

in the Hungarian era and which restrict the personal liberty and material welfare of the Hungarian-speaking citizens of the Republic within limits the like of which never cramped the Slovaks in Hungary.

The Hungarians of Slovakia and Ruthenia naturally do not, cannot, resign themselves to these conditions. They also demand national self-government. But the Prague Government closes its ears when the leaders of the Hungarian Party voice this demand, and in like manner as it relies on the support of the opportunist Slovak centralists and a tiny minority of German „activists” in its struggle against Hlinka and Henlein respectively, so does the Government in the struggle against the Hungarian Géza Szűllő lean on a few renegades financed by the Czech Government Parties and rightly cast out of its bosom by the Hungarian nation — men who for the most part had fled to Czecho-Slovakia and found refuge there after the collapse of Béla Kun's Communism in Hungary.

The Czecho-Slovakian Premier was therefore unreasonable when in his radio speech he attacked the nationality policy of pre-war Austria and Hungary, and also unreasonable when he praised the Czecho-Slovakian Constitution. Comparisons are odious and the Czecho-Slovakian Constitution would only suffer from them, for even if nationality legislature and politics were faulty in pre-war Austria and Hungary, a fact which we are the last to deny, still they were certainly far superior

to the Czecho-Slovakian system; for they nursed the beginnings of nationality self-government which the Entente States have nipped in the bud. Besides this, indirectly the provincial system in Austria and the county system in Hungary enabled the nationalities to exercise incomparably greater influence on political life than the anti-autonomy attitude of the Little Entente States. Like the other Little Entente countries in general Czecho-Slovakia's ideal is French centralism. In a homogeneous national State like France centralism may have its *raison d'être*, but certainly not in Czecho-Slovakia, where the majority of the population are not Czechs and where the totally dissimilar historical development and view of life the western and eastern parts of the country imperatively demand self-government and decentralization.

But there is nothing in M. Hodža's radio message to indicate that Prague is ready to enter upon the only practicable path. Rather do we receive the impression that Prague is determined to adhere to the present rigid centralism and at best is willing to yield to the demands of the minorities only in some unimportant, minor details. Yet if there is a State in Europe where an urgent and radical solution of the nationality problem is a vital question, that State is Czecho-Slovakia; for her present political isolation and her unfriendly relations with each of her neighbours are the consequences of the mistaken nationality policy pursued since 1918 — a policy which every sign seems to indicate Prague has no intention of abandoning.

KOSSUTH, LORD PALMERSTON AND POST-TRIANON HUNGARY

by

Andrew Bajcsy-Zsilinszky

August 13th, 1849, is a memorable date in Hungarian history, not only because it was on that day that General Arthur Görgey surrendered to General Paskievitz, commander-in-chief of the Russian armies, after a series of brilliant victories that had created a stir all over the world, but also because it happened to be the day on which the ambassador representing Lord Palmerston, Prime Minister of Great Britain, handed over in Vienna the energetic diplomatic Note in which Palmerston offered to act as intermediary between the leaders of the Hungarian War of Independence and the Vienna Imperial Court. Görgey did not know of the step thus taken by Great Britain; indeed, there was no means of his hearing of it: and the Governor of Hungary, Louis Kossuth, and the Hungarian national Government, in retiring from the stage on which one of the most glorious dramas of Hungarian history was being played and surrendering to General Görgey, not appointed dictator, the supreme command and the civil and military

power, had already evidently given up all hopes of any important international forces intervening to save the Hungarian cause.

Today it would be indeed difficult to decide whether this generous gesture on the part of Great Britain would under the circumstances have brought about any decisive turn in the course of events and whether it would not have been wiser to continue the struggle for a time even though there did not appear to be much chance of a fortunate issue to the military operations? It is however an indisputable fact that Great Britain — somewhat late in the day, to be sure — was ready to intervene to prevent the massacre — the murder of the heroes of the Hungarian epos — that followed the surrender at Világos.

Great Britain subsequently accorded Hungary the fullest moral satisfaction; such being, for instance, the reception given to Kossuth two years later in England and America, as also the reception to which General Haynau, the Austrian general who had been the murderer of the

Hungarian heroes, was treated in London when he was almost beaten to death by Englishmen for his bloody dealings in Hungary and Italy...

