



EMPEROR FRANZ JOSEF OF AUSTRIA-HUNGARY GREETED BY THE BURGOMEISTER AT BUDA-PEST

BUDA-PEST, CAPITAL OF HUNGARY

The Beautiful Twin City Marked by Splendid Buildings, and Dignified Residences—Life of Its People one of Richness and Ostentation

By FRITZ MORRIS

To be within easy reach of Vienna, or any part of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire Kingdom, without visiting Buda-Pest, would be like seeing Washington without visiting the Capitol or the Congressional Library.

Buda and Pest, beautifully situated on the right and left shores of the Danube were formerly sister cities, but are now united in one fair capital, joined by several bridges and make a delightful metropolis that has few equals. With splendid hotels and handsome shops, great public buildings, museums, and theaters, spacious streets and promenades, parks and gardens, with music and concerts, Buda-Pest has endless attractions for the visitor. In that part of the city on the right bank which was formerly Buda, is the chief seat of administration, the Royal Palace, a vast and splendid building erected by Maria Theresa in 1748, which contains the Hungarian regalia and, also, the chambers of the Hungarian Diet. The royal chateau crowns the summit of a hill around which the town is built and it is reached by a wire rope railway. That part of the city on the left bank of the Danube, formerly Pest, is the industrial, commercial district of Buda-Pest, and here are the National Museum and its famous Picture Gallery, near which are the magnificent Gothic Houses of Parliament, the Polytechnic School, many palaces of the aristocracy,

the splendid edifice of the Palace of Justice, the Agricultural Building, the Town Hall, the Academy of Science, and the Opera House, all worthy of admiration, because of their striking architecture.

Among the edifices on the magnificent boulevard—called Corso—up the river, is the Stock and Produce Exchange, and, still farther on, is the Academy, with a library of 100,000 volumes, and two floors containing the picture gallery bought from Prince Esterhazy. At the end of the magnificent Andrassy Street, one of the finest thoroughfares in the world, is the Park, a charming and fashionable resort both in winter and summer. On the Danube, at the upper end of the town, is Margaret Island, the property of the Archduke Joseph, who has converted it, at an enormous outlay, into a delightful park, with an elegant bath house, supplied by a spring of warm sulphurous water, and given it to the city.

The Danube, at Buda-Pest, varies in width from 1,000 to 2,000 feet and is spanned by four fine bridges. The celebrated suspension bridge is one of the most picturesque, and was one of the first, in Europe, dating from 1840. The rapid growth of the city, since in 1867 Hungary wrung from the Empire its independence, and the management of its internal affairs, has been very remarkable, being



THE ROYAL PALACE IN WHAT WAS FORMERLY BUDA
Viewed from Pest, just across the Blue Danube

rivalled only by that of Berlin since the establishment of the German Empire in 1870. It is now one of the leading commercial cities in Europe, and, having been built for the most part within quite recent times, is also one of the handsomest. From a political, scientific, artistic, and social, point of view, Buda-Pest may be regarded as the "Hub" of the kingdom.

The King, Francis Josef, who is also Emperor of Austria, visits Buda-Pest every year, in May, and remains for four or five weeks, and it is then that the Hungarian Capital is at its best. While the Hungarians have no love for Austria, they are devoted to their King; they adore and almost worship him. During his visit to Buda-Pest, the city is crowded, the Hungarian magnates return to town, the theaters and music halls are open, the opera is on, the races take place, and clubs are full, in short it is "the season."

Life, during the season in Buda-Pest, differs in many ways from that of Vienna, Berlin, Paris or London. By daylight, it is far more picturesque; at night, it does not end until daylight, while in the capitals of Austria, Germany, France, and Great Britain, all is quiet an hour after midnight. The Andrássy Street is one of the greatest of Europe, three and a half miles long and straight as an arrow, one hundred and fifty yards wide, with an alley of trees like Unter den Linden in Berlin, bordered on both sides by promenades and driveways, and bounded by superior shops, cafes, clubs, and residences.

The Hungarian Magnates, who are the old aristocracy, and the blue blood of the kingdom, still retain their personal body servants called "Heiducken," who attend them when they go out, and who stand behind their chairs and wait upon them at their meals. They are the "Old Guard of Hungary" and wear the most richly decorated uniforms. The magnates, themselves, are celebrated for their magnificent national costume which they always wear on holidays, festivals, and occasions of state. It consists generally of a red surtout with a white jacket, worn loosely over the shoulder and covered with gold chevrons and expensive furs. The headgear is a "Kalpak," a cap of fur with a white feather fastened with jewels and gold. The sword sheath is encrusted with gold and jewels. His Excellency the Baron von Hengelmüller, the Austrian-Hungarian Ambassador at Washington, wears his Hungarian Magnates' costume at most official functions. The ladies of the Hungarian nobility, dark beauties, also wear a national costume with many colored, and richly jeweled corsages. The King's Hungarian body guard is the most magnificently uniformed in the world, wearing mantles of panther skins.

The Andrássy Street is the favorite center during the afternoons, and there are few avenues where finer horseflesh or more elegant equipages are to be seen. The Hungarian Magnate drives his teams in "fours" and "fives," two horses hitched as leaders with a string of three as "wheel-

ers;" the animals are small, wiry, and generally bays or light browns, and they literally fly along the ground.

As an illustration of the educational, scientific, and social side of Buda-Pest it may be said that the city possesses thirteen colleges, six seminaries, a university of National Music, several commercial colleges, an academy of painters and art school, a national conservatoire of music, four colleges for male teachers, eight colleges for female teachers, and several high schools for girls. Buda-Pest is the seat of the Hungarian Historical Society, the Royal College of Medicine, Society of Arts, Natural History Society, the Royal Hungarian Geological Institution, and other institutions.

The principal clubs, the National Casino, the Park Club, and the Jockey, to which it is almost impossible for a stranger to gain entrance, are both bright and beautiful. It is in the cafes that life is at its brightest and best, and here are to be found in their true originality, the famous Gypsy bands, with their musicians of the "Rigo" type. The prices are reasonable, the cooking is good, and to an American palate such national dishes as "Gulyas" and "Haluska," all, of course, highly seasoned with "paprika," are not only new but delicious. One must either drink wine or beer, and many of the restaurants are either "wine restaurants," or "beer restaurants." The wines are mostly light, good and cheap. Buda-Pest, like Vienna, has one curious custom. Everybody is supposed to be at home by ten o'clock, if not, he is locked out, the bell must be rung, and a small fee must be paid to the concierge, or his wife, for opening the door, letting you in, and handing you a small taper to light yourself upstairs. It is perpetuated neither by law nor by municipal ordinance; it is simply a custom.



THE OPERA HOUSE AT BUDA-PEST

One of the many splendid architectural features of the city



THE COMMERCIAL DISTRICT IN PEST ON THE LEFT BANK

Viewed from the right bank, Buda