imputation of ever having risen voluntarily at so unseemly an hour for so absurd a purpose. To a sunset commend me if you will; there you have glorious colours, and feelings congenial to them,—all the brilliancy of golden lights and purple shadows, all the poetry of warmth, the luxury of shade, and the still sweetness of reposing nature: but in the morning the poor sun itself looks no better than a huge Seville orange; and the raw air, and cold dead smell of night, together with the gray tints of surrounding objects, make one shiver at such mockery of life and heat. I would just as soon get up to see the house-maid make my study-fire, as worship the god of day till he has fairly warmed the air, and made it fit for mortal breathing.

Not so apparently the *Kaiserliche-Königliche-Oestreichische-privilegirte-Donau-Dampfschifffarht Gesellschaft* (Imperial Royal Austrian privileged Danube Steam-boat Conveyance Company,)—I wish they had a more euphonious name!—and, in obedience to their strict rules and regulations, we were before five o'clock, opposite the Königsberg, and descending the little moveable pier into the steam-boat. In spite of the early hour,

a crowd was collected to watch its departure,—friends anxious to say the last kind words to those about to leave them. Nor were we, strangers though we were, without some hearty shakes of the hand from men we had never seen before we entered that place, but of whom we shall retain a most kindly recollection for years to come.

The cries of the captain in foreign English, "Back her!" "Ease her!" "Let her go!" warned us that we were already off; and, almost before we could look round, we were in the middle of the Danube:—another moment, and Presburg was running away from us:—yet another, and nothing but the castle could be seen, peering over the thick woods which come down to the water's edge on either side. For many miles no object of interest meets the traveller's expectant eye: the country all round is flat and sandy, sometimes wooded, sometimes spread out in rich meadows, looking every where as if it had at one period formed the bed of the river itself, which, even now, frequently changes its course. The immense arms, which the Danube in this part sends off at every half-mile or less, are many of them wider than the parent stream itself, if that term can be applied to any part of it; for it is often uncertain which course the steersman should prefer, the height of the water, and the appearance of the stream, guiding him in his choice. This, and a very undulating course, are the natural effects of the flatness of its bed; and it is to remedy these defects that the commissioners for the regulation of the Danube direct their chief efforts.*

We passed some well-constructed embankments, erected at a great expense, a little below Presburg; one of the largest cost 8,000*l*. By this means the force of the current is turned in a particular direction, and made to act on a fixed point with such power, that in a wonderfully short time it cuts out passages, brings down banks, straightens the course, and slits up whole arms, which would otherwise consume the water, and often lead to a change of the bed of the river itself. One of the greatest difficulties of the navigation at present, arises from the sharp turns the steersman is often obliged to make to avoid the sandbanks, which the force of the stream, diminished by the immense expanse over which the water spreads, is not sufficient to remove of itself. By means of these embankments, however, it is cal-

*Baron Putton is the commissioner for this part of the Danube; and, next to Count Széchenyi, he is the person to whom Hungary is most indebted for the success of steam navigation.

culated that in a very few years, the course of the river will be straightened, its bed deepened, and the navigation rendered practicable at all seasons. At the period of our voyage the water was low; and we could perceive, by the constant attention and watchful looks of the captain, that he was by no means certain that he might not strike a sand-bank, where it was very possible we might have had to remain twelve hours without being able to get off again.

In the first few miles we passed, I think, some hundred water-mills. They are but rude structures, though they seem to answer tolerably well the purposes for which they are intended. They are composed of two deck-boats, containing the mill-works, with a clumsy wheel between them, which is moved by the force of the current. They are generally in rows of eight or ten fastened together at a short distance from the bank. In winter they are drawn up high and dry ashore.

The islands, Great and Little Schütt, formed by two arms of the Danube to the north and south of the main stream, occupy either bank for more than fifty miles of its course. The stranger is surprised to hear that these islands form one of the most fruitful districts in the whole country,—They were formerly called "The Golden Gardens;" for he scarcely sees a single village throughout the whole of the route. Nevertheless, they are well peopled; but the sudden overflows to which the Danube is subject have driven the inhabitants to some distance from its banks, where they may be found congregated in large and flourishing villages.

Just above Gönyö, the southern arm, forming the Little Schütt, rejoins the Danube; and at some distance off may be observed the spires of Raab, standing forth from the sandy plain so fatal to the arms of Hungary. It was before this place that the undisciplined squadrons composed of the nobles of Hungary were dispersed, almost without an effort, by the well-trained legions of Napoleon; and, with them, the last hopes of Austria to resist the imperious commands of France.

The first place of any importance on the banks of the Danube, between Presburg and Pest, is Komorn, situated at the junction of the Danube and Waag, or rather the Danube and its northern branch, which receives the Waag. Defended on two sides by the Danube and the Waag, and enclosed by strong walls, Komorn boasts the honour of being a virgin fortress, in testimony of which it bears a small statue of a maiden on its walls. Soon after pass-

ing Komorn, the flat is agreeably broken by a low range of hills, following the north branch of the river for a considerable distance, and celebrated for the excellence of their wines. Neszmély, a small and insignificant village, grows the most esteemed. The Neszmüller is one of the highest-flavoured as well as most costly wines of Hungary.

The hill of Gran, opposite the embouchure of the river of the same name, now comes in sight; on which is situated the half-finished cathedral and residence of Archbishop Rudnay. This church was begun in 1821; and, after an expenditure of an immense sum of money, still remains unfinished for want of funds. It is difficult to form any opinion from so passing a view as that we could obtain from the steamboat, but I doubt if it will equal the expectations the Hungarians have formed of it.

Gran, the birth-place of St. Stephen, the patron saint of Hungary, is the seat of the Prince-primate, and perhaps the richest see in Europe; its revenues place those of Durham and Canterbury, even in their best days, completely in the shade.* It is difficult to ascertain their exact amount, but common rumour generally estimates them at 100,000*l.* per annum, though some reduce them to eighty or even sixty thousand.

Gran is memorable in the history of the crusades as having witnessed the friendly meeting of Frederick Barbarossa and Bela, King of Hungary. The German Emperor was received with all due honours by his brother monarch; whole magazines and stores were presented to him, to aid his expedition; and Bela even accompanied him to the mouth of the Save, to protect him from attacks on the part of his subjects.

When the power of the Moslems had extended into Europe, Gran was for a long time an advanced post of their armies in Hungary; and its fall before Sobiesky was justly looked upon as

* The Catholic priesthood in general are wealthy, at least in comparison with their Protestant brethren, though not exorbitantly so, and probably not more so than their habits of charity and hospitality require. The whole body of Catholic clergy, according to Schwartner, amounts to 9027; of Catholic souls, to nearly 5,000,000; so that there is about one priest to every five hundred souls. The lowest payment of a priest is 300 f. c. m. or 30*l.*, and is generally much more; besides which, he enjoys fees for sacraments, and a certain measure of corn from every married pair. He has also thirty or forty acres of land, a house, and the right to a certain quantity of firewood, cut and carried free of expense. This salary is chiefly derived from tithe; but in some cases I believe it is paid by the landlord, and in others by Government. The greater part of the priesthood is derived from among the lesser citizens and peasants.

the first step towards their total expulsion from this country. It was in the subsequent campaign, in which Waitzen, Wissegrád, and Buda were taken by the Duke of Loraine, that Eugene, then a volunteer in the army, first learned those lessons in war which afterwards enabled him to humble two of the mightiest powers in Europe—Turkey and France.

A few minutes sufficed to put on shore some passengers at Gran, for whom a rude boat rowed by still ruder boatmen was despatched from the town on a signal being given from the steamboat, and in a few minutes we were again under weigh. As I saw the long tables laid out along both sides of the deck, and a merry party of not less than a hundred persons sit down to a comfortable dinner, as well served as was possible on such an occasion, I could not help contrasting our present position, and its well-ordered society, with a voyage on the Danube before the introduction of steamboats, and the strange incidents and odd companions to which it introduced the traveller.

It was but three years before this time that I found myself at Linz, on the upper Danube, with a firm determination not to proceed to Vienna by any other means than the river. It required nothing less than such a determination to enable me to persevere, against the advice of every one I consulted on the subject. There were no regular boats even for the conveyance of goods, still less of passengers, between Linz and Vienna, at that time; and I was told I must wait till some of the Bavarian boats came down, in which, as they generally stopped an hour or two at Linz, I might be enabled to take my passage. The second morning, a boat was announced at the quay, and in half an hour the landlord of the inn had packed me up a basket of provisions for two days, and a good store of wine, for he assured me I should get nothing but Bavarian beer in the boat; and without further inquiry I hastened down and got on board.

As soon as I had time to look about me, I found myself in as old a specimen of naval architecture,—as singular a malformation of planks and poles as ever was put together: a Norfolk coaster would have taken it for a floating sheep-pen: or, if we may believe popular illustrations of Scripture history, such was the ark which Noah constructed for himself and his family in the days of the Flood. This *Kehlhammer*,—as this kind of boat is called, from Kehl, where they are built,—is a narrow flat-bottomed vessel of about one hundred and twenty feet long, and bearing more than one hundred tons' burden. On the sides of the vessel

are raised walls of planks about six feet high, covered in with a slanting roof, forming a long house, which, with the exception of a few yards at the bows and stern, occupies the whole boat.

The *élite* of the passengers were collected on the few yards at the head, and under a small portion of the roof spared for their accommodation, the rest of the covered part being filled up with goods; while the roof was occupied by the *ignobile vulgus*,—some score *Handwerksburschen* who had received a free passage on condition of helping to row the boat. From the head as well as from the stern protruded an oar of at least thirty feet long, to serve both the one and the other, as a rudder,—for it is quite immaterial which end goes first,—and from the sides four others of like dimensions, for the propulsion of the boat. These oars, which take four or five men to work each of them, were pulled by the *Handwerksburschen*, who laughed, sung, and begged with all the light-heartedness and impudence so peculiar to their order. We of the quarter-deck consisted of two Austrian civil officers, wearing a little silver image of the double-headed eagle in their caps, with short meerschaums peeping from their pockets, and embroidered tobacco-bags—the birth-day presents of some fair friends—hanging from their buttons, and possessed of all the characteristic slowness and *bonhomie* of their country united to all the fancied dignity of office; a young artist from Munich, returning with his dusty knapsack and worn-out shoes from a foot journey through the Tyrol; a fat burger of the little town of Molk, with his gay and pretty niece; and one or two others, without sufficient interest to have fixed themselves on my memory.

In less time than I have taken to recount it, the stream had borne us into the middle of the thick white waters of the Danube; the *Handwerksburschen* sung as they plashed the long heavy oars into the water; and, in a few minutes, the green hills and white towers of Linz were passing from our view.

Sometimes urged on by the united efforts of the rowers, sometimes floating listlessly down the stream, we passed the whole of that day; and night-fall found us near the town of Spitz. We had no protection from a burning sun, and no seat even, save the rough planks of the rude deck. The day was however pleasantly occupied in admiring the noble scenery of the Danube, making love to the fat burger's pretty niece in bad German, and listening to the good-natured nonsense of the Austrian *employés*. The only variety was, when our united prog-baskets were emptied to

form a very sorry dinner; when the Strudel and Wirbel,—the Scylla and Charybdis of the Upper Danube,—threatened our frail bark with ruin; or when a few minutes' delay beneath the proudly crowned heights of Mölk restored to her walls the burger and his niece.

The night, however, had no such charms to make up for its inconveniences. As we came to anchor at the miserable little town of Spitz, the boat emptied the whole of its remaining crew into the one poor public-house of the place. The *Handwerksburschen* and boatmen secured the large drinking-room, where they rolled themselves on some straw, and sung, drank, and smoked till morning. After some hours' waiting we obtained an apology for a supper, which was washed down by the Spitz wine, notorious only for the excellent vinegar it makes, and, to judge from its sourness, very little making it would require. My Austrian friends had kindly bespoken a bed for me, so that all care on that subject was off my shoulders; but, when the time arrived, I was a little astonished to find that they and the Bavarian were to join me in the occupation of a small room with precisely space for four beds, the ends of which almost touched each other. The beds themselves were boxes filled with straw; over which were laid a mattress and one dirty sheet, and on this a heap of pillows and a down bed, in dark cotton covers. It was intended, untravelled reader, that we should lie on the sheet, but under the bed; for here they use only one sheet, and employ the featherbed as a substitute for coverlet and blankets. Some of our companions were even less fortunate. A lady and her nephew occupied a little room on one side, and four or five stout fellows a still less one on the other. Of course, undressing was out of the question; and though we did manage to get through the few hours remaining,—what with smoking our pipes, laughing at our difficulties, and listening to the songs of the *Handwerksburschen* below,—we were not sorry when they roused us at three to say the boat was ready to start.

If our dormitory arrangements had been rather questionable, those for the toilette were to me quite incomprehensible. One pint decanter of water, a glass, and a pie-dish-looking basin, with a long narrow shred of cloth meant for a towel, were the only preparations visible for the ablutions of four persons. I modestly waited to see how the others would proceed: one of my friends of the double-headed eagle commenced. He poured out a glass of water, of which he took a large draught; and after using it as

most men do, in washing their mouths, he deliberately squirted it into his joined hands, and so applied it to his face! Several applications of the same kind, and a little dry-rubbing with a corner of the long shred, completed the washing of hands, face, and mouth. In mute astonishment I watched all these three nasty individuals go through their unclean ceremonies, ere I fully comprehended that they really thought they were washing themselves! As for the rest of their doings, Rabelais has described them in the history of the great Gargantua: "Après se pignoyt du pigne Alemaing, cestoyt des quatre doigtz et le pouce: car ses precepteurs disoyent que soy aultrement pigner, lauer, et nettoyer, estoyt perdre temps en ce monde." Anxious as I was to conform myself to the habits of the country in which I was, and unwilling as I might be to incur the accusation of English superciliousness, I need scarcely say that even my powers of endurance were exhausted. Captain B. Hall may object to a pump in the open air, but there are times when such a resource is invaluable! Thanks to Count Széchenyi and the company with the long name, a man may now travel from one end of the Danube to the other, and wash himself almost like a gentleman every morning.

After leaving Gran the scene undergoes a delightful change: instead of the flat plain to which the eye had been accustomed, fine mountains rise on either side, green and precipitous, from the water's edge. The captain, who had never before for a moment quitted his station on the paddle-box, now sat at his ease as unconcerned as any of his passengers: a child might have steered the vessel, so deep and regular was the stream. As we were admiring the varied landscapes which the bends of the river successively brought in view, a new turn introduced us to the scattered ruins of Wissegrád. On the very summit of the hill are the remains of the stronghold of the race of Arpád,—the keep, as it were, of the fortress; while halfway down between this and the little village on the banks of the Danube are the more elegant towers of the castle which Mathias Corvinus converted into what was called in that day "an earthly paradise."

No spot in Hungary has witnessed more of the tragedies of history than Wissegrád. The prison of two of Hungary's kings, and the death-place of several others,—now selected from its strength to the dangerous honour of the guardianship of the sacred crown, now a prey to the destroying ravages of the Ottoman,—there is still a story of poetic horrors located here, so

far exceeding all the others as to have acquired for its heroine the popular appellation of Wissegrádi Clára.

It was in the first years of the fourteenth century that Carl Robert, King of Naples, was placed on the Hungarian throne by the intrigues of Pope Boniface the Eighth, who, on the failure of the race of 'Arpád, declared the kingdom a fief of Rome, and arrogated to himself the right of nomination to the crown. Exhausted by civil wars, the Hungarians unwillingly yielded so far as to choose the Italian king for their monarch; but they paid dearly for their weakness. Carl Robert delighted to introduce into his new kingdom the shows and entertainments common to the more refined courts of Europe. We read at this period of frequent tilts and tournaments within the walls of Wissegrád, and of royal entertainments in which four thousand loaves of bread and two thousand bottles of wine were consumed every day for a fortnight. But with this pomp and luxury came a looseness of morals,—the common fruit of a meretricious civilization engrafted on barbarism,—of which the rude but simple Hungarians had no previous idea; the excesses of the new king and his court were a scandal to the whole land.

Following the licentious example of Carl Robert, his brother-in-law, Casimir, King of Poland, then on a visit at Wissegrád, forced from Clára Felizian, a lady of the court of surpassing beauty, and virtuous as she was beautiful, favours denied to his prayers. In this infamy he is said to have been aided by the queen, whom jealousy of her husband's admiration of the maid had probably driven to this crime. The moment Clara could escape from her enemies, she hastened to demand the protection of her father, Felizian von Zach, an old and attached officer of the king. No sooner did the poor old man receive the piteous complaints of his darling child, than, maddened with rage at the shame put upon his family, he sped to Wissegrád, and, unannounced, gained entrance to the castle. The king and queen were seated at table with their two children, when, sabre in hand, the injured father rushed upon them, and striking at every thing in his way, he wounded the king, and cut off four fingers from the queen's hand before the attendants could destroy him.