The European importance of the Hungarian War of Independence and the measure of the military achievements of the Hungarian arms has been stressed by H. G. Wells — in words of appreciation which it would be difficult even for a Hungarian to better — in the Hungarian edition his "Outline of History":

"The Hungarian nation, which — in a bitter struggle lasting for a hundred and fifty years which in many respects resembled that between the Spaniards and the Moors — warded off the Turkish danger, being at many periods — e. g. in the age of John Hunyadi left to fight the Asiatic hordes practically unaided, in this revolution too was left unaided to face two absolutistic Powers. Without any help from without that nation defended the principle of nationalistic and civil liberty in the great battle-field of Central Europe, the Great Hungarian Lowlands, against two imperial autocracies, the united forces of which had to struggle for nearly a year to be able, to overcome the Hungarians and thereby to suppress the idea of democratic progress. The chief hero of this struggle was Louis Kossuth, the world-famed orator who subsequently — during the years of his exile — continued with unflagging energy to keep alive the sympathy of the Western nations for his native country."

It was early in September, 1851, that Kossuth reached the shores of England on board the ship sent for him by the United States of North America on which he subsequently sailed across the Atlantic to America. The journey through England of the former Governor of Hungary was a veritable triumphal procession; in Southampton, London, Birmingham and Manchester he was received by the English people like a prince and as the guest of the British nation; though — for easily comprehensible diplomatic reasons — the British Government took no part in the celebrations. Kossuth arrived in America early in 1852; he was received there by the Government of the United States, which welcomed him in the Washington Capitol with a solemn splendour never accorded either before or since to any citizen of a foreign country with the sole exception of Lafayette. After his return from America Kossuth lived in London until 1859; it was in London that he organised the work of the Hungarian political refugees and initiated his powerful diplomatic campaigns against Austria. These efforts of his were not however crowned with success. The Crimean War shattered his hopes and upset his calculations.

Our object in mentioning all these circumstances is not to revive the memory and laud the deeds of Louis Kossuth; but simply the desire to draw a parallel between the Hungary of post-Világos and the Hungary of post-Trianon days.

Today it is very gratifying to recall the diplomatic step taken in Vienna by Palmerston on the very day on which Görgey surrendered to the Russians at Világos: nevertheless we cannot help

asking why that generous gesture of intervention was delayed until the Hungarian armies exhausted by the terrible efforts of some twelve months had been compelled to lay down their arms and surrender to the Russian and Austrian imperialists? Why had the conscience of Europe been so tardy in feeling that the time had come for international diplomatic assistance to be accorded the Hungarian nation, not merely out of humanitarian considerations or out of regard for the historical services of the Hungarians so eloquently referred to by H. G. Wells but also because the Hungarian people represented a great political idea and had in its War of Independence entered the lists, not only in its own interests but in defence of the liberty of the Danube Valley against the expansion in that territory of the pan-German and pan-Russian forces whose activity was a danger politically to Great Britain too. This territory — the Danube basin — had for centuries been a bone of contention between conflicting powers until the Hungarian people had taken possession of it, performing its task as master of that territory with indisputable heroism, self-sacrifice and energy. We would ask therefore whether Europe was justified in treating the struggle for independence of a nation which had so nobly fulfilled its important historical mission merely as a grand and admirable human achievement which was an internal affair of the Habsburg Monarchy and could not therefore be made the subject of international intervention?

So deep was the impression made on European public opinion by the Hungarian War of Independence carried on for a year (1848—49) against the imperialism of Austria that Czar Nicholas I. himself, the supreme lord of the Russian armies which overthrew the armies of Görgey and Kossuth, on one occasion at Warsaw declared openly that the Hungarians ought to be made the real central power of the Habsburg Empire.

But Europe then too failed to make any move — that being owing to the influence of the diplomatic situation of the moment and to considerations of delicacy. Yet, had Hungary received adequate diplomatic support — if only to the extent to which Palmerston actually accorded her — in good time, before it was too late for that diplomatic support to prove effectual in stemming the tide of events, — in that case maybe the World War itself might have been averted. Had Europe in good time realised the importance of Hungary's mission in the Danube basin and diplomatically supported the military achievements of the War of Independence of 1848—49, Francis Deák would not have been driven to wait with folded arms for an accidental favourable turn of events; the Compromise actually concluded in 1867 between Austria and Hungary *would have come into being much earlier and in a much more perfect form*; and — last, not least — the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy could have been organised on far stronger and firmer foundations. The Monarchy would not have been driven at the time of the Compromise to rely upon the support of a German Empire which gradually made that Monarchy economically and politically alike a mere func-

tion of Berlin and willy-nilly a train-bearer of the policy of William II.

