



Budapestre vonatkozó újságcikkek

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BEAUTIFUL BUDAPEST.

(By ELIZABETH CORATHIEL.)

Twilight wanes, and on the dark, shadow-shrouded hills zig-zag dramatic orange streaks of forest fires. The excitement on board grows intense. The Hungarians are on tiptoe. They are nearing home. Above us a violet canopy, flecked with honey-coloured stars; ahead a night-blue mountain, flecked with honey-coloured lights. Like a piece of the sky fallen to earth—this is Budapest.

It would be difficult to say which possesses the greater charm—night in this star-lit city, or morning with its rumble of farm carts, its clean, sweet awakening after sleep, the silvery-golden gleam of its sunshine, the tramp, tramp, tramp of feet over its suspension bridges—surely the prettiest bridges ever built.

With one accord the clocks of Budapest had agreed to differ. My own watch pointed to half-past eight, but five separate dials on city landmarks assured me confidently that the time was somewhere between 4.30 and 3.0. I had yet to learn that a difference of an hour or two in the keeping of an appointment or the transaction of business is of little account in Budapest—so delightfully leisurely is the whole attitude towards life.

On the banks of the Danube stand many cafés, outside which the gilded citizens take their morning coffee, their afternoon ice. Men in white suits, with the smallest waists; women in sleeveless frocks of organdi. Rather flower-like, all of them: the men exotic, the women painted. Your true-born American hastens to explain that these flamboyant plants are Jews. Indeed, the city is overrun with descendants

of Abraham.

To the natural beauties of its situation the city's dwellings give a finishing touch. Pest, with its fine Parliament, its long, singularly straight main streets; Buda, the old town—or Ofen, as it is called—dominated by the cathedral with its painted roof, the immensely sturdy Bastion of Fishermen, which dates back to Turkish times, and the exquisitely dainty royal palace, where Count Horthy now keeps economical house. The swift-flowing Danube runs between the two hill-side halves of the composite town.

In the hotel at night, which, café-fashion, overflows with white-painted chairs and tables and rose-shaded lamps on to the pavement, gipsy music issues from violin and tympanum. Impossible to describe the wizardry of these born musicians, who play exquisitely hour after hour the most intricate pieces, and read not a note of music. Again and again the national dance, the Czardas, rings out: the company, incapable of controlling itself, sways with the rhythm. Hearts are opened, eyes flash. "We used not to be good friends with Austria," one says in a burst of confidence. "But now Austria, poor country—Hungary, poor country—we are friends."

Never for one moment is there any doubt that Hungary will be rich again.

Not that there are any signs of poverty. One's host permits the dinner to start with beer—and excellent home-brewed brown beer it is. From beer he proceeds to wine; thence to a more excellent wine. And finally, when there is no more need for any wine at all, when his guests are sated and full of joy, he orders more wine—the best in the cellar.

A childish, lovable, large-hearted people—and the best company in the world.

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