If the revenge was bloody and unjust in its object, what can be said for the horrid cruelties by which Carl Robert satiated his rage? The innocent cause of this tragedy was seized, and suffered the mutilation of her hands, nose, and lips; and in this condition was led through different cities, to the cry of "So

perish the enemies of the king!" Her body, and that of her young brother, were then bound to horses' tails, and finally thrown to the dogs. Even the most distant relations of this unhappy family, who could have taken no possible part in the affair, were seized and executed, "in order that the whole of the race of traitors might be extinguished." From this time, say historians, the arms of Carl Robert were no longer attended with their wonted success.

After a few more miles of beautiful mountain scenery, the country becomes more open, the domes and towers of Waitzen come into view, and the Danube, changing its course, makes a sudden turn to the south, and hastens on to the capital of Hungary. On the west the mountains, though at some distance from the river, now run parallel with it, and form a beautiful feature in the landscape; while to the east extends that vast plain which occupies so great a part of this country.

It was a fine summer's evening as we approached the end of our journey, and I shall never forget my astonishment at the picture I then saw. The mountains, which had receded from the river, seemed again to approach its very edge; for some distance they were covered with vineyards almost to the top, but, as we approached Buda, these yielded to buildings which appeared to us a succession of magnificent palaces. As we drew still nearer, the beautiful Elizabeth Island, with its fresh groves and sloping banks, formed a lovely foreground; while, beyond, were ranged on the one side the palace and fortifications of Buda, terminating in the bold and rocky Blocksberg, and on the other lay the splendid structures which line the quay of modern Pest. Whether it was surprise at the unexpected magnificence and extent of the capital, whether the light of the setting sun imparted some magic beauty to them, or whether it was our imaginations that fairly ran away with us, I know not; but with one assent we declared we had never seen a more magnificent sight than that presented by our first view of Buda-Pest.

A salute from the steamer, returned from the shore, soon announced to all expectant friends and empty fiacres that it was time to hasten to the packet-pier; and, before we came alongside, the bank was covered with a crowd of persons interested in the steamboat or her occupants.

Among some half-dozen of persons who seemed privileged to come on board without waiting the conclusion of the preliminary arrangements, our attention was immediately directed towards

one in particular by the deference paid to him both by the passengers and crew, and the respect with which every one seemed to regard him. He was a short and rather dark-complexioned man, with a singularly bright eye, and dressed in a style so completely English, that, but for the moustache, I should have supposed him a countryman. Every eye was on him, every one was anxious to greet him as he passed; while his own composed features and compressed mouth told he was a man who knew he was observed, and had to act a conspicuous part in the drama of life.

It was the Count Széchenyi, who had come to inquire of the captain how he had got over the sand-banks, and what was the actual state of the navigation. But we must give him a new chapter.

CHAPTER VIII.

COUNT SZECHENYI ISTVAN.

Count Széchenyi, an Officer of Hussars, a Traveller, a Reformer.—Improvement in the Breed of Horses.—Races.—Magyar Language.—Széchenyi's Writings—the "Credit"—his Judgment on England—Character of his Writings.—Establishment of Casino.—Bridge over the Danube.—Nobles taxed.—Steam Navigation.—Political Career.—Prudence.—M. Tasner.

COUNT SZECHENYI ISTVAN* is the third son of the founder and benefactor of the Museum of Pest, a scion of the same house which produced two of the most distinguished archbishops of Hungary. For seventeen years Széchenyi served in the Austrian army; and it was not till the peace had rendered it an idle life, and removed all chance of distinction, that he determined to quit it. Perhaps, disgusted with the system of favouritism or the personal enmity which had kept him down to the rank of captain; perhaps moved by that spirit of regeneration, which, from the mountains of Transylvania spread over the plains of Hungary, and was felt even at the gates of Vienna itself; or, it may be, warned that the freedom with which he had dared, under the influence of this spirit, in his place as an Hungarian magnate, to address the upper chamber, was inconsistent with the uniform he wore;—such have been suggested among the causes which may have driven him from the army, and which soon placed him in the foremost rank of Hungarian patriots.

The leisure which he now enjoyed was occupied in foreign travel. England particularly fixed his notice. Our manners, our institutions, our commerce were objects of his study, and offered him useful hints for the improvement of his native land.

The causes which impeded the introduction of commerce in Hungary, and the great development of her natural resources which must result from their removal, first occupied his attention,

* In Hungarian, the Christian-name is placed after the surname, as in Natural History the name of the species follows that of the genus.

At home, he found a government and people mutually distrustful. The Hungarians complained to him that foreign—so they called Austrian—jealousy and oppression were the sole causes of all their misfortunes; while, beyond the Carpathians, he heard his countrymen described as a tyrannical, ignorant, and turbulent nobility, the oppressors of a poor, idle, and slavish peasantry;—the one class who would not, the other who could not effect any thing for the common advantage of their country. On all sides, a reform in Hungary was declared impossible.

Széchenyi was not to be turned from his object. His plan was cautiously laid down, and has been so far steadily followed up,—to labour incessantly at improvements, and to pursue such only as the strength of his means gave him a reasonable hope that with unwearied perseverance he might carry through. In common with others, he has always striven for the great objects of reform in the laws and institutions of the country, an extension of the rights of the lower classes, and a more equitable and just government; but his great and peculiar glory is in the path which he has marked out alone, and which, in spite of all obstacles, he still follows, with the greatest success,—namely, the improvement of the material condition of Hungary.

One of the first objects to which Széchenyi drew the attention of his countrymen was the improvement of the breed of horses; a subject particularly suited to their taste, and likely to attract their notice. A large stud, often from one to two hundred horses, forms almost a necessary part of a nobleman's establishment; and yet they rarely bred any thing but a cross of the common country horse with the large, slow, high-actioned Spanish horse, a race of little use but for the pomp of ceremony. Széchenyi introduced the English race-horse and hunter, and, to show their superiority, he instituted races and kept a pack of hounds; in short, he succeeded in making English horses a fashion, which is now generally followed.

The races take place twice a year,—at Pest about the end of May, and in autumn at Parendorf near Presburg—and are so well attended, that it is evident they suit the taste of the people, and it is highly probable that they will one day form a part of the national amusements.

An improvement in the breed of horses was an object well worthy Széchenyi's attention, and nothing was more likely to promote it than the establishment of races at the capital; but some have thought that objects of a deeper interest than the encourage-

ment of thorough-breds might have been dreamed of in their institution. The Diet ought by law to sit every three years; but, when the government is strong, it sometimes dispenses with its services, as it did during and after the last war for twenty-five years; and then the nobles have no object of common interest to bring them together. When minds clash not with minds, they are apt to grow rusty and lose somewhat of their sharpness and polish; a thousand useful ideas and beneficial projects, a thousand high resolves and patriotic schemes, expire untried, unheard of, from want of opportunity to communicate them to others. This opportunity to meet and communicate the races afford, without a pretext for interference or interruption. Many come they know not why; the master-minds command, and they obey.

The system so long and so ably followed up, of Germanizing Hungary, had succeeded to such a degree as to destroy to a considerable extent the feelings of nationality among the higher nobles: most of them were ignorant of the language; few of them took any interest in the affairs of Hungary, except in the preservation of their own privileges; and some even affected to despise their countrymen, because of a little outward rudeness, of which the absenteeism pursued by the more polished and wealthy was the main cause. Fortunately the well-wishers of Hungary knew how influential a principle the spirit of nationality is in the regeneration of a country; nor did they forget how strongly the language of one's childhood, with which man's earliest and dearest associations are connected, acts in exciting that spirit.

The restoration of the Hungarian language was therefore the first object. Széchenyi himself, from disuse, was no longer master of it: he made himself so, and became one of the most influential in its diffusion. He was the first in the Chamber of Magnates who spoke in Hungarian; till then Latin was always used in the debates, as, we have seen, it still is by the Palatine and by the court party. Few thought of reading Hungarian, still fewer, except some poets, of writing in it; Széchenyi published several political works in the language, and Hungarian authorship has become fashionable. Among men it is now the medium of conversation; at public dinners, toasts and speeches in German would not be listened to; and at Pest, whatever may be the case at Vienna, Hungarian gentlemen are now ashamed to be thought ignorant of the Hungarian language.

The establishment of a society for the development of the

Hungarian language was proposed by Széchenyi in the Diet, and was as usual met by innumerable objections, of which the want of funds was the most cogent. "I willingly contribute one year's income," (6000*l.*) said Széchenyi; "I second it with 4000*l.*" said Count Károlyi György; the example was catching, and 30,000*l.* were soon subscribed.

I have some hesitation in speaking of the writings of Count Széchenyi, for I have never been able to master the difficulties of the language; and we all know that translations, even the best, convey but indifferently the spirit of the original. Many of his works too, have not been translated, of these I can only give the title-page. It would be, however, too great an omission not to speak of what has produced so great an effect; and I shall therefore give a short analysis (from the German translation) of his "Hitel," or "Credit," the work which has been most extensively read, and which has gained him the most fame.

The "Hitel" is an inquiry into the causes of the want of commercial credit in Hungary, with suggestions for their removal. In the introduction, Count Széchenyi attacks one of the great drawbacks on Hungarian progress,—the want of a common purpose, and a common opinion. "All are anxious to build," he writes, "and every one at the same building; but unfortunately each wishes to lay his foundation stone in a different spot, and begin his work in a different style. Many would like to commence in the middle, and some seem to think the best plan of building a house is to begin with the roof. Few set themselves to work at the foundation. 'Oh! if the Ludovica road in Croatia were but toll-free!' says one.—'Give me rather a suspension-bridge between Buda and Pest!' answers another.—'First of all, let us lay out a promenade along the banks of the Danube, and plant it with trees; and while they are growing up, we shall have time to—' 'No, no; I say, a Magyar theatre, and the Magyar language, that will keep up our nationality!'—'Ah!' says another, 'if our rich magnates would only come and live at home, instead of spending all their money in foreign lands, and take a part in our county meetings!'—'Tut, man!' grumbles a neighbour, 'that's all nothing; if they would not bring those nasty foreign fashions into the country,—those shoes and stockings, instead of stout Magyar boots,—and those great hairy—how do they call them?—*coliers Grecs*, in which they hide their honest Magyar faces!'—'The paper money is our ruin, friend!' observes one; 'if we could only get hold of Krem-

nitz ducats and keep Hungarian gold and silver within the boundaries of Hungary; then—' 'Nay,' answers a second, 'but the salt-tax! if the salt-tax was but lower!' and so on to the end of the chapter. Every man believes his own plan so much the best and wisest, that, without it, no step can be made in the march of Hungarian improvement.

Others, again, he adds, lay all the blame on Government; others lament that Hungary's glory is past, and mourn the olden time. To all he answers, "Seek what is practical, depend on yourselves for your reform, and keep well in mind that the star of Hungary's glory has yet to shine."

Széchenyi next tries to persuade them that inquiry into their state will show them that their country is capable of much more than is at present supposed; enlisting even the laziest in his cause by the lightness and familiarity of his illustrations. He then begins the more formal part of his work, by proving that the Hungarian land-owner is poorer than he ought to be, from the quantity and quality of his possessions; and that he does not possess those comforts which his circumstances ought to afford him. He next shows that the Hungarian proprietor cannot, at the present moment, cultivate his land to the greatest advantage, because there is no mutual understanding among Hungarians, no commercial credit; while the common holdings of land, the monopolies, and limitation of prices, the loss occasioned by compulsory labour, and the collection of rent in the form of tithe, all tend to impede improvements in agriculture.

From this Széchenyi goes to the subject of commerce, and the causes assigned for its low state in Hungary are examined: the geographical position of the country, the want of capital, the inability to compete with other countries, and the amount and uncertainty of duties on exportation,—and, he might have added, with more force, on importation,—are illustrated with a facility peculiar to our author. The immediate causes of the want of commercial credit he considers to be the excess of regulations, the deficiency of productions, the defective state of communication, the expense and uncertainty of the existing means of transport, and the absence of that strict commercial probity without which an extensive traffic can scarcely exist.

The means by which this credit is to be obtained Széchenyi points out; and contends especially for the establishment of laws for the more certain and easy recovery of debts, and enforcement of contracts: and he combats most forcibly the arguments

brought against this on the score of the dangers of extensive commercial speculations, the unconstitutional spirit of laws delivering over the noble into the power of his creditor, the ruin and downfall of old families, which it is thought must be the consequence of them, and such other reasons as an Englishman may hear any day from a certain quarter of the House of Lords in a debate on the usury laws. Here, as well indeed as throughout the whole work, the prejudices and follies, the ignorance and false pride of the Hungarians, Széchenyi has most severely lashed.

The example of England is frequently held up for imitation, and to the common objections cast against it Széchenyi gives an answer which shows how well he appreciates and understands the best part of our institutions.

"It is impossible," he observes, "to have visited England, and to have seen the vast progress which free institutions have enabled her to make, whether in material improvements, or in protecting the holiest rights of humanity, and not pity those miserable creatures who traduce so great a nation. England has faults as well as virtues; for, earnestly as men may strive after perfection, and far as they may advance in its path, they are not doomed to reach the goal. But there are men who have no soul for what is good, and great, and beautiful; they ever seek, and find nothing but the filthy and the bad; they are the unclean birds of society, and rejoice only in its carrion. Of such are the slanderers of Britain. They seek only the dark side, and they find it dark enough no doubt; but from the light they turn away. There is much that is bad in England, from which God defend us! Above all, her 'intolerance' is always the first charge of her enemies: and that reproach we may make against her with a clear conscience! for among ourselves, thank God! no trace of it exists.—Then, 'the misery of her manufacturers' is brought forward; and it means that they cannot, perhaps, every day eat beef and drink beer, to which they are accustomed, and which, if deprived of, they grumble at. With us, more men live without meat than with it; many Wallacks never taste even a bit of good bread their lives long; and in the neighbourhood of D—— there are hundreds who live through the summer on nothing better than water-melons. But, perhaps, you exclaim, How happy they are never to have known any thing better!—enviable fellows, certainly!—'Then Ireland!* What do you say to Ire-

* "Before this work was finished, Ireland was reinstated in her natural rights."

land?' Alas! it is too true; and we may well wonder how the English can be guilty of depriving so large a portion of their fellow-countrymen of their common rights: indeed, it is almost as bad as if in any other country they were to impose on the poor peasant all the burdens of the state without allowing him any share in ruling it, while a few thousand families enjoyed all the privileges, and all the wealth, and lived like lazy drones on the fat of the land. Nothing could be worse than that!—'The National Debt!' There, indeed, we are more fortunate: of national debt—not very oppressive to individuals after all—we have none; but we have a precious quantity of personal debts, and by these we are crushed to the very earth. But are not such objections absurd? Is it not, fairly considered, seeing the mote in our neighbour's eyes, and passing over the beam in our own?"

If the "Hitel" were put into the hands of a mere political economist, he would find it, perhaps, diffuse, superficial, and crowded with proofs of what he might imagine no one was ignorant; but to one acquainted with the country and the people for whom it was written, the book assumes a very different character. He is astonished with how much delicacy the best parts of the Hungarian character are seized and worked upon; how such prejudices as impede the progress of improvement are ridiculed and exposed; with what a richness and familiarity of illustration principles are taught, so that persons even to whom such discussions are quite new must still be struck with them; and with how much skill the author has managed, in a treatise on political economy, to throw out hints to his countrymen on almost every subject, moral, economical, and political, which the actual circumstances of the country render important. The great lesson which Széchenyi constantly endeavours to impress upon his readers is, that the reforms necessary in Hungary depend on the will of the Hungarians,—that they have only to bestir themselves to effect a complete change in the moral and material aspect of their country.

The first reception of the "Hitel" was any thing but encouraging; the satire was ill relished by those against whom it was directed; its author was abused, written against, and in one instance the work itself was burnt by the common hangman by order of a county meeting. Such was the state of feeling in 1830. In 1835, Count Széchenyi was receiving addresses of thanks from almost every part of the country; in Transylvania a magnificent gold pen was voted him at a public meeting, as the

most useful of Hungarian authors; and every where his name had become a watchword among the well-wishers of Hungary.

Among the later works of Count Széchenyi, are the "Világ" (Light,) an answer to a pamphlet published by Count Desewffy against the "Hitel;" and a work on the Practicability, &c. of a permanent Bridge at Pest.*

Of the style, of course, I speak only from hearsay, when I pronounce it among the best in the Magyar language. To the accusation of coining and introducing new words every one must be liable who speaks of ideas new to the people, and uses names foreign to the country. Some persons complained that they had turned over their Magyar dictionaries in vain for the word "Macadamize," which they very innocently conceived to be a creation of Széchenyi's.

