

# Budapest, the Magyar Capital

By NICHOLAS KLEIN, Special European Correspondent WILSHIRE'S

PARIS, Rome and London, form the trinity of European cities for the average American traveler. He visits them because practically all Americans do likewise. These cities, especially Paris, are crowded with pleasure-seeking Americans every summer; in fact, each of them can boast of a regular American colony, with stores, churches and the rest. But one of the most interesting cities in all Europe, and one that the average American traveler hears little or nothing about and rarely visits, is Budapest, the capital of Hungary, the land of the Magyars.

Lying, so to speak, "just between the Occident and the Orient," Budapest presents ample field for study, especially for the student of political questions, for fist fights and political revolutions are almost daily occurrences in the Magyar House of Deputies. Some American travelers have expressed their opinion that they would rather see a good fight in the Hungarian Parliament between the Croatian and Hungarian delegates, than attend a bull fight in old Madrid. At least the admission is free in the case of the former exhibition!

Buda and Pest, formerly separate cities, lying on either bank of the beautiful Danube river, have been incorporated into the Magyar capital city of Budapest; and the population is now estimated at 900,000 persons. The scenery about two miles from the center of the city, and within easy walking distance, is equal to any in Europe. There is Zugliget, Nepliget, Varosmajor, Varosliget, Margitsziget and a number of other parks that place Budapest in the very front ranks of European garden cities. A midnight ride on the "Blue Danube" to Vienna is a complete poem in itself, but the most beautiful sight in Budapest is to be seen from the tower on the brow of the hill in Buda just in front of the Matyas church. To your right is the King's Palace, built of solid stone and sitting on top of a hill making it almost a fortress. It contains 300 rooms, a magnificent stable, and a private church for Francis Joseph, the king, who rarely ever visits here; recent alterations cost the people some 26,000,000 crowns. To your left is the magnificent palace of the Prime Minister, and immediately in front of you is the Danube, with Pest on the opposite bank. On a clear day you can see the four leading bridges crossing the river, namely: the Chain Bridge, built by an English firm, it being the first to span the river; Marguerite Bridge, Elizabeth Bridge and the Francis Joseph Bridge. In case of war, this tower would be an excellent place from which to bombard the city. The Parliament building is almost opposite, the leading banks are equally exposed and Andrassy avenue, the principal business section, could be destroyed in a few hours' time from this tower. St. Stephan Catholic Church, the largest in Hungary, the City Hall, County Court House, Palace of Justice, the Stock Exchange, in fact the entire city could be pounded into ruins from this very tower. The thought strikes you immediately upon entering, that this new tower, with its many port-hole windows and built of solid stone, was purposely designed for war, or the architect missed his calling. Anyhow, it is a magnificent view of the entire city that the architect has given us, war or no war.

One of the most popular resorts in all Budapest is Varosliget (City Park). It is said that there is not a man, woman or child in the city who has not visited this park at least once a year. The park is open day and night and is always crowded with people. It contains the famous Os-Budavara, Becketow Circus, summer theatres, and many other amusement places that make it closely resemble Coney Island, with a touch of the beauties of Central Park mixed with it, to make it more natural. Numerous artesian wells and hot-water baths, flower gardens that cannot be seen in the United States, and monuments that would arouse the spirit of art in almost any man, are scattered throughout this park. Almost adjoining some permanent exhibition buildings is the immense statue of our own Washington, built by patriotic Americans who were born in this land of the Magyar. Almost facing Arena-ut, and the real entrance to this park, is the Art Museum of Budapest. It is a magnificent white stone structure in the Greek style and contains among many other valuable works, one Rubens, one Cano, one Pacheco, one Romanus, "The Three Graces" of Giorgio Vasari, the wonderful "Death of Socrates," by Giambettino Cignaroli, six Murillos and dozens of specimens of the work of Mihaly Munkacsy, the most famous of all Magyar painters.

Budapest has fifteen daily papers, the foremost of which is the "Budapesti Naplo." It also has dozens of magazines and humorous weeklies, and a number of scientific and trade journals. One of the most curious facts in the newspaper business is, that none appear on Sunday. The daily "Nepszava" is the Socialist and labor paper of Budapest and has a paid-up circulation of 18,000 copies daily.

