

# Walks in Budapest-IV

In the course of our walks in Budapest, we have wandered in the rambling streets of the city centre, the Belváros, have seen the old city wall and contemplated the beautiful figure of a woman at Kálvin tér, the only remaining statue of the old Danubius fountain. (The new Danubius fountain is in Engels tér). However, few people know that our capital has more than 4,000 fountains and wells working to this day.

Only a few metres from Engels tér is one of the busiest points of the city, the junction of Bajcsy Zsilinszky út, Népköztársaság útja and József Attila utca. Standing on Engels tér, Népköztársaság útja, the former Sugár út, then Andrassy út, is like an arrow pointing to the Városliget. Construction of the elegant apartment houses lining the avenue, was started in the second half of the 1870s and in some 15 years the houses and the building of the Opera emerged in their present forms. At the time, the avenue, which to this day is one of the most beautiful features of the town was less advanced technologically than the rest of Budapest's road and public utility system. Thus, plumbing was installed in these houses only later. This explains the presence of a multitude of beautiful ornamental granite and marble wells and fountains in the gateways of these houses.

But the houses on Népköztársaság útja are worth a visit for a number of other interesting features as well. No. 3, at present almost invisible under the scaffolding, houses the Postal Museum. In the rooms of the museum objects of interest include the first telephone exchange designed and constructed by Tivadar Puskás, the old pillar boxes of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and the ornamental gilded telephone of Austrian Emperor and Hungarian King Franz Joseph. Two stories above the museum, the fiery colours of Károly Lotz's frescoes in the staircase form a sharp contrast with the drabness of the block of flats.

Most of the buildings on either side of the avenue are richly decorated with statues. The most beautiful of all is the State Opera house with its entrance guarded by two sphynxes and the statues of Ferenc Erkel and Ferenc Liszt. The front facade of the Opera is decorated with the statues of the classics of Opera from Monteverdi to Wagner.

It is little known that a large canal flowed once through the city on the route of Nagykörút. There were ideas to open the canal for shipping when plans were drawn up for town development. At the end, however, the canal was covered up but to this day it is the main branch of the city's sewage system, and workers of the Town Sewage Works row their boats on it.

Majakovszkij utca—the former Király utca—is only a few steps from November 7. tér. This street, which is a side street at present, was a hundred years ago the busiest thoroughfare of the town. Among the many interesting buildings that line the street the most famous is the

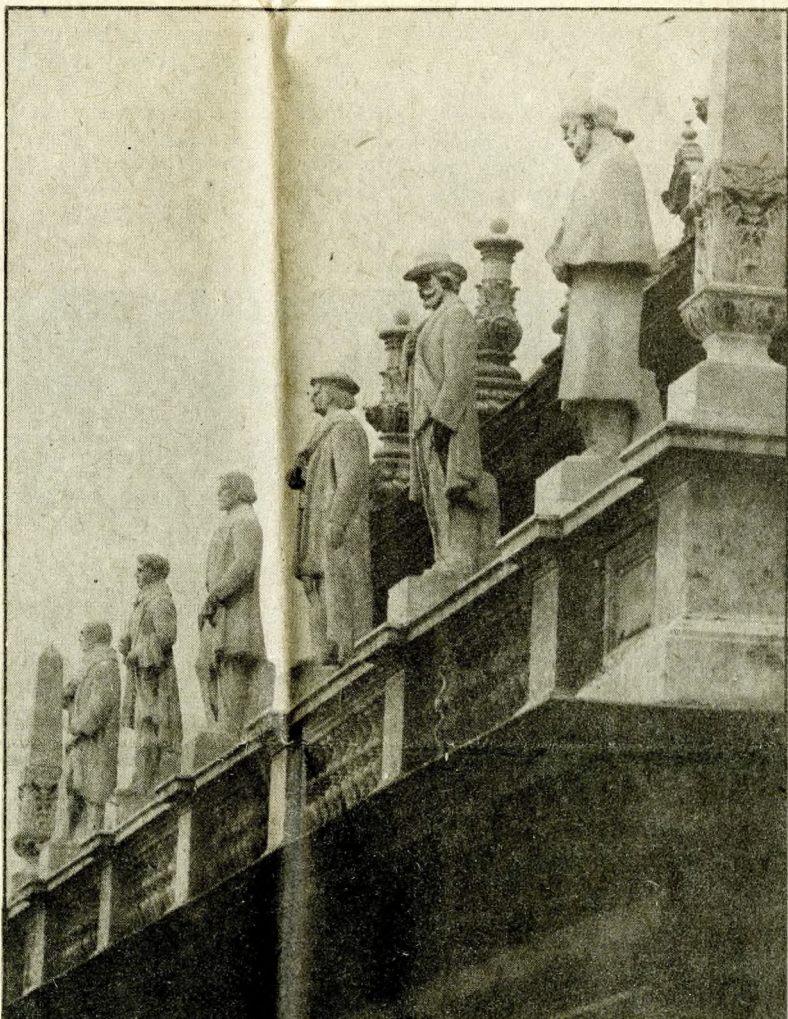
style, was once the first Budapest home of writer Gyula Krúdy. It is mentioned in several works of Krúdy, and its galleries on each level, its narrow circular staircase and its many statues still exude the atmosphere of the world of Krúdy.

Walking along Majakovszkij utca in the direction of the Városliget, there is an interesting building on the corner of Kazinczi utca. It was designed by Mihály Pollack, an architect of European fame who lived and worked in the first half of the 19th century. He designed the building of the National Museum and several other palaces and public buildings of the town, all built in a Neo-Classic style. He built a house on the corner of Kazinczi utca for a tradesman. The interesting two-storey building is remarkable for its galleries and unique windows.

A few hundred metres in the opposite direction brings us to the longest passage in Budapest, the Gozdsu udvar, which connects Majakovszkij utca, and the parallel Dob utca and is the traditional centre of silversmiths' workshops. In a few minutes



The statue of Saint Theresa of Lisieux on the house standing on the corner of Csányi utca and Majakovszkij utca



Great personalities of the opera remembered by statues on the upper balcony of the Opera House

time we are back at Engels tér, known even to natives of Buda-