In Hungary, a want of unity between the different ranks of the nobility, an absence of a common feeling, and of something like a general opinion, have been long among the most acknowledged causes of inaction. Every class discusses apart the subjects

* I subjoin a complete list of Count Széchenyi's works, given me by a friend in Hungary:—

"Lovakrul" (On Horses,) Pest, 1828. This work compares the state of horse-breeding in Hungary and England, and suggests plans for its improvement in the former.—A German translation by Vojdisck was published at Leipzig in 1829; and a second in the same language, by Paziazi, at Pest in 1830. It was also translated into Danish by Collin, and published at Copenhagen in 1835.

"Hitel" (Credit,) Pest, 1830.—German translation by Vojdisck, Leipzig, 1831; and again by Paziazi, Pest, 1831.

"Világ" (Light,) Pest, 1831. This is partly an answer to Count Desewffy's "Taglalat," and partly a more complete illustration of the subjects treated in the "Hitel."—German translation by Paziazi, Pest, 1831.

"Magyar Iátèkszinrul" (On the Hungarian Stage,) Pest, 1832.

"Buda-Pesti Allóhid" (on the Buda-Pest permanent bridge.) Pest, 1833.—German translation by Paziazi, Presburg, 1833. This pamphlet was published in common with Count Andrásy György, and contains a report of a journey they had made to England to obtain the opinions of our best engineers as to the possibility of a permanent bridge over the Danube; and is addressed to a company formed to carry this object into execution.

"Stadium," Leipzig, 1833. This work, which contains a further development of the principles of the "Hitel" and "Világ," was not published at Pest, from some objections on the part of the Austrian censor.

Several articles on the Danube Steam Navigation, published in 1834, and the following years, in the Hungarian Journal, the "Társalkodo," were afterwards collected and translated by Paziazi, forming one volume, published at Buda, 1836.

of immediate interest, forms its own opinion of public events, and its own plans for public reforms: the accordance which gives strength and force to action is wanting. This deficiency was universally acknowledged; but without a free press, and with a Diet sitting but rarely, and then at a distance from the capital and centre of the country, without reports of the debates, without even a national literature, and in the midst of the bitterest jealousies of caste and class, what remedy could be proposed? Széchenyi had seen the clubs in London; and with that singular talent, which he eminently possesses, of appropriating and adapting whatever he finds good in other countries to the wants and deficiencies of Hungary, he at once perceived how useful their organization might be made, to effect a greater purpose than that of serving as mere pride-protectors for poor gentlemen, or of furnishing the selfish enjoyment of the greatest luxury at the cheapest rate. A club, or—to avoid a name associated on the Continent with certain reminiscences of the French revolution—a Casino, while entirely free from any political scheme, would afford to all the upper classes an opportunity of meeting, and becoming better acquainted with each other's good qualities; it would harmonize and generalize opinions, and improve the manners and the tone of feeling, besides affording opportunities for reading all the journals of Europe, an advantage which few private individuals could command.

At Pest, accordingly, a Casino was established on a most magnificent scale, as we shall see hereafter; and now no less than one hundred exist in different parts of Hungary and Transylvania.

One of Széchenyi's favourite plans is the embellishment and aggrandizement of Pest. For this purpose he has laboured to have the Casino on so handsome a scale; to build a national Magyar theatre; and, more than all, to raise a permanent bridge between Pest and Buda. At present there is only a bridge of boats between the two towns, which is taken up during six months in the year; and the whole communication during that period is carried on by means of ferry-boats, or over the ice. At certain times, particularly during the freeze and thaw, not to speak of storms and fogs, this produces much inconvenience, and is often attended with great danger.

To remove so great a drawback to the prosperity of the two cities, Széchenyi has proposed to build a bridge across the river, either of stone or iron, as may appear best; and, as the width

is only a quarter of a mile, it would not appear so difficult an undertaking. Of course, it was declared impossible; one said the Danube was too wide, another found it too deep, and a third declared, if the bridge was all finished, the first winter's ice would carry it away. English as well as German engineers have thought otherwise; and it is a certain fact, that Trajan's Bridge, three hundred miles lower down, stood firm enough till Hadrian destroyed it.

These, however, were not the greatest impediments to be overcome. Count Széchenyi had a still greater object in view than the improvement of Pest in the building of this bridge; he proposed to teach the Hungarian nobles the advantage of paying taxes. The bridge was to be built by money raised in shares; the interest on which was to be paid by tolls, to which every one, noble or ignoble, should contribute. What! an Hungarian noble pay taxes? A hornets' nest is a feeble comparison to the buzz these gentlemen raised about Széchenyi's ears. It was no matter: he inveighed against them at the Diet, he wrote at them in the journals, he ridiculed them in private, and in the end he conquered them; a bill passed both Chambers, by which the legal taxation of the nobles in the form of a bridge-toll was acknowledged.* The Judex Curiæ shed tears on the occasion, and de-

* I am indebted to the kindness of W. Tierney Clark, Esq., to whom the construction of this great work has been intrusted, as well for the accurate measurements of the bridge, as for a beautiful drawing of it, and the projected improvements on the Buda side of the river.

The piers will be built with granite and marble.

	English Feet.	
The distance from centre to centre of the towers	700	
Width of the clear water-way	661	
Ditto of the side openings	271	each
Total water-way at the ordinary level of the water	1203	
Width of the road-way	35	
Each footpath	6	
Height of the underside of the platform above the ordinary level	43	
Total length of platform suspended	1227	
Ditto height of the tower, above the ordinary level of the water	117	
Total width of the river at the ordinary level of the water	1408	

Baron Sinna, a wealthy and enterprising banker of Vienna, has undertaken to provide the necessary funds for the bridge—estimated at half a million sterling—on condition of enjoying the revenues for ninety-seven years; at the conclusion of which period the bridge is to be given up to the country free of all expense, and, it is said, 100,000*l.* with it, the interest of which is probably intended to keep it in repair. It will be completed in seven or eight years.

clared "he would never pass that ill-fated bridge, from the erection of which he should date the downfall of Hungarian nobility."

Of the petty opposition which Count Széchenyi had to contend with, and of the means by which he overcame it, I cannot speak here. I did not believe that any man possessed the indefatigable energy and perseverance necessary for the task; it requires a truly patriotic spirit to endure those miserable checks which arise from the selfish and interested meanness of the very persons one is labouring to benefit. The corporation of Pest did not think they were justified in giving up the tolls which the present wooden bridge brought them in; the proprietors of land would not sell for such a purpose; the owners of houses here, feared the new bridge would be there, because they knew it would be better there; the very toll-keepers had their friends and supporters, whose opposition, at times, made even a Széchenyi doubt of success.

One of the greatest of Széchenyi's achievements is the steam navigation of the Danube. This is his own in idea and in accomplishment. It is now about six years since he first undertook the voyage from Pest to the Black Sea. A comfortable decked boat, a good cook, and a pleasant companion, with the means and appurtenances for shooting, fishing, sketching, and rowing, were not bad preparations against the fatigues and dangers to which he expected to be exposed. The comparative ease and safety of the navigation, the magnificence of the scenery, the size and importance of the tributary streams which poured their waters into the Danube, and the richness of the country on its banks, were secrets revealed to a mind which felt their full force, and happily knew how to employ them. Of course, the timid set him down as mad for undertaking such a journey; but when he returned, and ventured to whisper the possibility of steam navigation, even his best friends shook their heads. "Steam in Hungary! yes, indeed, in another century!" said those who never think the present the time for action. "Steam, indeed, in the shallows and rapids of the Danube! No; if we must have steam, why not take the plains? Nature has laid them out for rail-roads," said others, who oppose every thing practicable by proposing something impracticable. Széchenyi let the first wait their time: to the second he recommended a speedy commencement of the rail-road, that the country might derive advantage from one, if not from both of their schemes.

In pursuance of his own plan, Széchenyi went over again to

England; studied carefully the principles of steam navigation; brought over English engineers; and, when at last certain of the practicability of the scheme, formed a company, and purchased a steam-boat. It was in October 1830 that the first steam-boat plied between Semlin and Pest; the communication is now complete from Vienna, and will soon be so from Ratisbon to Smyrna. Thirteen vessels are employed, and a number more are building.

To detail the advantages of this undertaking in extending commerce, in developing the resources of the country, or in opening the road to civilization by the spread of intelligence, were only to narrate what every one knows steam navigation has effected, and will effect, wherever it is introduced; but in Hungary it has done more, it has engaged one of the proudest and richest aristocracies of Europe in a profitable commercial speculation! We shall show elsewhere that it is to the exclusive privileges of this aristocracy that Hungary must impute, in a great degree, her want of commerce: how great a point has thus been gained may therefore be easily understood.

At first, some of those whose hearts were better than their heads—and Hungary possesses a great number of that class—would not hear of profitable speculation: "If it would benefit their father-land, no other consideration was required; it would be degrading so noble an object to mix it up with such tradesman-like calculations." Széchenyi thought otherwise; and he felt assured that a profitable patriotism was the one by far the most likely to endure.

Count Széchenyi's first object was to make the undertaking answer as a commercial speculation. This is a favourite theme in his writings, the constant test by which he examines a new scheme,—I mean if of a nature to which it can properly be applied, for no one knows better how to sacrifice all pecuniary interest when necessary. He never recommends a thing till he knows that interest will back him; and he can then clink his full purse in his opponents' face, and laugh them out of their prejudices. Of all he has done for Hungary, I know of nothing more useful than these demonstrations of the co-existence and often necessary connexion of public and private interest.

During the earlier part of the last Diet, a strong opposition was formed in the Upper Chamber, chiefly under the guidance of Széchenyi, which contained many of the most wealthy and talented of the rising generation. From their moderation, their union, and their knowledge of business, this party, though small

in numbers, was acquiring so great an influence that all the power of the Court was employed to break it up. The Transylvania magnates* were called away by the opening of their own Diet. Those in Government employ were hastily recalled to their bureaux; this man received a place or a pension; another desired a decoration, and hung dishonour at his button-hole; and if a third was too high for such poor bribery, he was recommended to travel, and accepted a passport to convey him from the sphere of his duty. Széchenyi, though deserted, was more difficult to dispose of, but that "every man has his price" is always the belief of an immoral government; and they found the means of drawing the patriot from the fulfilment of perhaps the higher duty, by offering him a much more arduous one. Széchenyi was made sole commissioner for improving the navigation of the Lower Danube; and, almost before the ink was well dried on his commission, a thousand men were at work, current-dams were constructed, canals were cut, roads were laid out, rocks were blown up, and the very Iron Gates themselves were threatened with destruction. Széchenyi kept to his maxim—to leave the uncertain and follow the sure and practicable; and I recommend those who so loudly condemn his choice to go to Orsova and see the result.

Since this time, though very far from having neglected his political duties, Count Széchenyi has taken a less active part in politics than was expected of him. Perhaps disgusted and alarmed at the violence of the less prudent; perhaps fearing that an active personal opposition, while it effected nothing, might impede much material good; perhaps confiding in the good intentions of Government, or, it may be, reposing merely till a more favourable opportunity arises of urging on the Diet measures of justice to the peasant, and of encouragement to commerce, it is certain, from whatever cause, that he has withdrawn himself in some degree from active opposition.

Looking at the whole tenor of Count Széchenyi's public life, we feel convinced that he has not acted without reflection, and probably not without good reason, in withdrawing from the political arena for a time; but he must not forget how much Hungary, how much Europe expects of him. When a man has once embarked on the stream of public life, he has no longer a right to disappoint the just expectations of the world. When such a

* A Transylvania magnate enjoys the rights of a Hungarian also if he hold property in Hungary, which many of them do.

man fails, the honest confidence, the high resolves, the purest aspirations of millions are sacrificed. One feels a sickening at the heart, a contempt for virtue, a hatred of one's kind, when the man we have worshipped as the idol of our hopes deceives us in the expectations we have formed of him.

The Hungarians, however, need not entertain such fears: whatever may be the difference in opinion as to the means, no one can doubt the rectitude of Széchenyi's object. It cannot be denied that the support of high moral principles, the unflinching advocacy of just rights, and the unyielding defence of the injured and oppressed, are yet more important to the well-being of mankind than the mere improvement of their material existence; but few in the Hungarian Diet have fulfilled these duties better than Széchenyi, while the other objects at which he has so industriously laboured, the detractors of his fame have entirely neglected.

Those who read Széchenyi's works, and know the reception which they met with,—who are acquainted with the excessive national susceptibility of the Hungarians, and who recollect how just, and therefore how bitter, was the satire he directed against them,—will not suspect him of seeking popularity, except so far as it is necessary to the furtherance of his objects.

That Széchenyi has not attempted what he could not do, and what others have failed in doing, when they did attempt, is, both at home and abroad, no uncommon subject of complaint against him. To me it appears one of his greatest merits. To have known his own powers, to have calculated accurately how far his means would enable him to go, to have reflected deeply on the practicability as well as the utility of a scheme before he proposed it for adoption, would seem just those qualities which best entitle a man to the confidence of a nation; and which, when united to high talents, necessarily make him the leader of a party. But Széchenyi's objects and hopes are best described by himself in concluding the "Hitel."

"The contents of my work will prove to all that I hate all extreme measures, all excesses; that I am a friend of moderation and harmony. Gladly would I see parties unite; and much more willingly would I attain, by a middle path, the *possible good*, than vainly strive after that imaginary bliss, which we may probably never know but in a better world. I cannot, like many of my countrymen, please myself with contemplating what is past; I must look forward. It troubles me but little to know what we once were; but it is of vital interest to me to know

what with time we might, and what we probably shall, become. The past is beyond our control; the future is still within our grasp. Away, then, with fruitless reminiscences! it is time that we bestir ourselves, and open a more glorious future to our father-land. Many contend that Hungary has been; I love to think she yet will be."

It would be difficult, as it would be unjust, to conclude this notice of Count Széchenyi, without mentioning Mr. Tasner. This gentleman, educated for the bar, has accepted the office of assistant and secretary to Count Széchenyi; and the Count only does him due credit when he calls him his right hand. There are few strangers who visit Hungary, who are not indebted to Mr. Tasner for many polite services, who are not aware of the extent and accuracy of his information, and of the kindness with which he imparts it. It is no niggard praise to say that Mr. Tasner, in the less ambitious sphere he occupies, is not less unwearied in application, not less zealous in his exertions, not less devoted to the cause which he believes most certain to work out the good of Hungary, than Count Széchenyi himself.

CHAPTER IX.

BUDA-PEST.

Drive round the Town.—Fiacres.—New Bridge.—Casino.—Redoubt.—Quays and Streets.—Sand-storms.—Increase of Pest.—Museum.—Learned Society.—Meyer Höfe.—Neugebäude.—Plain of Rákos.—Ancient Diets.—Modern Reviews.—Races.—Shop Signs.—Bridge of Boats.—Tolls.—Rowing.—Elizabeth Island.—Buda.—Public Buildings.—Royal Statthalterei.—Austrian Policy.—Fortress.—Turks in Hungary.—Turkish Remains.—Environs of Buda.—Love for the Picturesque.—Gödölö.—Bureaucracy.—Blocksberg.

I HAVE not the least inclination to play the part of a cicerone in Pest, by giving a very particular account of all its churches and public buildings; and still less that of an ill-natured spy, by retailing all the stories, true or false, I may have heard of the owners of the splendid mansions now looking so empty and desolate: still I believe I must say something as to the whereabouts of the place, more especially as it was only this spring that a learned countryman of ours, whom spleen or the fidgets had driven so far from his usual haunts about Westminster Hall, declared with open eyes and gaping mouth that he had discovered Pest! Here was a city, Buda-Pest, of more than one hundred thousand inhabitants, of which this learned gentleman was, up to the time of his visit, entirely ignorant. To guard you, reader, from a similar error, I invite you to take a seat beside me in the fiacre, accompany me in my first drive round the town, and listen to the information I can pick up of it.

Of course we start from the Palatine Hotel in the Waitzner Gasse, because it is one of the best of its kind in the whole Austrian dominions; and therefore the one at which you and I shall remain during our stay in Pest, reader. And, first of all, please to notice the fiacre: none of the dirty, heavy, shabby, slow coaches, found on the stands of London; but a very clean, smart, open calèche, with two high-bred little horses which whisk along at a famous rate; and the driver as far superior in sharpness and wit to his wooden-shod confrère of Paris as the equipage is to

that of London. In winter, instead of the open calèche, a neat close chariot takes its place, for he is a very poor fiacre in Pest who has not a winter and a summer carriage.

