



# Budapestre vonatkozó újságcikkek

Szerző: .....

Cím: *Poverty the cause*

Forrás: .....

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## CITY OF SUICIDES : GRIM RECORD

### TRAGEDY OF A SINKING CIVILISATION

### POVERTY THE CAUSE

From Our Own Correspondent  
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PRAGUE (received yesterday).—Budapest is rapidly acquiring a name as the City of Suicides.

In one of his most fantastic moods, Robert Louis Stevenson has given us a picture of his "Suicide Club," composed of exotic members, princes and paupers alike, to whom death is dealt by an innocent pack of cards. Imagine, then, the spectacle of a great city, the inhabitants of which are being hunted down more and more by this social scourge.

A few days ago the Budapest police issued a brief report, stating that during the first eight months of this year 1,134 citizens of the Hungarian capital have committed suicide. It is a frequent occurrence that the daily toll of Budapest's self-murders reaches seven or eight. It must be remembered, of course, that this city is but one-eighth the size of London. The police announcement adds curtly that the cause, in most instances, is sickness or poverty.

How the number of suicides in Budapest has risen is suggested by a casual survey of the past few years. In 1917 there were 240; in 1918, 400; in 1919, 940; in 1920, 1,200; in 1921, 1,300; in 1922, 1,448; and before two-thirds of the year 1923 have elapsed, 1,134 have met death by their own hands.

Few will realise, perhaps, that these cold figures spell an historic tragedy, the tragedy of a sinking civilisation.

### SUICIDE AND SOCIETY

Years ago, Professor Ian Masaryk, now President of the Tchecko-Slovakian Republic, wrote a piercing analysis of suicide as a social manifestation. President Masaryk's words, written more than 30 years ago, deserve to be revived in view of their newly acquired meaning.

"In all times and among all peoples," declared the distinguished sociologist and statesman, "suicide occurs as an isolated episode. But in certain periods this social curse appears as a mass phenomenon, notably during the great lapses in civilisation. It was thus during the years when Greek, Roman and Egyptian culture faded and decayed. We witnessed a Europe-wide revival of suicide after the Renaissance. And now, in the most modern times, suicide has achieved such an intensity that we are forced to recognise the close identity of this evil with our whole social system."

We are reminded of Professor Masaryk's prophetic remarks when we read in the annals of the Budapest police of many instances of children who have recently ended their own lives by violent means. It is significant that love is seldom cited as a motive for suicide. Romantic elements are absent, and it is plain material want that is invariably the gruesome reason. Thus, one case is recorded of a schoolgirl, no longer able to stand by idly while her parents were plunged into misery, who threw her frail body into the eddying currents of the Danube.

These grim incidents and the growth of suicide from a rare individual tragedy into a veritable epidemic throughout the great cities of Central Europe, are providing a grave subject for thought for those who still parrot the outworn dogma: what is, is right.

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