And now — our readers may well ask what about the parallel between the old events of some century ago and the tragedy and destiny of present-day Hungary? In my opinion the parallel lies in the fact that the Powers of Europe failed utterly when drafting the Paris treaties of peace — and have ever since failed — to realise the importance of Hungary from the point of view of peace and of the maintenance of a more equitable and more lasting order in Central Europe generally and in the Danube Valley in particular. At present Hungary's natural and modest claims are being ignored for the sake of the imperfect and ephemeral idea and alliance known as the Little Entente. Palmerston was too late in 1849; and the Palmerston of today has not yet made his appearance in the arena of international politics to voice the protest of the humanitarian spirit of the British Empire — already a world force — and to protest in the name of the peace of Europe against the tortures being inflicted on the Hungarians.

Today the situation is the same as it was in the days of Louis Kossuth: British public opinion and a large part — perhaps the majority — of the Members of the British Parliament are fully conscious of the absurdity of the provisions of Trianon and realise to the full the still greater absurdity to allow the qualities and traditions and organising power of a people with the great past of the Hungarians to lie fallow in that part of Europe where there is so enormous a lack of higher European conceptions and of a higher constructive political ability — viz. in the Danube Valley. A very large proportion of unofficial Britain is with us today too as it was in the days when Kossuth was acclaimed by the citizens of Southampton, London, Manchester and Birmingham; but *the support of official Britain is still lacking*. Oppression is in the Succession States — particularly in Rumania — and playing fast and loose with Hungarian culture and with the rights of the Hungarian minorities; but the conscience of Europe — the *official* conscience, *that of Great Britain too* — still keeps silence.

P O L I T I C A L M O S A I C

THE ANGLO-ITALIAN AGREEMENT FROM THE HUNGARIAN POINT OF VIEW

Hungary in particular shares in the pleasure felt throughout Europe over the Anglo-Italian Mediterranean agreement. All the constructive factors in international politics labouring to insure order, consolidation and peace see with satisfaction that Britain and Italy, two powerful nations with civilisation and progress at heart, shook hands completely reconciled, respecting each other's rights, having decided to go together towards common aims, which are also the aims of all those who still have something to lose in the stormy chaos of political, social and economic extremes.

We feel that Hungary, in every respect, belongs to this category. Not merely because, even in her dismembered state, she is one of the constructive, creative elements in the Danube Basin, — an element of equilibrium and defence against anarchy and complete dissolution, but also because the reasonable demands of the Hungarian nation can ever be obtained in a peaceful way except through the fruitful co-operation of the two Great Powers which in European politics stand for the free play of dynamic forces, the mobility demanded by life itself, and a relentless determination to see justice triumphant, and not for the petrification of the *status quo* as created by the peace treaties.

For other States too the maintenance and security of the *status quo* in the Mediterranean zone will mean not only that for a long time a state of quietude will reign in that territory where the interests of the parties concerned were anyhow reasonably satisfied at the time of the great readjustment after the war, but also that Britain and Italy will be able to devote jointly their released energies to problems clamouring for solution in the name of law, justice and peace.

This, in the first place, is true of the Danube

Valley problem, and primarily of the question of dismembered Hungary.

Besides Mr. Eden, all the most important representatives of British public life, beginning with Mr. Baldwin himself, have almost unreservedly adopted the view, which may well be taken as mirroring the conscience of the century, that peace treaties, being human creations, are not infallible, and cannot be regarded as of immutable, unassailable sanctity. The less may be regarded as such the conditions and situations created by them, especially when they petrify serious injustices. This was why in British public opinion the wish arose to divorce the Covenant of the League of Nations from the peace treaties and make Article 19 of the former, which provides the possibility of territorial readjustments, operative in a way that would lead to practical results and change it from a dead letter to a living instrument. The political genius of the British nation as represented by British constitutionalism and the British Parliament and that of Italy embodied in the person of Mussolini, met years ago on this great idea, and in the spring of 1933, when Mr. Macdonald was in Rome, it took shape in the form of the Four Power Pact. Unfortunately a sudden change in international politics frustrated the realization of that mighty conception, which if materialised as originally intended, would have radically altered the lives of the Danubian countries.

But it was not to be, and the whole of Europe sorely felt the results. The political atmosphere has grown tense with uncertainty, the tempo and measure of armaments have increased three-fold since 1933, and the danger of Bolshevism in Europe, especially in view of the events of the Spanish revolution, has become incredibly greater.

There can be no doubt that Britain's first natural