Let us drive to the Quay. Observe those first three or four houses, and tell me if you know any private buildings on a more splendid scale, or built in a better style; some of them cost not less than 40,000*l*. They are inhabited by many families, living, as is common every where on the Continent, under the same roof. It is opposite these buildings that it is intended to erect the new bridge across the Danube.

Next we come to the Casino, a handsome building with an exceedingly elegant portico,—a little spoiled, perhaps, by being glazed,—and, as a kind friend has placed our names on the books, we will even introduce you there too. The rooms of the Casino occupy the whole first floor. As you enter, a number of well-dressed footmen are standing about; one takes your hat, and another ushers you into the billiard-room, round the sides of which are rows of pigeon-holes, each bearing the name of a member, arranged in alphabetical order, where letters, cards, or parcels are placed to attract his eye on entering. Beyond this, on one side, are two reading-rooms and a library; and, on the other, two or three drawing-rooms. On the reading-room table we were delighted to find that vagabond Englishman's consolation, Galignani; besides the Athenæum, Edinburgh, Quarterly, and Foreign Quarterly Reviews. In the centre is a very fine ball-room, where the Casino gives three or four balls every winter; and beyond this, again, is a long suite of supper-rooms. A dining-room, and a pretty good cook, complete the arrangements of one of the best managed clubs in Europe.

The stranger, however, is rather astonished at the smell of tobacco, which pervades the whole establishment; and still more by the array of pipes presented in each room, all ready filled, with lights constantly burning beside them. Whether reading, talking, or playing, scarcely a man is to be seen without a pipe in his mouth. It must be recollected, however, that Hungary is not far from Turkey, that the tobacco is excellent, and that smoking is deprived of more than half its disgusting character when unaccompanied by drinking and spitting, neither of which have more to do with it in this part of the world, than a demure face with a clear conscience in some others.

The liberality with which the Casino is opened to strangers, contrasts strongly with the narrow principles on which most of

our clubs are conducted in England. Nothing can be more mortifying to an Englishman than to receive favours which he knows he cannot repay in his own country; and nothing can astonish, not to say disgust, a foreigner more than to find that he is not admitted into a society, of which his friend is a member, without a previous ballot,—nay, that if he calls on him at his club, he may have to stand in the hall among the servants till his friend is summoned out to see him. It has surprised me that none of our clubs have opened a correspondence with some of the best Continental Casinos, and agreed to receive their members during their residence in London, on condition of their own being admitted on the same terms abroad. How far English stiffness might unbend in favour of the foreigner in London, and tend to make the club a pleasant resort, I know not; but it would certainly give the English traveller abroad the means of forming a more general acquaintance with men of his own age and class than any letters of introduction could possibly secure for him; and the foreigner, if he derived from it no other advantage, would at least be able to get his dinner without being subjected to the exorbitant charges of an hotel-keeper, or running the danger of misjudging English habits from the scenes of a common chop-house.

As we drove along the Quay, which is here paved and walled in, we arrived at the Redouten Saal, a ball-room of very large dimensions and elegant proportions, gay in winter with happy crowds of nobles and citizens mingled together in the levelling waltz and gallopade.

The whole extent of the Quay is about an English mile, from which the city extends in a semicircle; most of the streets are wide, all of them paved, and some of them furnished with footpaths. The houses are of white stone, and, generally speaking, much handsomer than those we are accustomed to see at home. Most of the squares are very well built, but, from want of some object in the centre, look bare and deserted, besides giving ample room for the accumulation of those heaps of sand with which Pest is infested. This sand is one of the miseries of Pest; it is so fine that it enters into every thing, destroys furniture, and blinds and chokes the inhabitants worse than a London fog. A sand-storm is something dreadful here. The country round Pest is a sandy plain,—there are few trees or gardens in the outskirts of the place, nothing to break the force of the wind; so that, when it once gathers into a storm, it marches forward, drawn on by the

current of the Danube, and traverses the wide streets of Pest almost without opposition. One sultry day, as I was writing at the hotel, I found the sky suddenly clouded; and, on looking out to see the cause, I felt the air hot and dry; and observed at the end of the long street, which runs parallel with the Danube, a vast cloud of sand advancing slowly forward, attended with a hissing noise as it passed on. A slamming of windows on every side announced that all my neighbours were providing against the enemy; and I had just time to shut mine before it swept by. For five minutes a dense mass of moving sand filled the whole street. In spite of all precautions, however, I found my books and papers covered with a very fine dust, which had entered by the crevices of the window-frames. It has been suggested that this might probably be prevented by plantations of trees round the outskirts of the town.

The growth of Pest within the last few years has been so enormous, that more than half the present town looks as if built but yesterday; at the present time there are ninety houses building, in many of which several families will reside. One of the large squares now in the middle of Pest was, only a few years ago, so far out of the town, that the first occupants could not sleep for the croaking of frogs in the neighbouring marshes. The then neighbouring marshes are now handsome streets.

On turning towards the centre of the town, the Museum was pointed out to us, which was founded in 1802 by Count Francis Széchenyi, with a magnificent donation of books and coins. It contains a fine library, rich in Hungarian MSS.; a complete collection of coins of the Hungarian Kings, from St. Stephen to the present day; a collection of minerals, which is particularly remarkable for fine specimens of the ores found in Hungary; a few fossils, ill-arranged; and a variety of antiquities, specimens of manufactures, &c., &c. Many of these collections deserve better treatment than they at present receive. It is, however, intended to erect a new building, where it is to be hoped the imperfections of the present arrangement will be remedied.

From the Museum we passed to the Hall of the *Tudományos Társaság*, the Academy of Sciences of Hungary. The first object of this society was the development of the Magyar language, and its first name implied simply that meaning; but it seems to be intended at present to give it the place of directress of science in general, and I think wisely. The funded income amounts to about 2,000*l.* sterling. The society has already published, be-

sides its annual volume of transactions, which is got up in very good style, a dictionary of Hungarian and German; and one of German and Hungarian is also in progress. Prizes for the best works published in the course of the year in the Magyar language are distributed at the annual meetings. It is just that the language and literature of the country should occupy the first place in the attention of the members; but it is to be hoped they will soon be able to dedicate some of their time to matters which may *unite* them to the learned of the rest of Europe, as much as their present studies tend to *separate* them. In natural history, Hungary possesses vast unexplored treasures, of which Hungarians are bound to give some account; at present, this subject is sadly neglected from want of union, though a great many naturalists are scattered in different parts of the country. In history and antiquities, too, a fine field is open before them; I do not mean, in absurd antiquarian discussions as to whether Adam spoke Magyar, or Homer was a Sclavack,—both matters, however, which have undergone profound discussion here,—but in the collection of materials for Dacian, Pannonian, and Magyar history, and in the preservation of the innumerable family records with which the private archives abound; among many of which are journals and letters which might one day throw light on obscure parts of the history of Hungary.

As we directed our fiacre to drive to the outside of the town, he took us through some wide streets with houses of only one story, many of which have large courts, with stables, cow-houses, and other farm buildings attached: these are the *Meyer Höfe*, or farm-yards of the nobles, who pass the winter in Pest, and keep here their cows and horses, as well as provender for them, which they send up in considerable quantities from their estates for winter consumption in town. The absence of trade, or, what the Hungarians call "the want of money," makes it more profitable to bring their own productions, even from very great distances, than to purchase on the spot.

As we came to the outskirts of Pest, we perceived a huge stone building of many parts, which we were told was the *Neugebaude*, or *Josephinisches Institut*. This building was begun under Joseph the Second, for what purpose is said to be a mystery, and has been only lately completed. It is now destined, or at least the Hungarians hope so, to contain a national military academy for the training of the Hungarian nobility to do good service in the field.

We had no sooner passed the gate than we were fairly launched on the great plain which surrounds Pest, and which bears the name of *Rákos Mezö*, or Field of Rákos. It is celebrated in the annals of Hungarian history as the scene of many of those wild Diets, where all the nobility used to assemble in council, armed and mounted as for war, and where, to say the truth, war —and among themselves too—was not unfrequently the termination of their discussions. The first of these Diets* which took place on the 5th of August, 1298, ought to be dear to the recollection of the Hungarians; for it was the first in which the lower nobles—the gentry of Hungary—took a part; the era, in fact, from which the present political constitution may be said to date. It had its origin in a cunning trick of an ambitious but patriotic churchman, the Archbishop of Kalocsa; who, discontented with the influence exercised by the great barons of the kingdom, persuaded the King to call together the whole body of the nobles, whose numbers were sufficient to overawe the powerful oligarchy which opposed him. Many important resolutions, in which the interests of the King, the lesser nobles, and more especially the clergy, were well cared for, and by which the barons were restricted in the exercise of their almost regal power, were passed at the suggestion of the Archbishop; and the council of barons, by whom the kingdom seems to have been governed up to that time, was fain to sign them. We still, however, find no recognition of the right of the lesser nobles to a share in the legislation; though from this time forward, they seem to have been frequently consulted. But it was especially in times of civil disturbances that the political rights of this class assumed a distinct character; and no one seems to have done so much towards it as John Zápolya, Woiwode of Transylvania, whose constant policy it was to ally himself with this party, and by their means to weaken the King and higher nobles, and so obtain the crown of Hungary for himself. Not unfrequently it happened that these stormy assemblies secured the person of the King or his counsellors, and obliged them to yield to their commands. Sometimes their dissolution was the signal for civil war; sometimes they threatened to surround Pest and Buda, and force the

* Engel claims an earlier origin for the Diet, on the strength of a meeting summoned by the King in 1061; but it was never regarded as a precedent, nor do I think the greatest stickler for antiquity would desire that it should, for it ended in the King's hanging and flogging all those whom he could not bring over to his own way of thinking.

consent of the Crown to their wishes by starvation; sometime with boisterous loyalty they declared themselves ready to die fo their King and country, and with freshened zeal rushed from th council to the battle-field.

It must have been a spirit-stirring sight, those vast hordes o armed men encamped on this plain to discuss the laws and inte rests of the nation, and armed to defend, in case of need, wha they believed to be their right. Like most eastern nations, th Magyars have much calmness in council; and, like them, too that strange susceptibility to excitement which changes in a moment from the tranquillity of deliberation to the wildest out breaks of feeling and passion. It is not wonderful that history has given to these assemblies a character of more importance than they really deserve; for here, as every where else in a purely popular assembly, a designing chief generally ruled the mass; but the romance attached to antiquity has twined itself round these ancient monuments of liberty, and concealed from those who now look upon them, every thing but a faint outline of past freedom and glory! Even yet, some of the old Magyars sigh as they think of the time when their ancestors assembled on the Rákos Mezö, and set both their King and his foreign counsellors at defiance. Prince Metternich would have but a rude reception from such a meeting: the old Hungarian cry of "Away with the Germans, they corrupt our King!" would burst from many a tongue, when loosened by the enthusiasm such a meeting would excite.

As we drove on to this vast plain, we might almost have fancied the scenes of former centuries were revived before us. In the distance we perceived a host of white tents stretching along the horizon, as far as the eye could follow them, the glance of bright arms were flashing in the sun, and ever and anon the sounds of martial music were caught up by the ear: but, as we drew nigh, the fancy was dispelled; the ugly white jacket and black gaiter, and the very unpoetical bayonet, following the *links* and *rechts* of modern drill, but ill-supplied the place of Hungary's best chivalry, its sabre, lance, and gallant steed, its loud shout of war, its wild impetuous onset, and its rich and varied costume glittering in the sun and fluttering on the breeze. An Austrian regiment of infantry may be among the best drilled, best dressed, best behaved troops in the world—I know nothing about the matter; but a more ill-fashioned set of fellows, in the eye of the civilian, it is hardly possible to conceive.

Another part of this plain now forms a race-course; and, re-

port says, a pretty good one. We were too late for the races, and I can therefore speak of them only from hearsay. The races, which take place in May or June, last for fourteen days; during which time there are public dinners, balls, and every other approved mode of passing idle hours. Much opposition, much jealousy, much ridicule, have been employed to put down these races; but their continued and increasing success testifies how innoxious it has proved.

The most amusing scene to an Englishman must be the races between the Csikósák (horse keepers,) who ride their own long-tailed steeds, without saddles, and in their own strange costumes —as wild a looking troop as that which first followed Attila over the plains of Europe. It was at first impossible to make these men understand the disadvantage of heavy weights for jockeys; nor was it till after they had been repeatedly beaten, that they would confess that little boys could ride a race, and win it from full-grown men. The excellent riding of the Hungarians, for which their hussars have long been celebrated, is more particularly to be found among the Csikósák. The nobles, even the lower grades, so commonly make use of carriages rather than horses, that I scarcely think they can be good horsemen: but the Csikós is on horseback almost from his birth: indeed, I suspect he sometimes learns to ride before he can walk. I have seen the merest children, without bridle or saddle—a string round the horse's nose supplied the place of the first, a bunda thrown across his back, the second,—galloping at full speed after a herd of unbroken colts, overtake and turn them. dash into the middle of them, and select those they required, apparently without the slightest fear.

Although it is impossible to conceive any thing more perfect than their seat on horseback, their general management of horses is sadly defective. I have heard it frequently said, that, if an Hungarian groom is once allowed to mount a horse, his mouth is spoiled for ever; and I can easily believe it, for the treatment they receive from them is excessively rough and cruel. In travelling through Hungary, the stranger can hardly fail to notice the number of horses which have lost an eye; and he will easily account for it if he watches a Csikós, when enraged, beat his horse. The drivers have an equally bad character; and it is a common complaint that good horses cannot be employed for the purposes of agriculture, from the carelessness with which they are treated.

But the horses have fairly run away with me! It is time I pulled up, and bethought myself of the fiacre and Pest! With your permission then, gentle reader, we will return to the river, cross the bridge of boats, and visit the wonders of Buda. On the way let me point out, as we pass through the best streets of Pest, the gay pictures exhibited by almost all the shops of respectable pretensions. After a fashion once common with us, and of which one or two specimens still exist in London, every shop has a name and sign: so that you may buy your cigars at the *Young Prince;* your cravats, at the *Three Graces;* and bonbons, at the *English Lord;* and for the instruction of those who do not read, or to attract the attention of those who do, these subjects are all illustrated by large paintings in a style by no means contemptible. For my part, I like these signs; they give an air of life and gaiety to the streets, which is sadly wanting in the rich but affectedly simple arrangements of our shops. A West-end hotel-keeper, or fashionable tailor, would be horrified at the idea of a large painted sign on either side his doorway; because with us every one apes his betters, and plain John Smith's shop is converted into Mr. Smith's museum, or office, or nobody knows what.

The Bridge of boats, of one thousand four hundred and forty Vienna feet long, which unites Pest with Buda, is guarded at either end by a toll-house. However, the fiacre drove on, and no one seemed to think of stopping us; a good coat frees its wearer from toll in every part of Hungary. By law every noble and citizen is toll-free; and as these are the only coated classes, or nearly so, the coat is a tolerable guarantee of indemnity; but as the reverse of the proposition is not equally determinate, it would require nothing less than a Falstaff's instinct for the true blood to find out the nobility under the strange guises in which it sometimes conceals itself here. I had begun to think there must be some secret impress which the nobles bore—for it was quite beyond my powers of discrimination to tell which was gentle, and which simple, of the passers—till one of the toll-keepers explained the matter much more plainly: "To confess the truth," he said, "we stop all we think likely to pay; from those who are willing, we take it; and as for those who are not, why we let them pass without." Yet the revenues of the bridge amount to sixteen thousand florins per annum—a pretty good proof of the intercourse kept up between the two cities.

As we jolted over the uneven planks, a light four-oared wherry,

which the first glance told us was London-built, came swiftly down the stream, and shot the bridge cleverly enough. It belonged to Count Széchenyi; and was well pulled by himself and some friends, with feathered oars and every thing in proper order. The Danube is a glorious river for boating; for although the stream is strong, the reflux in-shore is sufficiently powerful to aid considerably in pulling against it, and the beautiful islands, in the neighbourhood of Pest, give to rowing here an additional charm. The Elizabeth island, which lies about a mile above the bridge, is one of the most beautiful spots imaginable, and will some day be the favourite park of the gay world of Pest. Some cunning monks once petitioned the King to give it them for a kitchen-garden; and a very nice one it would have made, as it is not less than two miles in circumference.

The principal part of Buda stands on an isolated rock, which is still walled in; while the suburbs cluster round its base, and extend more than a mile along the banks of the river. Behind the town range a long line of hills famous for their red wines. The Buda wines, of which perhaps the Adelsberger is the best, are very full-bodied, and require to be kept several years before they are drunk; they resemble the Burgundy wines both in quality and flavour more than any other I know. These would probably be the best wines for the English market of any of those grown in Hungary.

