privileges of trade for its nationals." As Japan at that time was credited with Imperial and commercial ambitions in China that were not consistent with this principle, there was much uneasiness lest China should become the battle-ground of the political differences of America and Japan on these and other matters. Accordingly, the Washington Convention met, and largely as the result of Lord Balfour's diplomatic support of the United States a new Treaty was drafted, guaranteeing " the sovereignty, the independence and the territorial and administrative integrity of China " and in particular laying down the principle of the open door and of equality of commercial rights.

But this was not the only agreement concluded at the Conference. There was an elaborate agreement in regard to the customs duties, with power periodically to revise the scale of duties. In addition there was a resolution adopted at the Conference on the extra-territorial rights of foreigners in China, and the representative of the powers agreed to " further the efforts of the Chinese Government to effect such legislative and judicial reforms as would warrant them in relinquishing, either progressively or otherwise, their respective rights of extra-territoriality."

A variety of circumstances has hindered the further progress of these and other agreements reached at Washington, and not the least important obstacle has been the civil wars of China. But these are temporary obstacles only, and do not affect the principles laid down at the Conference. It is therefore a wise stroke of policy on the part of our Government to bring forward these agreements and lay them down once more for international acceptance. To do so is not to take sides in China's civil wars, for whatever the military end of the war may be the victors are sure to press for their acceptance. It is to disarm the nationalist movement of any hostile point against ourselves or other foreigners in China, and we shall await with great interest not only the text of the proposals that have now been made, but also the news of the effect that this publication will have on the course of events in China. In the Far East the United States is our natural ally rather than Japan, for she is above suspicion of imperialist ambitions, and the mainspring of her policy, the maintenance of equal commercial opportunities in China for the trade of all nations, is also one of the fixed objects of British policy in all neutral markets. China is perhaps the greatest undeveloped market left in the world to-day, and if she can win through to peace, it is not easy to set a limit to the possibilities of her future development. We paid for the Napoleonic wars partly by an increased productivity due to the great outburst of mechanical invention, but also by the development of the Americas. China may, with political settlement and contentment, do the same service for the coming generation.

These, it would appear, are the ideas that animate the policy of our Foreign Office, and it is to be congratulated on its breadth of vision. It is a pity that the same compliment cannot be paid to the House of Commons, where one party attacks our policy as though it were still that of mid-Victorian days, and another, through Mr. Lloyd George, attacks it as though the Washington Treaty had never been signed.

A LETTER FROM BUDAPEST

[From Our Own Correspondent]

Budapest, December 11

THE interesting features of Hungarian literary and dramatic life at the present moment are not so much its native aspects, in which its position is assured, as its relations to the art of other countries. By the Treaty of Trianon, Hungary lost not only three and a half million Hungarians and a third of her former territory but also the direct touch with other nationalities forming part of the old Austro-Hungarian Empire. To-day in Budapest one is aware of a very much more concentrated and self-centred Hungary. The Hungarian language was, of course, always dominant—it suffered no repression under the old regime—but German provided a *lingua franca* for the Empire which served a very useful purpose. It prevented art from becoming too narrowly national and gave it a touch of the cosmopolitan which was a great asset to the Hungarian people. Though every educated person speaks German, there is not now the same compulsion, and the status of German as a comman tongue is likely to suffer. The young people all seem to prefer English, partly perhaps as a national protest against Austrian influences, and partly for material reasons. There is less opportunity in Hungary than formerly, and the eyes of many young Hungarians are turned towards countries overseas, though apparently with little chance of getting there.