The English language is being introduced very rapidly, and English news-

terprising Yankee has started a modern shoe factory here. It would mean a fortune for him and a revolution in shoes.

Like every city of any size, Budapest has its dark side. Poverty, filth, want, hunger and privation is the lot of the average worker. Food is very high in price, and the average laborer eats meat on Sunday only. The average servant-girl works sixteen hours a day, including Sunday, and gets, besides her whippings, some ten florins (\$4.00) a month. Under the laws she is punished if she leaves her

side of this, most of the factories are, as yet, small and ancient in their methods. The average laborer in Budapest gets three crowns (60 cents) a day. The Typographical Union is the strongest and is building its own private palace here in Budapest. Practically the entire trade is organized and they have a nine-hour day with fifty crowns a week pay. A bricklayer gets four crowns a day, and a carpenter about five crowns, for nine hours work. Samuel Yaszai is the national secretary of the unions, and Jenö Horowitz and Manó Buchinger are the national officials of the Socialist movement, the latter being in jail at this writing (August, 1907) for disobeying the press censor. To show the growth of the labor movement in Hungary, it is only necessary to state that from 8,000 organized workers in 1902, to 150,000 in 1907, is a very strong growth. Strikes and lock-outs are frequent, and most of the unions are organized secretly, because of the opposition on the part of the Cabinet, which has power to dissolve any union at pleasure on complaint of the employers' associations. Unions and Socialists are very unpopular here in Budapest among the ruling classes.

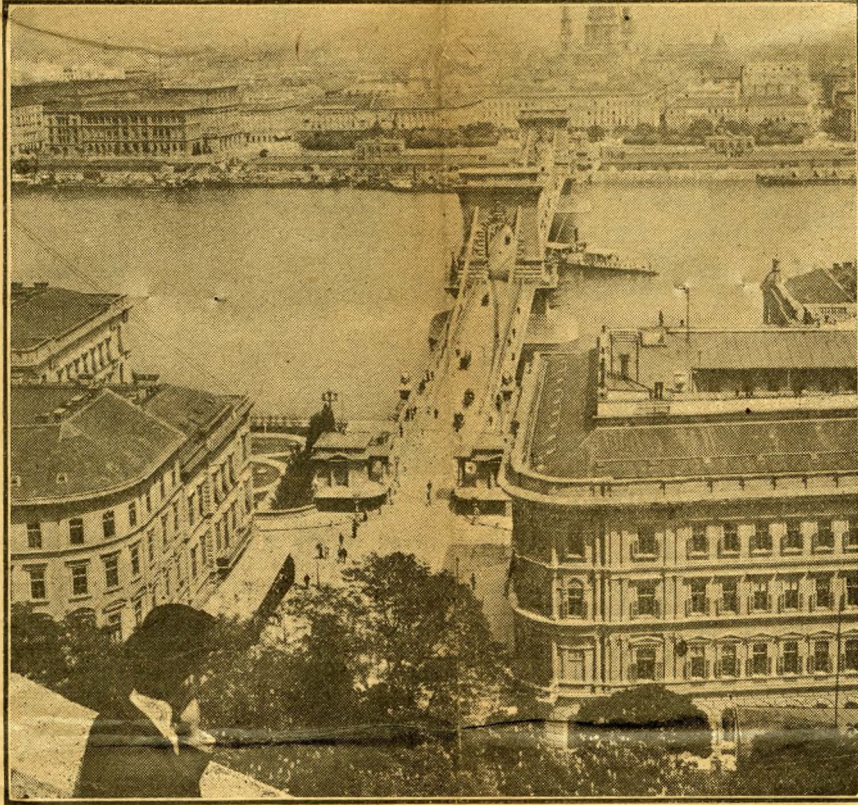
Every third person in Budapest is a Hebrew, and according to excellent authorities, the Jews absolutely control the commercial and financial life of the city. It is strange, but true, that while the greatest capitalists in the city are Jews, the leaders of the labor movement are also Jews. The old adage of "rich as a Jew" does not hold good here. While there are a few very wealthy Jews, yet the average Jew is in extreme poverty. Practically every well-known physician and lawyer in Budapest is a Jew, despite the anti-Semitism of the clerical government, but it is plain that it is nearly impossible for a Jew to remain a Jew and rise in politics. The case of men accepting Christianity in order to secure a professorship in the university, or in order to rise in politics, is very common. One wealthy manufacturer, of Jewish faith, changed to Christianity, in order, as he expressed it, "to give my only son, who is nine years old, a chance to rise in life when he reaches manhood's age." Sad to relate, the lad died shortly after he was baptized, and now broken-hearted the father sought to have his dear one buried in a Jewish cemetery. The father failed in this and died of the strange disease known as a "broken heart." The largest Jewish temple of worship is located on Dohany utza.