The Fortress, besides the palace, commonly inhabited by the Palatine, and some very handsome private houses, contains a number of large buildings occupied by the offices of the *Königliche Statthalterei* (the vice-regal council,) and the *Ungarische Hofkammer* (Hungarian court-chamber,) besides the directory of customs, of posts, of education, agriculture, &c., &c.

We have already, in speaking of the Diet, attempted to give some account of the legislative power of Hungary; a few words on the Königliche Statthalterei may suffice to give an idea of the higher executive department. The Vice-regal Council (*Consilium regium locumtenentiale,*) consisting of the Palatine as president, with twenty-five *intimates* chosen by the King from among the prelates, magnates, and gentry of Hungary, is nominally the efficient privy council of the Crown in all affairs regarding Hungary. The King receives their advice, and proposes questions for their consideration. Besides this, they receive the decrees of the King and the acts of the Diet, both of which they are bound to see duly executed. They correspond with the

counties, regulate the accounts of taxes, superintend the distribution of the military, enjoy the supreme direction of the police, &c., &c.

This council is said to depend immediately on the King; which, if it means any thing, should signify that its members are virtually ministers. But though they correspond immediately with the King, and receive decrees only when stamped with the sign manual, yet a little clause is added which gives the whole affair a very different colour: that is, *that all these communications shall pass through the Hungarian State Chancery in Vienna*—in other words, that the members of the Statthalterei shall be very like puppets to be played upon by an Austrian minister.

This, however great an evil it is, can scarcely be avoided in a union like that of Austria and Hungary; at least, without granting to Hungary a responsible ministry with seats in the Diet,—a measure which Austria will never concede while she can avoid it. It would be unjust to throw all the blame of this upon the ministers of Austria; for the extreme difficulties under which they labour, with an empire so divided by race, language, and national antipathies, requires a very firm and consolidated centre to keep it together: unfortunately, however, they have not taken the best means within their power to obviate these difficulties. It has been the policy of Austria to increase these hatreds and these differences by continually making each feel the injury it receives from its union with the others, where each ought to have felt only the benefits. Hungary produced good tobacco, and at one time supplied all Italy; but its export to Italy was rendered too costly for the Italians to profit by it, while at the same time foreign tobacco was excluded from Lombardy under the plea of protecting Hungary. English and French manufactures were excluded from Hungary, to aid those of Austria and Bohemia; yet the Hungarians could not exchange their beef, corn, and wine, even for these products, without paying the same frontier duties as if sent to a foreign country. They had all the disadvantages both of union and separation.

National antipathy, too, has been fostered by mutual though involuntary injuries. The insolence of the Italian and Austrian troops quartered in Hungary has imbittered the Hungarian peasantry to the highest degree against the *Schwab* and *Tolyány*, as they call them; while the roughness of the Hungarians at Milan have made the Italians hate those whom they believe to be the willing instruments of Italy's oppression: and—would the reader

believe it?—this has been considered a masterpiece of policy! There are those who see signs of better things in the future,—God grant they may see clearly!

We must quit the fiacre, reader, for a while; and stroll gently round those ramparts, now converted into pleasant walks, but formerly so often stained with Christian and Moslem blood. Though I trust we are both stout haters of Russia, and quite willing to pray for the regeneration of Turkey; yet it is impossible to compare the state of Hungary with that of the countries on the other side the Danube, and not rejoice that Lorraine and Eugene drove the turbaned tyrant from this, his strongest hold in Europe.

For one hundred and forty-five years did the Turks remain masters of Buda: yet almost the only evidences of their former dominion are some baths near the Danube, and the tomb of a saint; the former of which are still used by the Christians, and the latter is sometimes visited by a pious Moslem pilgrim. The Turkish baths, which are supplied by natural sulphur-springs, are small vaulted rooms, with steps leading down to the bottom, along which the bathers lie at different depths. If I might judge from my feelings merely, I should say that the steam which arises from these springs is much hotter than the water itself; for, though it was quite painful to support the heat of the steam, the water appeared only moderately warm.

It is not easy to imagine a more perfect contrast than is presented by the environs of Pest and Buda; the one a bare sandy plain; the other hill and valley, beautifully varied with rock and wood. Hitherto this romantic neighbourhood has been sadly neglected; but as the taste for the picturesque is extended, and the wealthy citizens of Pest begin to desire the imaginary importance conferred by landed possessions, and the real luxury of country-houses, the hills of Buda will be as well covered with suburban villas and mimic castles as Richmond or Hampstead. At present, the taste for the picturesque is, perhaps, as little felt in Hungary as in almost any country in Europe. The negligence with which the position of a house is commonly chosen, the absence of gardens and parks, or, if present, the bad taste with which they are laid out, and the carelessness with which they are kept, are strong evidence of this deficiency.

There are, however, some very striking exceptions; among which, Gödölö, in the neighbourhood of Pest, stands pre-eminent. In spite of the disadvantages of a sandy soil, and rather a flat

situation, it would be difficult in any part of England to find a flower-garden either more tastefully disposed, or more perfectly kept, than that of the Princess Grassalkovich. All the varieties of lawn, boscage, and bower—all the lesser elegancies of trellis, basket, and bouquet, have been taken advantage of in the best manner. Another beauty of Gödölö is the Dairy. It is situated in what was formerly a forest; and which, by judicious cutting out, now forms a very beautiful natural park. In appearance it is a pretty little villa, and we entered by an elegantly furnished parlour which leads into a circular saloon. On each side of this saloon open two folding-doors, which disclosed—what shall I say?—two vaccine drawing-rooms! for cow-houses I cannot call them. A wide walk runs through the centre of the rooms in the form of a cross, towards which looked about one hundred cows; and, at the angles of the cross, four magnificent bulls. Nothing could be better behaved than this society; the very bulls had a *sotto-voce* bellow, quite different from that of vulgar bulls, by which they expressed their sovereign wishes to their matron dames. The cows are of Swiss breed; on one side of the dairy they are all red, on the other all spotted. Behind each cow was a diary of her age, food, milk, &c., &c. The Swiss cows are preferred, I believe, rather for their beauty and rarity, than for any superiority in milking or feeding, to the native white or dun breed of Hungary; which, by a little care and attention, might probably be much improved. It is doubtful whether the introduction of new breeds, or the cultivation of those natural to the country, is the more advantageous.

But it is not, certes, at Gödölö, amid the beauties which art and nature have alike thrown around the place, that such speculations intrude themselves; we were too much dazzled and delighted to be critical. It is impossible that any of our party should forget the delightful evening which we spent in that pretty park, with its noble trees, and wild deer, as they every now and then crossed our path,—the drive through the woods, and, least of all, the society of its amiable and accomplished mistress, which throws a charm over every thing within its sphere. But, such matters tend little to your instruction, reader, however much they may have done to our pleasure; and, besides, they trench on that strict line of non-allusion to any but public characters which I have drawn for myself. "*Revenons à nos moutons.*"

The stillness of Buda contrasts very strongly with the active

bustle of Pest. Buda is the residence of the Bureaucracy of Hungary, and there is always about these gentry a certain sedateness of air, and not unfrequently a pompous vacancy of expression, which has nothing analogous to the haughty look of the rich noble, or the quick glance of the enterprising merchant of Pest; and Buda seems to have caught the complexion of its inhabitants. The royal palace, occupied by the Palatine, the residence of the commander of the garrison, and the houses of two or three great families, give an air of dignity, but not of life, to the town; and, as we walked round the ramparts, and admired its beautiful position, it was quite a relief that the establishment of a permanent bridge would soon restore to Buda* its share of life and prosperity, of which its young and lusty rival seemed in danger of robbing it entirely.

We now left the fortress; and, passing some rows of ill-built houses, ascended the Blocksberg, the pride and ornament of the landscape. The small building on the top is an observatory, where there is a good set of instruments, but we did not stop to see them. The view from the Blocksberg is magnificent. Buda, with its blue chain of mountains vanishing in the distance, Pest, with its yellow plain of sand, and the glorious Danube, with its green islands, were all at our feet, forming a picture so beautifully mixed up with buildings, boats, and moving figures, that we sat long to watch it ere we felt inclined to move. There was matter for much thought too in that view. One hundred and fifty years ago, Pest, now so beautiful and flourishing, was a mere heap of ruins; its mud walls broken down, its houses destroyed, and its few inhabitants flying from the desolation around them. At that time, too, a Turkish Pasha sat in the fortress of Buda, and nearly half of Hungary was subject to his sway. In one hundred and fifty years, then, has this place grown to its present size; from a miserable ruin, it has become one of the capitals of Europe! Nor does Pest owe its rise to the fiat of a monarch, who could raise a Potsdam or a Carlsruhe from the desert; but to the energy of the people and its own natural ad-

* The railroad from Vienna through Raab to Buda, not dreamed of at the time of our visit, though now in active preparation, will do much to raise the importance of Buda still higher. Since 1836 no less than four or five lines of railroad, traversing Hungary in every direction, have been proposed, and some of them actually undertaken. The success of steam navigation has given a stimulus to enterprise and speculation in Hungary, from which the country will eventually reap a golden harvest.

vantages. Situated nearly in the centre of one of the richest countries in the world, on the banks of a river which traverses more than half of Europe, surrounded by a population requiring a supply of almost every article of luxury from abroad, chosen by fashion as the metropolis, with a good climate, and capable of unlimited extent on every side, it requires but little sagacity to foresee a brilliant future for Buda-Pest. No one can wish its prosperity more sincerely than the author of these pages; for he believes that with it is closely associated the prosperity of all Hungary, and perhaps too the independence of the east of Europe.

CHAPTER X.

FURED AND THE BALATON.

Excursion to Füred.—Inn at Márton Vásár.—Houses under ground.—Style of Travelling.—Stuhlweissenburg.—Veszprim.—Minaret.—Bishop.—Treading out the corn.—Füred—our reception—Theatre.—The Balaton.—Dinner party.—Soirée.—Hungarian beauty.—Ball.—Waltzing.—H——'s Adventures at Tihany.—Supper at the Restaurant's—its Consequences.—Serenade.—Gipsy Band.—Four-in-hand Driving.—Tihany.—Monastery.—Fossils.—Tradition of the Peasants.—Second Ball.—The Polonaise.—The Hungarian Dance.—Return.

About eighty miles south of Pest, on the shores of the Balaton, there is a pretty little bathing-place called Füred; which is worth the stranger's visiting, as well for the beauty of the neighbouring scenery, as for the pleasant and sociable society which commonly assembles there.

As the weather was fine, and nothing was going on of particular interest at Pest, we determined to avail ourselves of it; and, making our arrangements accordingly for a few days' excursion, started for Füred.

The road, as far as Stuhlweissenburg, which terminated our first day's journey, contains little of interest, except a good house and pretty park of Count Brunswick's at Márton Vásár, where we stopped to dine. Márton Vásár is rather a favourable specimen of a Hungarian village, and the inn bore marks of a thriving commerce; and, as a specimen of its class, I may as well describe it. It is a long one-storied house, forming two sides of a court-yard, and, besides the kitchen and landlord's room, contains a large drinking-room for the peasants, and two strangers' rooms. The latter have boarded floors, thickly strewn over with sand; and are furnished each with two beds, a table, and three or four wooden chairs. In half an hour we had a dinner of soup, bouilli, vegetables cooked in grease, roast fowls, and pancakes; and such is the common fare and ordinary accommodations of the country inns of Hungary.

I was wrong in saying that there was nothing of interest save

Count Brunswick's house; for, a little further on, we observed several villages built under ground, the roof being the only part of the houses visible. We examined some of these burrows, for such they literally are; and found them mere holes cut in the ground, roofed in with straw, and entered by a sloping path, frequently without any other opening than the doorway and chimney, and as filthy and miserable as can well be imagined. What may seem to render the fact more extraordinary is, that one of these villages, we were told, is inhabited entirely by noblemen; that is, by men who possess a small portion of land, pay no taxes to Government, and are free from all seigneurial impositions. Let the reader keep this fact in mind; for it serves to show that it is not the amount of taxation which renders men poor and miserable, but the absence of a knowledge and desire of something better, and of the industry and thousand virtues to which that knowledge gives birth. It is but fair to say that I never saw such houses in any other part of Hungary; though I believe, during the Turkish war, a great part of the country was reduced to a similar state.

Stuhlweissenburg, though formerly a Roman town, and a name of frequent occurrence in Hungarian history, contains nothing remarkable. The palace of the bishop, and some of the buildings connected with it, are handsome; but the streets are badly paved, and the whole town disagreeably placed in the centre of a huge bog.

The next morning we passed through Palota, and while we were waiting for fresh horses walked round the ruins of the old castle, which a Count Zichy—one of the fifty-two Counts Zichy of Hungary—has had the good taste to repair and render habitable.

At Veszprim, the seat of another bishop, we stayed long enough to visit the handsome episcopal palace, which crowns a steep hill that formerly bore one of the most important fortresses of Hungary. This was for a long time in the possession of the Turks; and contains a memorial of their residence, the more interesting from its rarity. One slender minaret, erected by the Turks above an old Gothic tower, still retains its elegant proportions. It now serves as a watch-tower against fire: where the Muezzim daily called the faithful Moslem to his spiritual duties, a watchman now warns his Christian brethren of danger to their worldly goods.

The town of Veszprim is chiefly supported by trade, but not

of a very high class. It contains few good houses, but has less appearance of absolute poverty about it than almost any town I know. A party of the better sort of country people, whom we fell in with in this neighbourhood, gave us but a bad character of the bishop and chapter of Veszprim as landlords. They complained sadly of their oppression, and said that the peasants of the church were worse off even than the peasants of the nobles, for the masters of the former had no permanent interest in their welfare, but tried to grasp as much as they could during the short period of their enjoyment. A young girl of about eighteen years of age, one of the party, observed, rather caustically, "*Ach Gott!* Hungarian priests are not worse than any other priests; they are all tyrants when they have the power to be so." It is curious that, round the room of the village inn where this conversation occurred, were hung the portraits of Lord John Russell, Stanley, Burdett, and Count Széchenyi.

As we pursued our journey, early as it was in the year, we had several opportunities of remarking the old custom of treading out the corn by oxen or horses, so often and so beautifully alluded to in sacred history. It is commonly performed in the open field where the corn is cut. A flat piece of ground is prepared, by paring and beating till it is quite hard, for the "threshing-floor;" the corn is then strewn over it; and a boy with a long whip stands in the centre, and drives the animals round the ring till the whole is sufficiently cleaned. It is still considered in Hungary the part of a miser "to muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn." I cannot explain the pleasurable feeling produced by an actual illustration of this kind, simple as it is, of images which have been familiar to the mind from our earliest infancy, but of which we have never felt half the force or beauty till actually before our eyes.

It was near evening as we came in view of the Balaton; and, if not grand, its shores have sufficient hill and wood, as seen from this point, to give them all the character of pretty lake scenery. Füred is a bathing-place which has come into vogue only within the last few years; and, except for the huge *Horváthischen Haus*, and a few other less pretending buildings, it is yet as near a state of nature as the most romantic could desire. The Horváthischen Haus is a large hotel, or rather lodging-house, which has been built by Mr. Horváth, the owner of the place; and, except the rooms reserved for his family, is let out to visiters at a very moderate rate.

We drove up directly to this hotel, and inquired if we could be admitted; but a very positive "No!" was returned by the porter, with the pleasant addition, "that he did not think there was a single room to be had in the whole place." While a search was being made for rooms among the half-dozen houses which constitute Füred, all the idlers of the place began to collect round the carriage to stare at the Englishmen, whom our servant had not failed to announce the roofless strangers to be. At the same time, a number of very bright eyes were observed peeping through the *jalousies* of the hotel, tantalizing us with the desire to stay, as every refusal of our applications for a resting-place made us fear we must return. The crowd of gentlemen grew every moment thicker; and as I have a particular dislike to being stared at, I began to return as uncivil looks as possible to what I thought the ill-mannered curiosity of these people. But I was soon undeceived, for it appeared that they were only at a loss in what language to address us; and, before long, one of them came up, and, speaking to us in French, very politely offered his services to aid us in our difficulties. The ice once broken, Hungarian frankness made us at home with the whole party in a few seconds. A lodging was soon found, the present occupants having been persuaded to change them in our favour. A little female curiosity was, I believe, after all, our best friend; for, as I afterwards heard, the Countess B—— declared that three Englishmen at a country bathing-place, and the first who had ever been there, were too great a catch to be lost so easily; she, therefore, insisted that rooms should be found; and found they were accordingly.

While we were waiting till our quarters were prepared for us, we were subjected to the "question" as unmercifully as any poor victims of the inquisition ever were. A thousand odd queries as to our names, titles, country, and objects, did we reply to, and, I am proud to say, with great good humour too—maugre our English breeding; for we saw that the inquirers had no other wish than to be polite and friendly, albeit the manner of it had somewhat startled us at first.