One result of this seems to be an increase in the translation of foreign works into Hungarian. The young Hungarian literary movement which flamed up in the last stages of the war and the years that followed had its counterpart in most countries of Europe, and, as elsewhere, it has died down. Now there is a dearth of good work, and what is being produced is not very different in character from the more or less international output of the world's market in mediocrity. It is a passing phase, no doubt, for the Hungarian people have a long intellectual history. It was theirs to hold Europe against the Turk, and by dint of their own heroic efforts to be the first of the Central European peoples to free themselves from the Turkish yoke. They have kept their lamp of learning bright in the teeth of neglect. Austria never did anything for them; the pride of Vienna, the State Opera House, was given to the Viennese by the Emperor, but the Hungarian Royal Opera House was built by the Hungarian people out of money levied upon themselves.

Budapest has a range of museums which for interest compare with any in Europe, but no royal house formed their nucleus by showering gifts upon them. The collections, where they have not been the loan or bequest of Hungarian families (prominent among whom were always the Esterhazys), have been got together by the subscriptions of the people or by the help of such societies as the Friends of the National Museum. To-day the Hungarian State can afford little in the way of grants for purposes of art, and though there is much to be had in Hungary in the way of art treasures at a low figure it is a bad time for curators. Yet the museums gallantly keep abreast of the times, as witness the exhibition of the newest accessions at the National Gallery at Budapest. It has added greatly to the Gallery's fine collection of Muncaczy's works, and nobody who visits Budapest should miss it. Soon it will be dispersed into the general classification of the main collections.

The most familiar sight in Hungary is the map of the country as truncated by the Treaty of Trianon with the old Hungarian frontiers as a black mourning border. The most familiar utterance of the Hungarian people is that they are determined, in the face of a settlement which they deem unjust, not to allow their country to drift back, but to stand boldly up to

the dangers imperilling a land that once comprised twenty-two millions and now has only eight. This, however, is to touch the fringe of politics, which in this letter are best avoided. I offer no comment but place the fact on record as part of a state of mind which is likely to have a permanent influence on Hungarian art.

The Royal Opera House is enjoying a season that witnesses one triumph after another. Jan Kiepura, the new world-tenor, as the Germans called him, came on to Budapest after his Vienna successes. I saw him as the Duke of Mantua in ' Rigoletto,' and he subsequently played ' Faust.' In ' Rigoletto ' he was on the best of terms with his audience, though here, as in Berlin, critics were inclined to think he was risking his future by not waiting a little longer and getting a few finishing touches put upon his singing. His answer would have been implied in the reception he was given. There is a large Polish colony in Budapest, and his own countrymen saw to it that nothing was lacking in the way of sustained applause, but the Hungarian section of the audience was not backward in its generous welcome. If most of the triumphs of the evening were his, he owed a great deal to the regular company of the Royal Hungarian Opera House.

After Paganini, Chopin. In a dainty operetta Jonö Farago had cast the life and love-affairs of Chopin, and István Bertha had woven musical illustrations out of the more reminiscent of Chopin's melodies. The libretto was by general agreement a brilliant piece of work; some controversy, however, was aroused by the score. Much of it was apt to the words and situations, but here and there it jarred, as when peasants with scythes danced a rhythmic movement to the very familiar polonaise and the comic man did a grotesque dance to the equally familiar mazurka. Against that must be set the most charming minuet scene, with music that needed, of course, hardly any adaptation, and another, a duet between Chopin and George Sand, made up of the D major nocturne and a movement from a quartette, the name of which I cannot now remember. The theme of the book gave great opportunity for Mlle. Ilonka Kovács, who took the part of Wanda, the daughter of Chopin's music master. She is new to the operetta stage, and should have a great future. The other outstanding performance was that of M. Julius Czortos as the clumsy Prince Czartoriski, which afforded ample opportunity for humour. But the haunting music was the main delight of the piece.

The outstanding Hungarian dramatist of to-day is Franz Molnár, the title of whose last comedy, ' Játék a Kastélyban,' translated into English is ' the Game in the Castle.' It is at present being played at the Hungarian Theatre in Budapest and running in German translation in Vienna Burg Theatre, and it will no doubt make its appearance elsewhere on the Continent. Of the other outstanding features of the theatre season I must mention the series of performances given by Frau Leopoldine Konstantin, who brought her German company from Vienna and played a translation of a Hungarian piece, ' Dr. Juci Szabó,' by Ladislaus Fedor, chiefly for the benefit of the large German community in Budapest. To do so was something of a challenge, and though the Germans welcomed the attempt it did not seem altogether to the liking of the Hungarian portion of the audience. Perhaps they missed the native atmosphere which was thought to have slipped away in the course of a transmutation.

