

THEATRE • LITERATURE • ART

BUDAPEST!

*Enchanted City, where rapture calls,
New is the joy you give,
And jaded spirits have reached your walls
To live.*

*Deep, radiant river of many lights,
Bright as the stars above,
Here come the weary on magic nights
To love.*

*And when life's setting sunlight gleams
Dim in the twilight sky,
May I come back to my town of dreams
To die.*

MARY D. WICKHAM

LISZT MEMORIAL EXHIBITION] IN HUNGARIAN NATIONAL MUSEUM

During the "June Weeks" a Liszt memorial exhibition was arranged in the Hungarian National Múzeum, this being the Liszt centenary year. The exhibition contained a mass of material proving that Francis Liszt was always proud to call himself a Hungarian. On the score with the theme of the "Song of the Hungarian King" we read: — "As a loyal son of my Hungarian fatherland — Francis Liszt". In another place he wrote: — "I shall never cease trying to bring glory on my Fatherland."

The exhibition contains all the most famous Liszt portraits, from a lithographic print made in 1825 and Lehmann's beautiful portrait in oils through a succession of famous portraits, drawings and lithographs by Nicolas Barabás, Kaulbach, Maurice Than, Kriehuber, Preller, Lenbach, Munkácsy and Bertalan Székely to Aloysius Strobl's and Klinger's sculptures. How arresting is George Sand's caricature of Liszt, the head of white porcellain from the Alt-Wien factory, or the many excellent plaques which preserve Liszt's extraordinarily strong features in various styles! We saw documents from the days of his youth; pictures of the house in Doborja where he was born and souvenirs of the Esterházy manor in Kismarton where Liszt's father, Adam Liszt, and his forbears had been employed on the Prince's estate. We could follow the soaring curve of his brilliant career,

* The author of the above poem, the wife of a British naval officer, visited Budapest recently as the guest of Madame Lazzari, née Princess Odescalchi. This English lady, who had travelled far and wide, arrived in Hungary — as she herself complained — in a state of nervous depression and without much hope of finding anything new to rouse her out of her lethargy. But in a few weeks time she felt a changed woman. "My nerves are better, my whole mood is changed", — she said with a peculiar smile which betrayed that her words were no mere conventional politeness. "I was born anew in this city and have found an interest in life again." Then once up in the Gellért-hill kiosk, on a beautiful evening in May, when she was gazing down at the improbably silver ribbon of the Danube, in a moment of enchantment she asked for paper and a pencil, and in a few minutes wrote this beautiful poetical tribute to Budapest.

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when with all Europe at his feet his compatriots offered him a Hungarian sword of honour in 1840. This sword of honour was bequeathed, along with most of the Master's relics, to the National Museum. There are to be seen also the conductor's baton adorned with precious stones given to Liszt by the Duchess of Sayn-Wittgenstein, the splendid piano presented to him by the Chickering factory, the silver music-stand received in 1858 from the municipalities of Vienna and Budapest. Liszt's abbot's hat, Beethoven's English pianoforte, all of which Liszt bequeathed to the National Museum. The exhibition also contains the manuscripts and scores of his compositions in many variations and his correspondence in French, amongst other letters one to the Curator of the National Museum in which he bequeaths his relics to that institute. A thick copybook contains the drafts in French of all his letters and telegrams.

The exhibition was opened by Dr. Hóman, Minister of Public Education, who amongst other things said: —

"Seven Greek cities claimed the blind poet of ancient Greece as their own. Seven cities competed for the privilege of numbering Homer among their great ones. *The lot of our Francis Liszt was a similar one.* Peoples, nations and countries are rivals for the honour of calling him and his genius theirs. But he was and remained a Hungarian in feeling. He always called himself that, and when others said he was a German, he at once insisted on his Hungarian origin. When he heard of the terrible havoc wrought in Pest by the flood in 1838, he wrote to a friend as follows: "This flood has carried my soul back into the past, and to my inexpressible joy I have found in it all my childhood's memories. Now I know what Fatherland means. I see Hungary, that beautiful country, which nourishes so many noble and good sons. I see my native land, for I, too, belong to that ancient and virile nation; I, too, am a son of that old race. Oh, beautiful, far-off Fatherland! Oh, families of my unknown friends and kin! Your cries for help have led me back to you. My heart is full, and I bow my head in shame at having so long forgotten my real Fatherland." The eruption of emotion from the hidden depths of the soul of a young man of twenty-seven who was living abroad at the time of the renaissance of Hungarian national consciousness, was no ephemeral enthusiasm. Nearly four decades later the artist of sixty-five, crowned with the laurels of his brilliant career abroad, still says in a letter to a Hungarian friend: "On reading your last letter, Schiller's old appeal spoke to the depths of my soul:

An's Vaterland, an's theure schliess Dich an,
Das halte fest mit Deinem ganzen Herzen,
Hier sind die starken Wurzeln Deiner Kraft."