As our visiters disappeared, to scatter far and wide the news they had been so industriously collecting, we were left alone to discuss a late dinner, and laugh over the adventures of our arrival, which offered so pleasant a prospect for the rest of our visit. We were not doomed to rest long in quiet, however; for, almost before we could change our dusty dresses, it was time for the

theatre, where we were promised a still nearer view of all those bright eyes which had so sparkled from behind the *jalousies*. Nor were we disappointed: a perfect galaxy of beauty seemed to have descended on that little theatre, and amply compensated for the horrors of what was called an opera. It was an Hungarian piece, taken from some scene of Hungarian history, to which was badly adapted the music of an indifferent German opera; the whole murdered in a most melancholy manner. A severe headache soon drove me back to my own room; but S—— remained, and was introduced to a number of the notables, with whom he came back in perfect ecstasies. Mr. Horváth invited us to meet a party at his house to dinner the next day.

On looking round us in the morning, we found we were just on the reedy shore of the lake, which offers nothing but low hills on the other side; and, on this, not a tree or a rock, still less a grassy bank, to render it passable. At some little distance to the south, however, the peninsula of Tihany is a very striking and beautiful object; and the monastery and its church look well on the summit of the hill. H—— soon set off to see if he could get a sketch of it; and we determined not to leave without paying it a visit.

The Balaton, or Platten See, extends for fifty miles, nearly north-east and south-west; its breadth is nowhere more than eight or nine miles, and in some places scarcely one; its medium depth is about six fathoms. Nearly opposite Füred it opens into the river Sio, which communicates with the Danube, but is not navigable. It is difficult for an Englishman to imagine a fine inland lake of this kind, totally useless for the purposes of commerce or pleasure. I believe there is not a single trading barge, and certainly not one sailing-boat on the whole lake! There never was a people who had less natural disposition to navigation than the Hungarians. Their rivers and lakes seem to be of more use to them when frozen than when fluid; for, on observing to a gentleman of this neighbourhood how extraordinary it was that they did not use the lake as a means of communication, "Oh!" he exclaimed, "we do in winter; we drive from one end to the other of it, as if it were a road."

The supply of fish from the Balaton seems almost without a limit, and is very various in kind. A great part of it is sent to the markets of Pest and Vienna. The Fogas (Perca lucioperca) is said to be found only in the Balaton, and its peculiar structure

has rendered it well-known to the learned.* The delicacy of its flavour, and the firmness of its texture, constitute it perhaps the best fresh-water fish in Europe. The craw-fish of the Balaton, which in size is more like a small lobster than the poor little things which our brooks produce, is equally sought after as a delicacy by the gourmand.

Our dinner was as good and gay as the well-known hospitality and good-humour of the host could make it. As usual in Hungary, it was at two o'clock; and as usual, also, profuse in quantity, and excellent in quality. The ceremony of bowing, and among relations of kissing, on retiring to the drawing-room, was a novelty to us, of which we could not well understand the rationale. I imagine it must be the substitute for the Turkish "May your food be healthy to you!" I believe it is common in many parts of Germany; for I remember seeing a whole party of gentlemen kiss each other after a dinner party in Berlin, to my no small horror. By the by, kissing among men is almost as rare in Hungary as with us.

We separated at an early hour, and were invited to return at five o'clock and join a *réunion* of all the most distinguished persons at Füred in Mr. Horváth's drawing-room. Soon after the hour appointed, we found a party of sixty or seventy persons assembled, among whom there was certainly a greater number of pretty women than I ever saw in any other society of the same extent. The Hungarian ladies are handsome,—that is beyond a doubt; but here was a galaxy of beauty, extraordinary even for Hungary. To tell my readers their names would be of no service, and to describe woman's beauty is next to impossible; so I believe I must leave it to the best of painters—their own imaginations. I may venture to say, however, that the characteristics of Hungarian beauty are, a large full eye, very dark hair, with a fair complexion; features of little regularity, perhaps, but delicately formed, especially the mouth and chin, which have very rarely that heavy, coarse outline which adheres so pertinaciously to the Saxon race. But there was one *blonde* among them, whom I cannot pass over; she was of exquisite loveliness, and most rare beauty; her features were perfectly regular, her blue eyes full of sweetness and expression, and her complexion one of the purest conceivable. The Countess M—— was the only person who ever recalled to my memory the head of the

* Csaplovics says it is found also in the Nile, and in some parts of Siberia.

visiters from Füred, that, for the last year or two, they have closed their doors against all comers. Luckily, a poor carpenter took pity on H——'s melancholy situation, and shared with him his meagre dinner. As evening drew on, however, H—— had discovered some very picturesque peasants, whom he persuaded to sit to him; and quite forgetting, in his delight, that the sun will set, and daylight pass away, he found himself without shelter in a dark night, and at some miles from Füred, without having once thought where he was to lay his head. The friendly carpenter came to his aid a second time, and offered him the best shelter his cottage could afford. It was a very poor one, but there was no choice, and H—— gladly accepted the offer. When they reached the door, the wife and children were already asleep. A bed, however, was soon got ready, and H—— groped his way to it, as well as he could, in the dark, for the people were too poor to indulge in the luxury of candles. He was soon convinced that he was not alone. A coughing on one side, cries on the other, a cackling and rustling of feathers above, and a butting of horns below, continued at intervals throughout the night, and afforded him abundant matter for speculation as to who and what his fellow-lodgers were; but it was not till morning broke that he became aware he had been sleeping in close proximity with two women, half a dozen children, a hen and chickens, and a great billy-goat! In fact, the good Samaritan had left his own chamber, and with it, wife, maid, and all its other occupants, to the mercy of the stranger whom he had taken under his roof. A bit of black bread and a little goat's milk was all the poor man could offer him for breakfast, but any recompense was firmly though respectfully refused.

A stroll on the promenade between the hours of ten and eleven o'clock, which capricious fashion has fixed upon as the only proper time for that exercise at Füred, and a swim in the lake, served to pass the morning. The baths are wooden sheds extending into the lake, and open towards the water; we were forbidden, however, to transgress beyond the rail, because, by so doing, we might have seen into all the other sheds, and the Baroness —— was still in one of them. We were determined on a swim, however; so, waiting very quietly till this lady—a sour-looking old dowager, by the by—was gone, we climbed the barrier, and indulged in a swim in the open lake. They say the water is salt, and that it ebbs and flows with the sea; but we were not able to perceive either the one or the other.

Some visits, a stroll in the pleasant woods, the theatre and a public supper at the restaurateur's, finished the evening; the supper, however, must not pass without a word or two. In order to support the restaurant, it was determined that all the ladies, instead of supping in their own apartments, should adjourn to this place at least once a week; and this happened to be the night. A number of persons were already there, but to our no small astonishment, in two distinct parties,—the ladies at one end of the room, and the gentlemen at the other. Supposing that this was some national custom, I believe the fear of offending would have banished us in like manner, much as it was against our inclinations, had not a little hint from Madame —— set us at liberty, by informing us that it was only because the gentlemen found their own society more agreeable than that of the ladies, that they congregated together.

Before the ladies had finished supper, the gentlemen had already begun their pipes, and the whole room was soon in a cloud of smoke. As soon as the music struck up, a scene of such riot commenced,—some were dancing, some singing, others smoking and applauding,—that I was heartily glad when the Countess B—— declared it was no longer to be borne, and left the room, followed by the whole party of ladies.

Many of these ladies, though Hungarians, were inhabitants of Vienna, and it so happened that I had a short time previously expressed my astonishment that they did not prefer their own capital to that of a country which they affected to look down upon. This was too good an opportunity of running down Hungarian society, and excusing their desertion of their own capital, to be lost: "Such," said the Countess, "are the scenes Hungarian ladies must submit to if they will frequent Hungarian society; and yet you are astonished that we should seek a more civilized circle, even though it be in the capital of Austria!" I urged, though I must confess the scenes of the past hour had rendered my pleading but very feeble, "That their own absence was probably the cause of much of this rudeness; that it was always the privilege of woman to civilize our coarser sex; and that it only depended on themselves to banish smoking and such abominations from their drawing-rooms whenever they pleased."—"Don't believe any thing of the kind," she answered; "such men easily find consolation for the want of our society, and they prefer their pipes to our drawing-rooms at any time; and, besides, the woman who should attempt such a thing would be exposed to neglect

and insult of every kind."—"But surely in the capital—" —"The capital is worse than any where else. The society there is in a most deplorable state; the excesses of the young men render it unsafe even to walk the streets: be assured, no one would live at Pest who could afford to live any where else in the world."

I could answer nothing, for I had seen but little of the country, and was talking with those who ought to have known it well; and we returned to our rooms with no favourable opinion of Hungarian society. The reader will be able to judge for himself, I trust, ere we part, how far such opinions were just: but I may as well warn him that many of the persons by whom this scene was acted were country squires, neither the highest nor most polished of their order; and that the persons from whom these remarks proceeded were absentees, totally ignorant of Pest, and anxious to find excuses for neglecting what is now beginning to be considered a duty,—a residence in the country from whence they derive their immense revenues. I have felt myself bound to relate this incident, because it did occur; but I should be unjust did I not say that it contrasted strongly with the manners we observed in every other society we entered, and that it required nothing less than the most rooted prejudice to draw from it the conclusions just related.

We were talking over these matters, and refilling our meerschaums for the last pipe,—mind, I am far from objecting to a pipe in its proper place,—when a wild burst of music came from the shores of the Balaton, and awoke the midnight echoes of the lake to most harmonious sounds. It was a serenade, which some of the heroes of the supper-room had offered—we hope in contrition—to the offended fair. Nothing could be finer or more soothing than those soft notes, now swelling on the breeze, now dying away over the waters of the lake; and we trust they may have obtained pardon for the sinners.

It would be ungrateful, while lauding the music, were we to keep silence as to those who made it. The Füred band was really a very good one, and it surprised us not a little to hear that it was composed entirely of gipsies; yes, that same thieving, lying, music-loving race, of whom we so often see a stray member in our own villages scraping a jig on a three-stringed fiddle, is found here, too, and busy in the same idleness. But instead of strumming at village wakes with country bumpkins for their auditors, we found them here in stately festivals, ministering to the plea-

sures of the nobles of the land; and, instead of a crazy fiddle, a well-conditioned orchestra might have been formed out of the gipsy band.

The leader was not the least remarkable of the party, for, though not more than fourteen years of age, he was a most accomplished violinist. He had studied for some months under Strauss, in Vienna, and had received high commendations from his master; but what Strauss certainly had not intended to teach, though it was no slight element of his pupil's success, was a most perfect imitation of those extraordinary movements by which the body of the great waltz-player seems convulsed during his performance, and which our little Czigány took off so admirably as to keep his audience in a roar of laughter. I have seen the gipsies—Czigány, as the Hungarians called them—as actors also, and they are not very much worse than the generality of strolling players in other lands.

A great bustle was heard next morning in the quiet streets of Füred; horns were sounding, horses neighing, and wheels rattling to and fro at an unaccustomed rate. It appeared that all this was in preparation for a driving party. There were not less than twenty fours-in-hand here, and the greater part of them were on this day to turn out. But, oh! what erroneous ideas are conveyed by words. Twenty fours-in-hand! Glorious reminiscences of the palmy days of the old club torment one's fancy at the very sound; alas! the sight of them was quite enough to banish any such visions. The common Hungarian four-in-hand is a low britchska, or calèche, ill-painted, ill-cleaned, and drawn by four long-tailed horses about fourteen hands and a half high, with thin legs, bare bones, and devoid of any one point of beauty.

The harness, though of the worst quality and in the worst state, is often ornamented with ribbons, and has generally long thongs of leather hanging loosely from the head, shoulders, and croup, as low as the knees. The reins are all mixed together in what appeared to us a most incomprehensible jumble, and those of the fore-horse are often fixed to the wheelers; yet, in spite of these disadvantages, they drive at full gallop, and turn very suddenly and very adroitly. The whole secret lies in the whip, and the horses commonly bear very evident marks of their drivers' skill in its application.

When a first-rate Hungarian coachman starts for a drive, before he takes up his master, he blows a horn, flogs his horses well

we found a very intelligent Italian at the head of the silk-growing, which promises ere long to be an important and lucrative undertaking. This year they had collected about sixty pounds of silk worth 20*s.* the pound.

The steward showed us over the farm-yard, where we found a large flock of Merino sheep, collected in hovels to protect them from the heat of the mid-day sun. The entire flock amounted to about twenty thousand, of course scattered over different estates. At the present moment this is the most profitable branch of agricultural industry; it requires little labour, the produce is certain of sale, and it pays no duty on exportation. The ordinary medium price is 100 *f. c. m.* per centner,* or about 10*l.* per cwt.; though it fell in 1837 to the half. The very first sorts sell at nearly double that price.

The chief danger in the cultivation of the Merinos is from disease, caused by unhealthy or over feeding. On very rich pastures they allow them to graze only a few hours each day. During the four winter months they are kept entirely under cover, where the temperature is accurately regulated by the thermometer; and are fed on dry food, consisting of corn, straw, potatoes, and dried leaves; the latter being found a cheap and good substitute for hay. Nothing can be more miserable in appearance than the Merino sheep; every other point is sacrificed to the wool. The flesh is said to be coarse; indeed, all mutton is held in such low esteem here that it is difficult to get it.

At one end of the farm-yard was a huge granary of many stories high, and capable of containing vast stores of corn. This is said to be a source of great profit here; for, from the reckless extravagance of the peasantry, and the necessitous state of a great part of the nobility, the rise of prices in spring is always greater than in other countries, where a more regular commerce and more prudent habits provide against such exigencies.

Our host was a great admirer of England, and had acquired many of our tastes, as his establishment sufficiently manifested; but there are so many of the present generation in Hungary who show the same inclination, that he can scarcely be regarded as an exception. In the stables we found six or seven English blood-mares, and several running-horses, under the management of a first-rate English trainer. One colt, bred in Hungary, and

* The centner of Hungary contains one hundred Hungarian pounds, or one hundred and twenty-five pounds avoirdupois; and, therefore, when I use the cwt. for the centner, it is only a rude approximation.

already a winner at Pest and Vienna, was very promising. He stood sixteen hands at least, was lengthy in the quarter, clean and strong in the bone, in fact, a racer all over.

From the stables we adjourned to the kennels, where we found eight couple of young harriers, besides a brace or two of pointers. Count S—— had formerly a pack of fox-hounds; but the woods are so extensive, and a large bog so near, that the foxes almost always took refuge in the one or the other. The length of the winter, too, which commonly lasts four months, is a great impediment to hunting; but, in spite of this, two subscription packs are kept,—one at Parendorf, near the north end of the Neusiedler Lake, and another at Fót, near Pest. I heard that one might almost fancy one's self in Leicestershire, when among the smart English grooms, top-boots, and scarlet coats, which are exhibited at a throw-off in the neighbourhood of Pest; but, alas! the large enclosures and the springy turf are wanting; and, though the sands are tolerably sound galloping ground, bogs and woods are very awkward interruptions. For the rest, Count S—— has good sporting on his own estates. His woods are well stocked with pheasants, hares, and rabbits, and at certain seasons of the year with woodcocks; his corn-fields with partridge and quail; and the bogs with hosts of duck and snipe. I think I hear an old English squire exclaim, "Hem! I do believe a man might live in Hungary."

Count S—— now took us to see what gave him more pleasure, and of which he was evidently more proud, than of house, horses, or dogs: I mean his Magyar peasants.

Like most of my countrymen, when I first entered Hungary, I had some indistinct idea of a degrading serfage on the one side, and oppressive seigneurial rights on the other, as the relative position of landlord and tenant in this country; and, as a natural consequence, I had expected to find among the peasants nothing but misery, attended by the most abject submission or stifled hate. What I had already seen had tended a good deal to shake these first opinions; and as we walked up the wide street of the village of Z——, with its row of whitewashed cottages on either side, shaded by an avenue of acacias and walnuts, it was impossible to observe the comfortable appearance of every thing around us without feeling convinced that I had been in error, though to what extent I could not tell. All I had lately heard, too, of the sacrifices which a noble was obliged to make to obtain possession of his own land, though I did not quite understand it, seemed to

imply the existence of rights on the part of the peasantry which I certainly had not expected. But then, again, the very conversation I was listening to confirmed my former notions. The Count was detailing to us a host of oppressive laws and civil disadvantages under which the peasantry laboured, and the improvements which he hoped new laws and more extended rights would introduce among them; so that when he stopped at the first door we came to,—that of a poor widow,—I was positively startled at the kindly feelings with which he was received, and the appearances of comfort which every where met my eye. The widow was poor, for she had lost her husband and her sons,—all except one, who was a soldier: and she had none, therefore, to aid her to till her little farm. But yet nothing like want was apparent in any part of her arrangements; and her heart was glad, for the Count had succeeded in obtaining the young hussar's discharge, and the mother's gratitude was warmly and affectionately expressed. From thence we crossed the street to the house of an opposite neighbour, a stout middle-aged man, and one of the richest peasants in the village. Joy sparkled in the good man's face as he doffed his broad-brimmed hat, smoothed down his long black hair, and kissed his master's hand, in delight to see him in his cottage. Nor must the English reader imagine that kissing the hand is a servile salutation; in Hungary, even the grown-up child always uses it to a parent; and, among the old-fashioned, it is still the customary compliment from a gentleman to a lady.