The new ballet pantomime music by Bela Bartók, ' The Marvellous Mandarin,' though it took Budapest by storm, had a rough reception when produced in Cologne, Cassel and other places in Germany, where the public seemed to think it was a joke in cacophony devised for their special irritation. The composer gave a recital of his works at the beginning of December in co-operation with Mlle. Maria Basilides, but produced nothing new. On the other hand, a new quartette by Dohnyáni has been given a first hearing by the string four, MM. Waldbauer, Kessler, Temesváry and Kerpely. The composer was certainly fortunate in his executants.

There has been a great wealth of concerts and recitals, to say nothing of choral music (some very curious and unfamiliar), rendered by the Choir of the Capital under the leadership of M. Victor Karváy. Heyfetz followed Emil Sauer, both on their own familiar ground. Madame Ada Sari, from the Scala at Milan, who succeeded Kiepura at the Opera and played in the ' Barber of Seville ' and ' Traviata,' prefaced her appearance with a concert in which she gave a marvellous exhibition of *coloratura* singing in the principal airs from her repertoire.

LE CŒUR CONTENT

By Rosemary Blackadder

IT is Christmas Eve. The rucksacks are quickly packed and the train puffs us up the valley with a dreadful groaning and rushing of steam. Up and up. Three thousand metres up, away from houses, factories and walls. Snow and trees and trees and snow and snow. The pines stand red and blue against this dazzling white, their branches still and heavy with their load. It is dark when we come to the village. We strap our skis on to our backs and lift our faces to the keen, clear air, the scent of wood smoke, frost and juniper. We follow in the tracks the snow-plough has cleared along the road. The miller's wolfhound barks at us, straining on the chain. " Grüss Gott !" shouts the miller. A whiff of incense. The church door is open and light streams out from the Krippe where a crowd of children has come to look with shining eyes at the Christ Kindchen.

" Kommet ihr Hirten." Their clear mountain voices follow us up the path. Up and up. The snow crunches beneath our feet, harsh and frosty, and the skis on our backs clatter together with every movement. We climb at a steady pace. The village lies below now and the lights show out like small sparks. Dim, striding ahead, knows every step of the way and we stumble after in the dark.

Rukko has his pack filled with Operas—Verdi, Lully, Gretry, Borrodin, one heavier than the other. " I put Prince Igor in instead of the Heinz beans; I wish to God I hadn't. It's the worst of the lot." He jerks it higher on his shoulders. All the hills are pale with the unearthly white that seems to shine upwards. The stars are as bright and prickly as if they hung from a Christmas tree. After two hours at last the lights, the lowing of cows in the outshed and the dogs barking. " Holderiooo," shouts Dim, so that the hills answer " ooo." " Grüss Gott." " Grüss Gott." The forester unbolts the huge door and grips our hands in knuckle-destroying welcome. " Fröliche Weinachten. " Maria, his wife, is still busy warming and lighting up the house for us. They live in a few rooms in the lower part and take care of it when Dim is away. " Nous arrivons d'un cœur content de l'Arabie," sings out Rukko, passing under the door post, where the faded paint of three big letters, K B M still shows, Kaspar, Balthazar, Melchior.

We run to look at the tree that was planted long ago in the stretch of grass outside the verandah. It has grown too high to put a candle on the topmost branch. But we light it up with a hundred little flames, and Karen hangs its green branches with apples and nuts for the birds. But there are no birds, no deer or squirrels at this silent hour. Some holy saint or angel stepping down tiptoe from the mountain tops may fill his pockets with