Education is yet backward and the schools are divided into Roman Catholic, Greek Catholic, Protestant and Jewish. Unlike the United States, the teachers can marry, and religious instruction is one of the leading courses of study. The Jewish child when born is marked down as "Israelite," and this stamp weighs him down even to the grave. In the schools his books and certificates of report are marked "Israelite," and when he goes out into the world his diploma or worker's book also bears this stamp "of Cain."

There is an excellent university and a number of libraries in Budapest, the largest of which is the one attached to the Nemzeti Museum on Sandor utza, opposite the old Parliament building, containing half a million volumes. But the library system of Budapest, like that of most European cities, discourages reading. Books cannot be taken home and only students and literary men ever visit the library. If we Americans had nothing else but our public libraries with the open-shelf system built by our municipalities, we could still say that we are a century ahead of Europe.

While we excel in libraries, we are away back in sewerage systems and municipal enterprises. Budapest streets cannot be equalled anywhere in America. Even in the poorer quarters on Dob, Petöfi and Istvanter utza, one notices the cleanliness in contrast to our American cities. Budapest has her own gas works and lights the city for a trifle. Budapest repairs her own streets, the contract system being unknown. Budapest makes her own bricks in a municipal brickyard, grows grapes in a municipal vineyard, and presses them in a municipal establishment; the profit made from the wine pays a good part of the municipal expenses of running the city government, and consumers get pure, unadulterated wine for 16 cents a gallon. The city has municipal baths, where, for five cents, one can take a genuine Turkish steam bath, plenty of municipal markets, and other enterprises which place Budapest ahead of any American city as a clean municipality.

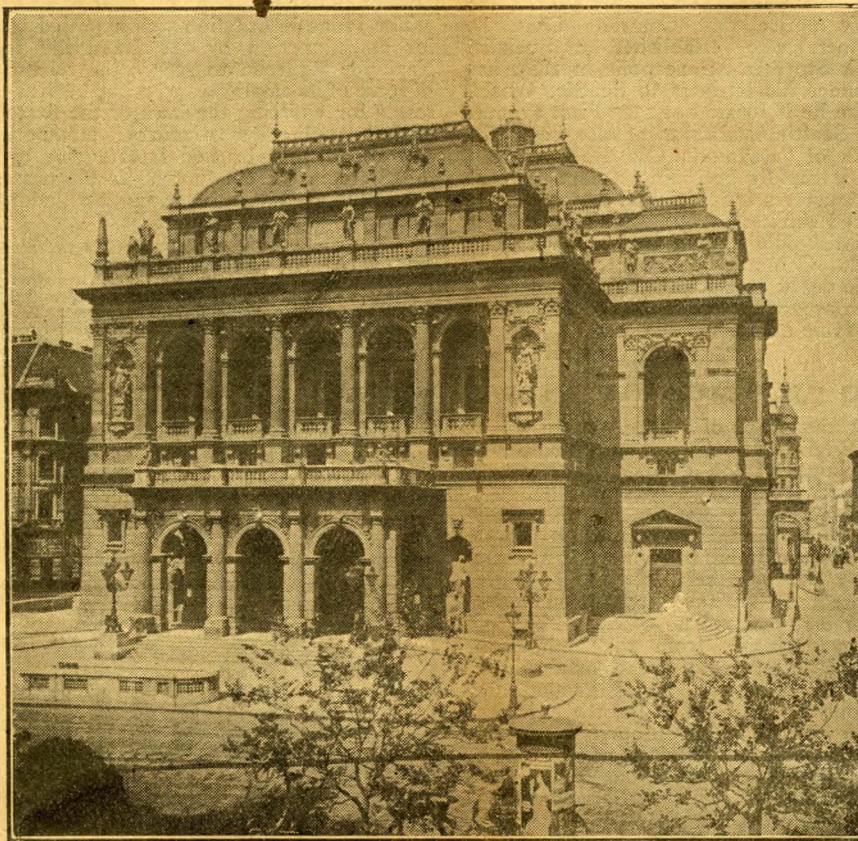
Philip Coloman is the Lord Mayor and holds office for life; while Stephan Bárczy is Mayor and is elected by the electors having the tax qualification.



