

DANUBIAN REVIEW

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COUNT STEPHEN CSAKY †

The whole Hungarian official world, irrespective of Party, and the people of the country, irrespective of class, have been plunged into deep mourning by the untimely death at the age of forty-six of Count Stephen Csáky, one of Hungary's most capable Foreign Ministers, of whom great things were expected in the future.

Count Csáky became Foreign Minister at the end of 1938. He was forty-four then. He brought a new atmosphere, a new personality, into Hungarian diplomacy. The beginning of his career as a young man coincided with the beginnings of a Hungarian foreign policy that had become independent and was able to shape its own course. His first official journey was undertaken on a sad occasion: for he took part in the work of the Hungarian Peace Delegation in Paris at the close of the last war, and was an eyewitness of how the victors trampled on historical, ethnographical and geographical rights and of how the loudly proclaimed right of self-determination was ruthlessly denied in practice. This left irradicable marks on his soul. With these memories in his heart, this extremely capable, energetic and gifted diplomat set forth on his career. He served his country in foreign lands; he held positions in the most important departments of the Ministry, from the Press Department to the Lord Chamberlain's Department. He was sent abroad on many important missions and made many friends in foreign countries.

Throughout the whole of his dazzling career there was one thing he never forgot, that ran like a guiding line through the intricacies of his work, namely, that he had been the youngest member of the Hungarian Peace Delegation whose extremely valuable and zealous work had been so humiliatingly ignored by the victors in Paris. It was then that the conviction that revision was bound to come, a conviction that was

an Article of Faith to every Hungarian, became a conscious creed with him, and never again could he forget the gnawing bitterness of soul caused by the inhumanity, the criminal carelessness and the cruelty of the Peace Edicts. It was more than symbolic; it was of practical significance that it was Count Csáky who took a prominent part, as his Minister's right hand, in the work of preparing for revision, at the Four Power *pourparlers* and also later on when parts of Upper Hungary were restored, and that it was while he was in office as Foreign Minister that Subcarpathia and parts of Transylvania and Eastern Hungary returned to the mother-country. The same is true of the circumstance that both at the time of the Paris Peace Conference and when preparations were being made for the restoration of a strip of Upper Hungary he was working in collaboration with Count Paul Teleki, during whose Premiership and his own term of office as Foreign Minister the restoration of Subcarpathia and parts of Transylvania and Eastern Hungary took place. And it is certainly more than of symbolic significance that by a special dispensation of Providence Count Teleki is the scion of an ancient Transylvanian family, while Count Csáky was born and brought up in that province.

It was surely by no haphazard chance, but by the wisdom of historical logic that Count Csáky, before he became Minister of Foreign Affairs, as a young diplomat made intimate contacts with the men who were shaping Europe's international politics.

Count Csáky was a member of the Hungarian delegation sent to England for the mournful occasion of King George V.'s funeral, and he was also present in an official capacity at the spectacular Coronation of King George VI.

The only consolation for the Hungarians in their profound grief is that although a soaring career has been cut short by the inscrutable workings of Providence, and the life of a genial and fascinating man has been cut off in its flower, Count Csáky was able to taste the firstfruits of revision, to bask in the sunshine of what promises to be a new, more humane and more equitable era.