A number of cottages were entered, chosen as we pleased, or as chance directed; and, except some slight variations, the same aspect of comfort and plenty was presented by all. The cottage of the Hungarian peasant is, for the most part, a long one-storied building, presenting a gable only to the street, with an enclosed yard facing the whole length of the building. The gable end is generally pierced by two small windows—or rather peep-holes, for they are very rarely more than a foot square—below which is a rustic seat overshadowed by a tree. The yard is separated from the street, sometimes by a handsome double gateway and stately wall; sometimes by a neat fence formed of reeds or of the straw of the maize; and sometimes by a broken hedge, presenting that dilapidated state of half freedom, half restraint, in which pigs and children so much delight, where they can at once enjoy liberty and set at naught control.

Passing through the gateway of one of these cottages, we

entered the first door, which led into the kitchen; on either side of which was a good sized dwelling-room. The kitchen, white-washed like the rest of the house, was itself small, and almost entirely occupied by a hearth four feet high, on which was blazing a wood fire, with preparations for the evening meal. The room to the left, with the two little peep-holes to the street, was evidently the best room of the cottage, for it was that into which the peasant was most anxious to show us.

In one corner was a wooden seat fixed to the wall, and before it an oaken table, so solid, that it seemed fixed there too; on the opposite side stood the large earthenware stove; while a third corner was occupied by a curious phenomenon,—a low bedstead heaped up to the ceiling with feather-beds. The use of this piece of furniture completely puzzled us—to sleep on it was impossible; and we were obliged to refer to the Count for an explanation, who assured us it was an article of luxury on which the Hungarian peasant prided himself highly. For sleeping, he prefers to lay his hard mattress on the wooden bench, or even on the floor; but, like other people who think themselves wiser, an exhibition of profuse expenditure in articles of luxury—feather beds are his fancy—flatters his vanity. These beds are generally a part of his wife's dowry.

In the favourite corner we commonly observed—for the peasants of Z—— are Catholics—a gilded crucifix, or a rudely-coloured *Mater dolorosa*, the *penates* of the family; while all round hung a goodly array of pots and pans, a modest mirror, perhaps even a painted set of coffee-cups, and, sometimes, a drinking-glass of curious workmanship and of no ordinary dimensions. A Protestant peasant supplies the place of saints and virgins by heads of Kaizer Franzel and Prince Schwartzenberg; and, not unfrequently, Bonaparte and Wellington look terrible things at each other across the room.

The corresponding apartment on the other side of the kitchen was furnished with more ordinary benches and tables, and served for the common eating and sleeping-room of the family. Beyond this, but still under the same roof, was a store-room and dairy; and below it a cellar. The store-room well deserved its name; for such quantities of *turo* (a kind of cheese,) lard, fruits, dried herbs, and pickles laid up for winter use, I never saw; and in some houses the cellar was not less plentifully supplied, and that, too, with a very tolerable wine. The cow-house was rarely without one or two tenants; the stable boasted a pair, or

sometimes four horses; the pig-sties, it is true, were empty, but only because the pigs had not yet returned from the stubble-fields; and to these most of the houses added sheep-sheds and poultry-pens,—presenting altogether, perhaps, as good a picture of a rich and prosperous peasantry as one could find in any part of the world.

The appearance of the peasant himself might perhaps, strike a stranger's eye as somewhat rude. The fashion of his dress is uncouth, and its material is coarse; his hair hangs in braids or flowing locks upon his shoulders; and his huge hat throws a deeper shade over his swarthy features; but speak to him, does he answer you with fear or rudeness? His strange costume, is it ill adapted to the climate of the country? Are there no signs of care and neatness in its adjustment? Does not that elaborate embroidery on his fringed trowsers, and the gay lace on his jacket, tell of personal care, and a taste for harmless luxury? And do not these show that the man is neither a pauper nor a slave? Such appearances, it is true, are strange to our eyes; but let us not mistake them for signs of barbarism, lest others condemn us as ignorant for doing so.

Often did our surprise break out, as not one, but every cottage, presented in its turn the same picture of plenty and comfort; nor could I help exclaiming, "If such be the state to which bad laws have brought the peasants of Hungary, for mercy's sake, my dear Count, do not attempt to alter them! Would that our envied land could see all her children in the enjoyment of such abundance!"

"Be not too hasty in your judgment," said Count S——; "what you see here is obtained in despite of bad laws, not in consequence of them; before you leave the country you will probably see enough to convince you of the existence of more than a fair share of poverty and misery among our peasantry: besides, you forget that these men are the cultivators of the soil, and with you would become wealthy farmers, bestowing a good education on their children, and bringing them up to reputable trades and professions."

Nor, as I afterwards learned, was the state of the peasantry at Z—— merely the effect of the laws they lived under. Their position has many advantages. The soil they cultivate yields abundantly; a market and means of transport for any excess of production is near at hand; the village school has given to almost

all the first elements of education; they have been blessed for generations with wise and just masters; and they are now reaping the advantages of some useful reforms which Count S—— has himself introduced among them.

It would be easy to find a contrast to this. Take G——, a small village in the north of Hungary, difficult of access from the bad roads in the neighbourhood, and not favoured by nature with the richest of soils. The peasants love the brandy-bottle, and hate their landlord. The Baron B—— lives in Vienna, and lets his village to a greedy Jew, who grinds out of the people every particle of possible profit, no matter how injurious ultimately such conduct may prove to them or to their master. The dingy cottages are built of unhewn firs, carelessly put together, and plastered with mud on the inside; they rarely consist of more than two, and generally only of one chamber, where the whole family must live. Attached to the house is a shed for the oxen and pigs; horses and sheep they have none. I must confess, I cannot speak so minutely of the interior of the cottages here as at Z——, for, in going towards one of them, I stepped up to the knees in a mess of putrefying hemp; which, with the filthy appearance of the children crowding the threshold, effectually cooled my curiosity.

Such are the varieties to be found among the Hungarian peasantry; nor have I in Z—— or G—— chosen exaggerated instances of either class. I could have cited the peasant, whose proud and haughty bearing bespeak the feelings of the *millionnaire*,* whose flocks of a thousand sheep and whose herds of snow-white oxen cover the plains; I could have taken the miserable wretch whose hut scarce protects him from the winter's frost, and whose one half-starved cow suffices to till the small plot of barren soil to which a hard fate has attached him; but I have preferred a medium, which I think any Hungarian traveller will recognise as just.

Without stopping to analyze the causes of these varieties,—among which might probably figure the nature of the soil, the facility of communion, the religion of the people, and, above all, the character and conduct of the landlord himself,—I cannot quit the subject without some notice of the laws by which the pea-

* I believe Count Károly may boast the richest peasants in Hungary. Not long since, two of his villages purchased their entire freedom; that is, compounded for ever their personal service for a fixed annual tax, payable in money.

sants have hitherto been affected, and the changes which of late have been introduced into them; for I believe it is in this way many of the faults and vices by which they are distinguished can be best explained, and I am convinced that it is only by an improved legislation that these can be radically cured.

It was not till 1405 that the Hungarian peasant seems to have had a recognised civil existence. In that year it was first declared that the peasant should have the power to leave the place where he was born, in case he could obtain his lord's consent; which consent, however, it was provided, should not be arbitrarily refused.

It must not be imagined that, because this was the first legal notice of the peasant's existence, he had formerly been treated as a mere slave. Slavery had been, in fact, abolished on the introduction of Christianity. Accustomed to the omnipotence of the law in our own country and times, we allow too little for the natural feelings of justice, the influence of fear, or respect for the common observances of society, in ages when that greatest barrier against wrong was wanting. If not law, custom had given the Hungarian peasant certain rights which could not be infringed with impunity; and, besides, it was the lord's interest—"*ne omnis rusticitas, sine quâ nobilitas parum valet, deleatur*," as the preamble to an old act quaintly expresses it,—not to treat him with too great severity.

No other material change in the condition of the peasantry took place till the commencement of the sixteenth century, when the nobles, irritated by the excesses committed during a servile insurrection under Dosa, revenged themselves by reducing the whole peasantry to absolute serfage, "that future generations might learn how great a crime it was for the peasant to rebel against his lord."*

Too great a severity defeats its own object; and it was soon found impossible to maintain this cruel enactment in its full vigour. It was repealed in 1547, again re-enacted in 1548, and a second time modified in 1556; but it was not till towards the end of the last century that the rights of the peasant were placed on a firm basis.

In the Diet of 1764, the third and last held under Maria The-

* After the insurrection of Wat Tyler, Richard addressed the peasants of Essex, "*Rustici quidem fuistis et estis, in bondageo permanebitis, non ut hactenus, sed incomparabiliter viliori.*"—HALLAM's Middle Ages, vol. iii. p. 268.

resa, the grievances of the peasants were most strongly urged on the attention of the nobles, but no ameliorations were obtained: occupied with their own affairs, those of the weaker classes were delayed to some future period. The next year, the natural consequences of the agitation of such a question, without any step being made towards its solution, were manifested in a rising of the discontented peasantry in several parts of the country, and in the commission of the usual outrages before the forces of the Government could allay the ferment. Taking advantage of the alarm which these excesses had impressed upon the public mind, the great queen determined, by an act of arbitrary power, herself to apply the remedy to so crying an evil; an act which, if it cannot be defended as strictly constitutional, will never want apologists among the friends of humanity.

The result of this determination was the celebrated Urbarium of Maria Theresa, the Magna Charta of the Hungarian peasantry. Partly a formal recognition of established customs, partly a grant of new rights, the importance of which was not at first perceived, this Urbarium, though unsanctioned by the Diet, became virtually, and almost without opposition, the law of the land. After the death of Joseph, when the Diet was again called together, it was adopted provisionally till a more perfect one could be framed, and so continued till 1835.

One of the chief grievances of the peasantry in the time of Maria Theresa was the heavy taxation to which, for some years, they had been subject, and for which the almost constant wars in which the empire was engaged during this reign was a sufficient reason. The new Urbarium did not propose to lessen this burden; but under the plea of rendering its pressure less irksome, and at the same time to defend the peasant against the oppression of his lord, it declared him not only at liberty to quit his land when he chose, but conferred on him the right to retain it as long as he pleased on the fulfilment of certain conditions. To enable him to support the taxation, he was endowed with a kind of joint property in the soil.*

By this master-stroke of policy, one half† of the land in Hun-

* This principle had been announced by the predecessors of Maria Theresa in 1728, when it had met with the strongest opposition; but it was now allowed to pass without a remark.

† Probably much more than one half is thus taxed and given (so to speak) to the peasants; for in many villages the whole land is in peasants' portions, and the only income to be derived from it by the landlord is a

gary was rendered for ever taxable. It is known to the reader that the Hungarian noble pays no direct taxes, and that before this Urbarium the peasant had no right in the land; so that had it pleased the noble, he could at any time—not, indeed, have prevented the peasant paying tax, but—have deprived him of the power of doing so by retaking the farm into his own occupation. The case, however, was now altered. It was simply declared that the landlord could not deprive the tenant of his land, and that the latter could bequeath it (or its usufruct, to be verbally correct) to his children; so that in fact it became partially his property, subject only to certain conditions and restrictions of right. The vast importance of this change we shall see hereafter.

The relative rights and obligations of the peasant and his lord, as laid down in the Urbarium of Maria Theresa, stood pretty much thus:—

1st. The peasant was no more attached to the soil, but could leave his farm and landlord whenever he thought fit, having first given due notice to the magistrate and paid his debts.

2nd. An entire peasant's fief consisted of a house and garden-ground to the extent of one acre; of an arable and pasture farm, —varying in different counties, and according to the qualities of the soil,*—from sixteen to forty acres of arable, and from about six to twelve of meadow land.

3rd. The landlord† could only dispossess the peasant—nor that without due process of law—in case he had absolute need of the land to build his own house on,‡ or in case of incapacity or refusal on the part of the peasant to fulfil his duties, or of his condemnation for heinous offence; nor could the landlord exchange the fief without giving another equally large and good.

tenth of the produce and the labour. In fact, the nobles will one day find out that they have much less landed property than they fancy; albeit far more than they know what to do with.

* There are four classes of land, divided according to its qualities, in each of which the quantity appertaining to an entire fief is different; and each class differs in almost every county, according to the population, value of land, cost of labour, &c.

† I use the word landlord, as that most directly answering to the *Grund Herr* of the Germans, the *dominus terrestris* of Hungarian Latin.

‡ I have stated elsewhere, that the youngest son has the right of retaining the paternal mansion; and the privilege above-mentioned was therefore extended to the elder sons, who might otherwise be left without a dwelling-place.

4th. When there were vineyards, the peasant might retail wines from Michaelmas to St. George's Day; where there were none, to Christmas only.*

The peasant might cut wood for building and firing, and gather rushes on the property of his landlord without payment.

Soc mill, or the obligation to grind at the lord's mill, was forbidden; as likewise all other demands than those specified by this law.

The peasant held this property, for such it really was, subject to the following conditions:—

1st. The holder of an entire fief was bound to labour for his landlord, in every year, one hundred and four days, or if he brought a team of oxen or horses, fifty-two, from sun-rise to sunset. This time it was required should be taken in one or two days weekly, as it might be, except during harvest, when it might be doubled for a certain time, though not increased in the gross amount; and, moreover, one quarter of the labour was to be reckoned in the three winter months.

2nd. In like manner, the holder of half a fief performed half the quantity of service; and the holder of a quarter, only a fourth: a mere house-holder rendered only eighteen days' hand labour.

3rd. Every four holders of entire fiefs were obliged, once yearly, to furnish a man and horse for a two days' journey,† the landlord paying the necessary expenses.

4th. Each peasant, for the liberty of cutting wood, was obliged to cut and convey to his landlord's dwelling one small cart-load of fire-wood.

5th. When the country was infested by beasts of prey (bears, boars, wolves, and foxes,) the peasant was to assist in hunting three days, if required, in the course of the year.

6th. For his house, he paid two shillings yearly.

7th. Every fief was bound to pay yearly two hens, two capons, nineteen eggs, and one pound of butter, or eighteen pence; and every thirty fiefs together, one calf or three shillings in money.

8th. Should the lord or lady marry, or enter into any religious order, the peasant was obliged to make a present similar to the contribution in the former clause; and the same if the lord was taken in battle and forced to ransom himself.

* Retailing wine, as well as baking bread, grinding corn, killing meat, and distilling spirits, are rights of the lord.

† Where there was no post, this was the means used for sending letters.

9th. For permission to distil, the peasant paid four shillings yearly for each still.

10th. Of all the productions of the soil, one ninth belonged to the landlord, except the produce of the second harvest, and the fruits of the garden. Of cattle, lambs, and kids, a ninth was also the lord's due.

In order to enforce prompt obedience to these laws, the seigneur was empowered to inflict summary punishment on the refractory peasants, by means of his officers, to the amount of twenty-five blows; for which, however, he was amenable to the laws if it was inflicted without due cause.

The *Sedes Dominalis*,—the Manor Court,—in which the lord or his representatives appoin'ed the judges, was declared the legal tribunal for the settlement of differences between the peasant and his lord, as well as of those that might arise among the peasants themselves. There was a right of appeal to the County Court, and from that to the *Statthalterei* in Buda. In civil matters, the jurisdiction extended to all cases under the value of six pounds; in criminal, to the infliction of twenty-five blows.

This has always been considered by foreigners a very gross injustice; but, when the cause has been between peasant and peasant, I doubt if it has been felt to be so. I have seen the system in action, and have often admired it as a cheap, speedy, and satisfactory mode of administering justice. In quarrels between two peasants, nothing can be more natural than that they should refer to their landlord, who has both their interests at heart,—for, be it recollected, if the peasant is poor, the landlord soon becomes so too,—to settle it for them; and it is but rarely he is not able to arrange it to their mutual satisfaction.

Where the landlord is himself a party interested in the process, the matter, however, assumes another character. Some Hungarian writers have alleged that the seigneurial right resolved itself into a simple refusal of the plaintiff's claim, which was of course referred to another tribunal, the County Court; that, in fact, the whole affair was little more than the serving a notice of action.