Budapest From Castle Hill.

papers can be had at most any café in the city. The Revolution of 1848, and the defeat of the Hungarian troops by the combined forces of Austria and Russia, created a hatred for Germans and the German language which still exists, consequently even those, who are not engaged in commercial enterprise, prefer the English language. The Hungarians, like all other foreigners, complain of our spelling and it's a big task to get a Hungarian to pronounce "business, thor-

master before the end of a month, or two weeks' notice. To every bricklayer there are two women hod-carriers, and they seem to have a complete monopoly of this branch of the building trades. They work nine hours and receive thirty-five cents a day in wages. About one-half of them are married women who help support the family. In summer these women work barefooted, carry hods just like our own American hod-carriers, and all belong to the union. Nearly all com-



Municipal Opera House, Budapest.

oughly, theatre," and many words that are not written phonetically. This one fact, alone, hinders the spreading of the English language to a very considerable extent. American farming implements, typewriters, cash registers, razors, and even patent medicines, are very popular here; in fact, everything here that is put on sale is said to be from America. American styles govern absolutely and have almost entirely wiped out the French, but I am surprised that no en-

mon labor in tearing down buildings is done by women.

But there is no child labor in Hungary! The laws do not permit it, and these laws are enforced. The labor movement and its political wing, the Socialist movement, are one here, and a union man pays his party fees when he pays his union dues.

The largest factory in the city is that of Ganz & Co., electrical implements, employing about 3,000 people, but, out-

The city is divided into ten districts and an equal number of men represent the city in the national Parliament, although it is claimed that the industrial centers have little or no representation, as compared to the agricultural districts, and if justice were done, Budapest would be entitled to at least twenty-five members of Parliament.

The strangest thing about Budapest is that people all live in large buildings, containing ten or more families and built in a shape to allow a court and one central gate which closes every night at 10 o'clock promptly. Those coming home after this hour must awaken the janitor, and pay a fine for admittance. Even hotels lock up the front door at 11 o'clock and fine guests after this hour. This does not imply the fact that people go to bed early in Budapest. Oh, no! On the contrary. It seems that Budapest is far ahead of Berlin or Paris for midnight life. The Cafés are always open and one cannot walk peacefully through the streets after 10 o'clock in the night without being stopped by prostitutes. Morally, the city is one of the worst, if not the worst, in the world. For its size it contains more fallen women than any city in Europe. Speaking to one of the members of Parliament, whose name I am not at liberty to mention, we compared the different cities of the world and finally reached Budapest in our conversation. I told him that while I liked Budapest fairly well, the morals did not suit me; his answer was: "Young man, you are mistaken. We have no morals!" Nearly every bar and restaurant, every theatre and hotel, contains a group of prostitutes who offer themselves for sale, in order to make some sort of a living. The whole system of prostitution in vogue makes the poor unfortunate girl a slave, used as an article of profit for rich profit mongers, who eke out a comfortable living and sit in plush church pews on the life and virtue of the poor, unfortunate daughter of some working-man. Once in the hands of the Budapest slave-mongers the girl never escapes. Her clothes are not even her own.