About the same time he wrote in another letter: "It is my loadstar that Hungary should one day speak proudly of me."

Liszt always gladly and disinterestedly gave of his art and his compositions to express Hungarian joy or sorrow, or when it was necessary to ameliorate the distress of Hungarian sufferers or help towards the creation or development of Hungarian things.

Labouring, encouraging and directing, he was foremost in all movements calculated to further musical life in Hungary, such as the founding of the National School of Music, the Academy of Music,

and other similar institutions. He was one of the pioneers and encouragers of the great forward impulse which raised Hungarian music to a European level in half a century. Abroad he was the favoured conductor of Princes, the beloved and fêted favourite of musicians and friends of music — at home, the benefactor of the distressed, the patron of Hungarian festivals, the inspirer and guide of Hungarian composers, a Hungarian artist who never asked or expected any reward for his contributions and services to national culture.

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Bayreuth is preparing for a magnificent Liszt memorial festival this year. In addition to the usual performance of Wagner's operas, the city of Bayreuth will pay tribute to the memory of the great Hungarian composer who lies buried in the graveyard there. The Liszt memorial festival will be held from October 19th to October 23rd. One of the outstanding features of the festival week will be the performance of Liszt's "Legend of St. Elizabeth" by the Budapest Opera. The Opera has already received a written invitation from the city of Bayreuth, where its performance is awaited with great expectations, the more so because the Budapest Opera achieved a great success during the Hungarian week in Nürnberg a few years ago.

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BUDAPEST TO HAVE A COLLECTION OF FOLK-SONGS

M. Béla Bartók, a world-famed representative of the modern trend in music, has been rendering a great service to the science of ethnography as a collector of folk-songs. A year and a half ago the Hungarian Ministry of Education entrusted M. Bartók, and M. Kodály, another famous composer of modern Hungarian music, with the task of editing a collection of

Hungarian folk-songs for the Academy of Sciences, and to enable him to devote all his energies to the work, released him provisionally from his duties as professor in the Hungarian Academy of Music. A statement published at Easter reveals that he is engaged at present in revising the matter collected — Hungarian folk-songs which have been recorded on phonograph cylinders. Parallel with this the work of copying all the published folk-songs of the neighbouring peoples, Slovaks, Ruthenians, Serbs, Croats, Poles and Bulgarians, is going on. When the work of copying in finished the songs will be classified so as to make it easy to compare them carefully with the Hungarian material and to show the different variations, as also how a song may have wandered from one country or district to another. This entails an enormous amount of work, because the material is very abundant. Czecho-Slovakia alone supplies at least 10.000 songs, counting only those published in the most important collections; Bulgaria has almost 10.000, Poland 6000, the Serbs, Croats and Russians about 5000, but the Rumanian songs published are less than a thousand in number, so that M. Bartók's manuscript collection is the chief source of the Rumanian material. When the work of comparing them is finished the folk-songs of half Eastern Europe, classified according to type, will be available in Budapest. If the work of revising them is ready by Christmas, the Hungarian material will be got ready for publication. The magnitude of the task may be gathered from the fact that about 10.000 Hungarian songs are to be published. If now, counting all the preparatory work, we reckon a quarter of an hour on an average for each tune, it will take 2500 hours work to get the collection shipshape. This means over three more years' labour before the printing can be begun, and that will take another year or two to complete. The printing is to be paid for by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, which will appropriate a certain sum annually for printing expenses.

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P O L I T I C A L E C O N O M Y

A U S T R I A

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS' COMMISSIONER TO LEAVE AUSTRIA

The League of Nations' commissioner in Austria, Herr Rost von Toningon, who since 1931 has been entrusted by the League with the control of financial recovery in Austria, has, in a letter to M. Avenol, Secretary-General of the League of Nations, begged to be released from his duties by 1st October. The reason given was that in recent times Austria's finances had relatively recovered, which made their control by a foreigner superfluous. Besides this, the maintenance of a situation the conditions of which no longer existed would be an injustice. M. Maurice Frère, adviser to the National Bank will also resign his post.

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FAVOURABLE EFFECTS OF THE AUSTRIAN COMMERCIAL AGREEMENTS

The commercial agreements concluded in the past months by Austria have already produced some favourable results. The export of skins and furs to Poland, for instance, has improved. Thanks to Austria's agreement with Hungary, imports in wheat and flour have increased, as has Austria's export of timber. It is noteworthy that the deposits in the National Bank of Austria to the spa account are increasingly satisfactorily. This is explained by the fact that in terms of the last negotiations, provision has been made by Austria for a sufficient amount of *schillings* to be placed at the disposal of Hungarian visitors to Austrian watering-places. The smooth functioning of the spa account has resulted in a considerable increase in the number of Hungarian summer visitors compared with last year. By the beginning of August about 400 Hungarians had visited Austrian spas and it is expected that the aggregate number of Hungarians, including travellers for other purposes, will be at least twice as many — if not more — than in 1935.

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