There was this important difference, however; the right of appeal is undoubted, but it was what the Hungarian law-books call "*extra dominium*," without, in the meantime, arresting the execution of the first judgment; so that, if the refractory peasant had received his five-and-twenty blows, he might appeal against its injustice, but his master's cruelty had nevertheless enjoyed its savage indulgence.

If the County Courts, composed of magistrates, themselves nobles, might be supposed to have favoured the noble, the Court of Buda, the court of last resort, has never been accused of such a tendency; nay, in its desire to protect the weak, it has been often thought to have done injustice to the strong. In fact, it must never be forgotten that it has been the interest of the Crown to protect the peasant, because the peasant alone pays the taxes.

Such has been the law of the landlord and tenant for the last three quarters of a century in Hungary. In the Diet of 1835, the Crown again proposed the question to the States, and a new law was passed.

The spirit in which the new Urbarium is conceived may be imagined from the avowed principle, *that, where it was safe and proper, the rights of the peasant should be increased, and his burdens diminished; but in no instance should his privileges, however attained, be curtailed.* The small tithes, often a subject of vexatious oppression, were abolished, as well as gifts on extraordinary occasions. The long journeys, by which the peasants' cattle were injured, were given up. A number of other minor enactments were added, all in the same spirit; and many of them rendered necessary, rather by the ingenuity of the dishonest, who found out a thousand ways of eluding the intentions of the legislator, than by any fault in the laws themselves.

Almost the only advantage gained by the landlord from the recent changes has been the establishment of his right to separate his land from that of his peasants, and to have it all in one piece. In many cases this has excited the greatest irritation among the peasantry, who are exceedingly suspicious of change; and in one or two instances serious riots have taken place in consequence.

But the changes really most important are those which tend to confer on the peasant a right of property to the land he holds, and which more distinctly fix the liability to taxation on the property, and not on the individual or class. The power of removing a peasant is rendered more difficult. The peasant is declared henceforth to have the right of *buying and selling the investitures, ameliorations, together with the right of enjoyment* of peasants' fiefs; the right, however, being hampered and restricted in various ways. In the absence of heirs-at-law,—if he has children, it is divided among them just as with the property of nobles,—he has the right to dispose freely of his property by will. The more important of these restrictions have in view an

object humane in itself, but it is easy to foresee that they will have a contrary effect to that designed; and, like all legal measures intended to establish an artificial check on the operation of natural causes as regards the disposition of property, must eventually yield to the wants of a progressing society.

Since the passing of this law, it can scarcely be said any longer that the peasant alone pays taxes; for it is especially provided, that, should a noble purchase a peasant's fief he is not only liable to all the labour and payments of the landlord, but also to all the taxes of Government, county rates, &c.

In his judicial character the landlord is much more restricted than formerly; he can no longer inflict on the refractory peasant any corporeal punishment, and the only summary means left in his power of enforcing obedience to his orders is imprisonment from one to three days, he being obliged to support the prisoner during that time.* The jurisdiction of the *Sedes Dominalis* has been restricted to cases between peasant and peasant, those between the peasant and his lord are from henceforth to be decided by the *Sedes Dominalis Urbarialis;* a new court, composed of five disinterested persons, among whom must figure the magistrate of the district, and one of his sworn men, the rest being named by the landlord, but the landlord himself, and his officers, are absolutely excluded. All the numerous disputes arising from the peculiar relation in which landlord and tenant stand to each other,—as, oppressive exactions and unwarranted ejectments, illegal judgments, and bodily injuries, on the one side; or on the other, refusal to labour, the nonpayment of dues, wilful destruction of property, or personal insult,—are decided by this tribunal; which assembles on notice being given in the village itself where the offence has been committed, and proceeds by a verbal or written process to take cognizance of the matter. The right of appeal remains as before, though it will probably be much less frequently employed.

I have entered thus at length into the laws affecting the Hungarian peasantry, especially those which regulate their intercourse with their lords; because I have been anxious to show that they are not, as strangers commonly suppose, serfs, nor their lords tyrants, with unlimited power over their lives and fortunes.

* As long as the system of paying rent in labour continues, it is absolutely necessary that the landlord should have a summary power of enforcing it: a strong reason for changing the system.

The rights of each are accurately defined, and a cheap and easy process exists for obtaining justice on either side. The rent paid by the peasant in labour and produce, instead of cash, is exceedingly small; and he is endowed with a right in the property, inconsistent even with our notions of the landlord's just claims. It is evident enough, then, that the Hungarian peasant is no serf—that the laws give him rights fixed and determinate; but it is yet a question whether they have all been wisely conceived.

I believe that many of these laws have an injurious effect on the character of the peasantry. The system of rent by *robot* or forced labour,—that is, so many days' labour without any specification of the quantity of work to be performed,—is a direct premium on idleness. A landlord wishes a field of corn to be cut; his steward sends out, by means of his Haiduks, information to the peasants to meet at such a field at such an hour with their sickles. Some time after the hour appointed a great part of them arrive, the rest finding some excuse by which they hope to escape a day's work; while others send their children or their wives, declaring some reasons for their own absence. After much arranging they at last get to work; a Haiduk stands over them to see that they do not go to sleep, and between talking, laughing, and resting, they do get something done. Where horses are employed, they are still less inclined to hurry; lest they should tire them for the next day, when they use them for their own purposes.

Now how much does the reader suppose such workmen perform in one day? Count S—— says, just one-third of what the same men can do easily when working by the piece; and he has accordingly compounded his peasants' one hundred and four days' robot for a certain amount of labour, which they generally get through in about thirty-four days.

Another evil of the robot is the ill-will it begets between the masters and the workmen; their whole lives seem to be a constant effort, on the one hand, to see how much can be pressed out of the reluctant peasant; and, on the other, how little can be done to satisfy the terms of agreement, and escape punishment. Mutual injury becomes a mutual profit; suspicion and ill-will are the natural results.

The restrictions on the sale of peasants' fiefs, to which I before alluded, though evidently well meant, are equally injurious in their tendency. They exclude from purchasing peasants' fiefs

the lord of the manor, or landlord, other nobles possessing parts of the same village, and the community or parish *in corpore:* while, in villages of forty entire fiefs, no one can purchase more than one fief; or, in those of eighty, two; or, in those of one hundred and twenty, three; and, even in the largest, four is the greatest number allowed to one person. The object is evidently to prevent the greedy speculator, the overbearing landlord, or even the saving industrious peasant, from grasping in his own power the whole property of a village, and thus reducing an independent peasantry to the state of tenants at will. Without pausing to examine whether the system of tenants at will does not produce greater happiness, as well as greater plenty, than that of independent holders, it is easy to see that these restrictions injure the peasant himself. In lessening the number of purchasers, they rob him of the value of his land; by refusing him unlimited right of purchase in the same place, they check his industry and prevent his rising to a higher station; while, by confining his farm to so small a size, improvement in agriculture becomes almost impossible.

Nor have they a less direct tendency to keep the whole body in a state of indolence. When one case of idleness is supported by the law, independently of any personal efforts, the example of course influences a whole neighbourhood; whereas were idleness followed by want and misery, and did industry unrestricted lead to wealth and independence, these effects would be most extensively felt. One peasant, become rich and independent from his own industry, would make fifty such. But this is one out of many instances we shall meet with of the results of that paternal affection, which takes care that its children shall not take care for themselves.

The present state of the Hungarian peasantry, and the tenure by which they hold their land, have a particular interest for the English reader, as they illustrate the origin of some obscure rights and customs in his own laws. I have been forcibly struck with some of these; and, if I blunder occasionally in attempting to indicate them, the learned reader must pardon the errors of a non-professional annotator on so knotty a subject.

All landed property in England is either freehold or copyhold; that is, either what was originally held by a *homo liber* (the noble of Hungary,) and constituting a freehold, *liberum tenementum*,—or let by him to a *villein*, or peasant, on consideration of certain services, for which he held, as a title-deed, a *copy*

of the entry in the manor roll, hence called *copyhold;* in other words, the *fundus dominalis* and *fundus colonicalis* of the Hungarian Urbarium. The very mode of conveying peasants' fiefs is similar to that practised with respect to copyhold. They are transferred by a simple writing, one copy of which remains with the lord of the village.

Now how similar were the states of society which gave rise to these analogous laws!

In some of our old copyholds,* still preserved in their original form, the services to be performed are servile: in one case the holder must reap the lord's corn, in another he must repair his fences; in some cases it is especially provided that the lord shall find the copyholders in meat and drink; and, in an old Scottish tenure, the lord binds himself to pay the piper as long as the villeins work. The resemblance in this last point is most extraordinarily maintained,—the Wallack peasantry of Transylvania will not work without a bagpiper; and, I am sure, were they to commute their days of labour for so much work, they would contract for meat and drink, and bagpipes too.

We have in England some tenures, equally curious, by which a certain number of fat geese must be delivered at Michaelmas; and, in like manner, in some parts of Transylvania the tenants are bound to furnish a certain number of aigrettes' or herons' plumes, and martens' furs, as yearly rent. The only difference in the two cases is this, that with us no Urbarium ever existed, every thing was left to private agreement; accordingly it took from the Conquest to the time of Elizabeth to do away with absolute villeinage:† while, in Hungary, by one sweeping law, the nobles gave up their exclusive right over one half the land of the country, retaining only certain privileges which we have enumerated. As we shall show by and by, it requires but one simple law permitting, not enforcing—for that I hold to be unjust and imprudent—contracts, commuting personal service for a fixed tax, and the Hungarian peasant slides gradually into the English copyholder. I need not say to the English reader, that, for the most part, copyhold is now just as good as freehold.

* These have been for the most part commuted for payment of money-fines at certain periods, mere nominal services, &c.; and though the lord has still the right to reclaim in theory, it has been generally allowed to fall into disuse.

† Absolute villeinage, or serfage, has not existed in Hungary for several centuries.

The theory still remains that they hold at the lord's will, but it is a complete fiction.

Our manorial rights, which still exist, and which always go with the *Hall,—Curia Dominalis,*—are the sole remains of seigneurial power in England:—would that the *Jura Domini Terrestris* of Hungary had become equally innocent! But enough of law.

Should these pages meet the eye of some philanthropic Hungarian, he may think that I have spoken too leniently of the conduct of the nobles to their peasantry, and found too much good in the peasants' condition. He would be mistaken, however; I both know and appreciate their wrongs. But he must recollect that I am writing for those who have hitherto believed them serfs. This is an opinion for which we Englishmen are not altogether to blame; for, in addition to our ignorance of Hungary, and our aptitude to compare it with Poland and Russia, the error is often fostered by the silly vanity with which some Hungarians themselves speak of their *subjects* and their *vassals;* forgetting that, instead of impressing a foreigner with an admiration of their greatness, such remarks only fill him with disgust at their injustice. What renders it still worse is, that this language is sometimes used by men who talk loudly of the oppressions they suffer from Austria,—of attacks on their rights and privileges: they may talk long enough on such matters before they excite the sympathy of an Englishman, when they utter in the same breath complaints of the disobedience and insubordination of their own *vassals!*

No! Hungarian peasants are not vassals; but Heaven knows they have even still enough of injustice to complain of!

It is rare indeed that the poor, the ignorant, and the weak, do not suffer from the oppression of the strong; but in Hungary they have more than their share of the sufferings which ordinarily fall to the lot of humanity. Well might a Diet of the olden times exclaim, "Nulla res magis florenti quondam Hungariæ statui nocuisse videtur oppressione colonorum, quorum clamor ascendit jugiter ante conspectum Dei;" and that cry will still be heard at the throne of eternal justice.

I know well that the burdens of the Hungarian peasant are hard, and beyond all measure of justice. I know that, besides the dues he owes his landlord, he pays a tenth to the church, to the government a head-tax and property-tax, and to the municipality (besides his labour in the repair of roads and bridges, and

the toll in crossing them) a heavy impost for the administration of justice, the municipal government, the maintenance of public buildings, and also, the greater part of the burden of supporting an army of sixty thousand men. I know that the soldier is quartered upon the peasant; and that, besides giving up half his cottage for his accommodation, he is obliged, for one kreutzer (something less than a halfpenny) a day, to furnish him with fire, cooking, stable-room, and fodder,—not to mention the peculations and impertinences of which he dare neither complain nor avenge himself. I know that, in addition to this, he is obliged to sell his corn and hay at a fixed price for the use of the troops; and that, as this price was fixed many years ago, it is now generally below the market average, and in some years is only one-eighth of what would be obtained by a fair sale.

I know that, thus bearing all the burdens of the state, the poor peasant enjoys but few of its privileges. It is true, that it is difficult to deprive him of his farm, for in that government protects him, for the sake of the tax it obtains from him; that his complaints against his seigneur are often listened to with a willling ear, and for that also there is a reason which it is easy to divine; that, by industry, he can generally obtain more than is absolutely necessary to supply the demands of nature; and, in short, that were he to be reduced to that state of brutalism which some rulers think the *ne plus ultra* of human perfectibility in those they govern, he would be no doubt a happy creature. But, thank God! the worst efforts of the worst rulers have not been able to crush all that is noble and great in man. I know that the Hungarian peasant feels that he is oppressed; and, if justice be not speedily rendered him, I fear much that he will wrest it —perhaps somewhat rudely too—from the trembling grasp of the factitious power which has so long withheld it from him.

Nor do I forget that the Hungarian peasant is entirely excluded from all political power; that an artificial barrier, which no exertions of his own can enable him to pass, prevents the possibility of his aspiring to it; that he can only hold landed property under servile and degrading restrictions; that he can never hope to rise higher than the situation in which he is born; that he is not equal with the noble before the law; that he is liable to the infliction of imprisonment, and, till the last Diet, of corporeal punishment also, without fair trial; and that, in all disputes with the noble, he is subject to the jurisdiction of those whose natural sympathies incline them to favour his adversary. I do not forget that

he is thus deprived of the two feelings most sacred to a freeman, and the most carefully protected by a good government,—a sense of personal security, and a confidence in the fair administration of justice: but I know that this is still far removed from vassalage; and when I look round the world, and would mark the spot where the poor and weak are not oppressed, alas! I find it not.

But, in Hungary, I see prospects of better things to come. A great change has been begun, from which it is impossible any longer to recede; and, if it be conducted wisely, I see a happy and glorious future for Hungary as the consequence. I see the nobles contented and wealthy; I see the Government strong and feared abroad, because loved and respected at home; I see from the Hungarian peasants arise the future yeomen, the free possessors of the soil, the electors, the jurymen, the militiamen —the citizens in the noblest sense of the word, the bulwarks of their country in war, the guardians of her liberties in peace. It remains to consider how this vision will be accomplished.

I have already said that the act of the last Diet would eventually change the whole aspect of society in Hungary: the nobles showed by that act a spirit of self-sacrifice worthy of all praise; little more is needed. The most simple remedy for existing evils is this: let every peasant holding land be allowed to purchase a commutation of his services, tithes, and other obligations, either by a permanent tax or by a sum of ready money: let this confer on him not only free possession of the land, but entire independence of his lord: including, of course, independence of the Seigneurial Court,—for, as he would then have no duties towards his lord, his lord could have no longer any claim on him. Let every holder of an entire fief, thus enfranchised, become a member of the municipal and political body,—his stake in the country is surely sufficient, and his qualification depends on his property. The peasant land would still remain subject to Government and municipal taxes, the enfranchised peasant would be equally liable to all the burdens of the state as the unenfranchised. Let Government encourage the peasantry on the *Kameral* (Exchequer) properties to purchase their enfranchisement by fixing a low scale of prices; the revenue would be the better for it, and the country could not complain.

If to this it be desired to unite the great political and national project of Magyarizing the whole country, it is only necessary to annex to the enjoyment of political and municipal rights the condition of a knowledge of the Magyar language. This would

be no hardship, for, as the law stands, all legal and political acts must be published in that tongue; and it is evident that no one can be fit to take a part in them who does not understand it. This would effect more towards Magyarizing Hungary than all the schools that can be established,—than all the coercive acts the Diet can pass. It would become every man's interest to learn Magyar; the knowledge of the language would be in itself a kind of patent of nobility,—the ignorance of it a badge of servitude. What father would refuse his child the means of acquiring such advantages, and at so cheap a rate?

Some such measures as these are all that are wanted.

Let the nobles gradually yield the vexatious rights of seigneury, which bring little profit to them, but do much injury to others; let them enable the peasant to purchase his freedom from service; grant him independent justice; as he acquires property, let him acquire consideration and rights; leave men and things to act as circumstances show to be best, untrammelled by restrictions, unaided by privilege; and the peasant of Hungary will soon occupy a position which may justly be envied by his fellows of any other part of Europe.