Visitors should not fail to visit Margit island. This island forms a public park washed by the Danube, and is 50 hectares (about 125 acres) in extent. It is the property of Archduke Joseph, who, after spending large sums in laying it out and

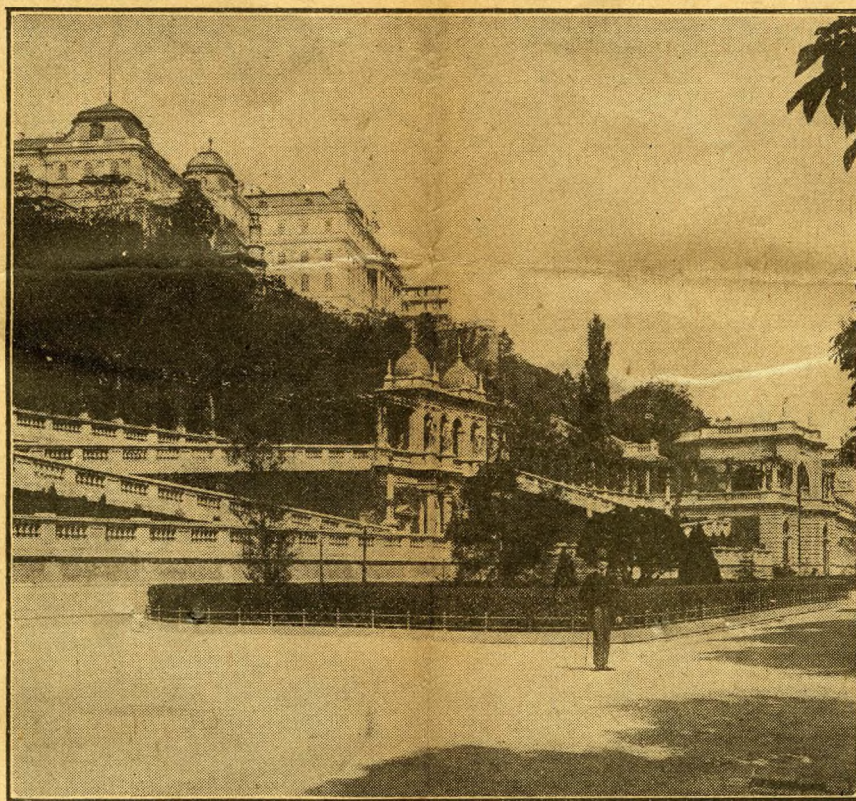
villas and greenhouses which are crowded during the summer season. A sulphur spring rises from an artesian well, 372 feet deep, and flows smoking with discolored banks into the Danube. It is stated that an American capitalist has of-

forced by strikes and demonstrations from the governing bodies, there being no labor representatives in Parliament. All contracts between capitalists and laborers must stipulate the following periods of rest, viz.: half an hour in the forenoon, one hour at noon and half an hour in the afternoon. An act of 1884 protects female labor and exempt them from work for a term of four weeks after confinement without damaging their contract. This act further provides for arbitration between employer and employed in all labor disputes. To this end a Board of Arbitration, presided over by one of the government authorities and consisting of six representatives of the employers, and six representing the workers, drawn from the trade immediately concerned, is provided. If the negotiations of this board lead to no result, the industrial surveyor of the state is called upon to intervene and attempt to create peace.

Act XIII of 1891 makes Sunday rest obligatory for all industrial and commercial establishments, recognizing, also, August 20th, the day dedicated to the memory of St. Stephen, the first king of Hungary, as a public holiday, cleaning and repairs alone being excepted. Work must cease at 6 a. m. on Sundays, and must not be resumed for twenty-four hours.

The Hungarian law providing for insurance against loss of wages from sickness was passed in 1891. This law bears a close resemblance to legislation on the same subject in Austria and Germany, and is based on the principle of compulsory insurance, the cost being borne by employers and workmen in the proportion of two-thirds by the workmen and one-third by the employers. The contributions to the sick insurance funds vary between 2 and 3 per cent. of the daily wages.

Americans will do well to keep their eyes on Little Hungary, the land of revolutions, and especially Budapest, its capital city, for labor is awakening there and demanding justice!



Entrance to Royal Gardens, Budapest

planting it, building baths and providing many attractions, has thrown it open to the public. Passing the football grounds near the bridge, which also gives access to the island, one arrives at the race-course and pigeon shooting grounds. The entire island is a mass of hotels,

fered twenty million florins for the island, his idea being to build a new Monte Carlo, but Archduke Joseph refused the offer.

Labor laws are interesting, in view of the fact that the workers have no franchise, and what laws do exist have been