

BUDAPEST IN 1900: CITY AND PEOPLE

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"Buda-Pest!" wrote Blowitz, a most celebrated and most cosmopolitan journalist in fin-de-siècle Europe. "The very word names an idea which is big with the future. It is synonymous with restored liberty, unfolding now at each forward step; it is the future opening up before a growing people." A growing people indeed. During the last three decades of the nineteenth century Budapest—we shall see soon why Blowitz's usage of "Buda-Pest" was already outdated in 1894—was the fastest growing city in Europe. From 1890 to 1900 its population increased by more than 40 per cent. In 1900, with a total of 733,000 people it had become the sixth largest city of Europe, the largest one between Vienna and St. Petersburg. The growth after 1900 went on; but it was slowing down. In more than one way 1900 represented a zenith in the history of Budapest. There is a reason for the brevity of the historical sketch that follows. Until the nineteenth century the two towns of Buda and Pest did not amount to much.

There was a tiny Celtic settlement on the northern reaches of Buda, around one of its mineral springs. The Romans made that place the headquarters of their Pannonian legion, naming it "Aquincum". They seldom crossed the Danube. Where Pest is there was nothing. During the early Middle Ages Buda was scarcely a town; Pest a fledgling semi-barbaric village. Both were destroyed by a Tartar invasion in 1241. It was only during the fourteenth century that the kings of Hungary established their royal seat in Buda. On the Castle Hill of Buda a small renaissance court was created by the redoubtable King Matthias in the second half of the century. But a generation after his death first Pest and then Buda were conquered by the Turks. Buda was reconquered one hundred and forty-five years later by a Habsburg army, composed by many volunteers and mercenaries from all over Europe. There were relatively few Hungarians among them. The reason for this was that most of Hungary had been torn, ravaged, and depopulated in the century and half of Turkish rule. Twenty-five years after the Turks had left the population of Buda amounted to less than 13,000 and that of Pest to hardly more than 4,000. The two towns were unconnected, separated by the wide and ungoverned Danube, except by an occasionally assembled and then again disassembled pontoon bridge. Five hundred years after its medieval origins Pest was still not much more than a semi-Oriental river village; Buda consisted of clusters of simple houses and vineyards, inhabited by a few traders and artisans. Buda and Pest were only one hundred and sixty miles east of Vienna: but that was a distance between two worlds, one being Europe, the other something akin to the

Levant or even the Near East. In 1815, during the Congress of Vienna, Metternich was supposed to have said to one of his visitors as he pointed at the dusty road stretching away from Vienna toward Hungary that here was the end of Europe (or, as his Hungarian detractors were wont to quote him: "here Asia begins"). But the extraordinary rise of Budapest, of Hungary, of the Hungarian people, and of Hungarianness was around the corner.

In 1799 Buda had 24,306 inhabitants and Pest 29,870, a total of about 54,000 in 1890 the total was nearly 500,000, close to a ten-fold increase. Berlin was the only European city that grew at a comparable rate (eightfold) during the nineteenth century (from 1800 to 1890 the populations of Paris and London increased by 3–4 times); and the celebrated eleventh edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica would describe Budapest as "one of the handsomest capitals of Europe" (which Berlin was not).

Till after the middle of the eighteenth century the majority of the peoples of Buda and Pest were German-speaking. The reason for this was the above-mentioned depopulation of Hungary during the Turkish century, and the fact that the Habsburgs came to rule the country after the Turks. Some of the Habsburg emperors were not inimical to their Hungarian subjects and even to their aspirations; but the Magyar population, and its national consciousness, revived slowly. A considerable number of families from the Austrian crownlands and from the southern Germanies had come to settle in the two river towns, mostly in Buda. But one hundred and sixty years ago the sudden eruption of Hungarian national consciousness and of Hungarian nationalism began. The extraordinary rise of Budapest before 1900 was connected with the extraordinary force of Hungarian nationalism in the nineteenth century: extraordinary, because it had much to do with certain characteristics — strengths as well as weaknesses — of the Hungarian national genius. The factor of national character is often eschewed and avoided by historians and social thinkers in our times; nonetheless it is wrong and foolish to ignore, let alone deny, its existence. From Greece to Ireland, from Italy to Finland, nationalism proved to be the dominant political idea and reality of the nineteenth century, as indeed in Hungary; but there were elements in the Hungarian character that do not only distinguish a Kossuth from a Parnell or a Garibaldi or a Mavrocordato; they were, too, inevitable ingredients in the extraordinary rise of Budapest. That rise in numbers surpassed the revivification of other ancient capitals of newly independent nations, such as, say, modern Athens or modern Rome but it was not a matter of numbers alone; it brought about a generation of 1900: writers and scholars, artists and savants, of often reputed and of sometimes inflated world-wide fame. That was true of Vienna too: but Vienna in 1900 was the continuation of a great urban and artistic culture that a century before had been already marked by a Mozart, a Beethoven, a Haydn; and by a European political culture manifested by a Metternich or a Coblenz. In Budapest the flourishing of an urban and urban civilization appeared only a few decades after a time when the civilization of Hungary had been largely unknown abroad, and when even within Hungary urban culture had hardly existed at all.

The Hungarian national revival — the so-called Reform Age of Hungary — began to blossom after 1825, and it debouched onto the Hungarian revolution of 1848. Much of this national revival was the inspiration and the creation and the exemplification of The

Greatest Magyar, Count Stephen Széchenyi (the epithet was bestowed on him by his contemporaries) who, together with other amazing achievements, inspired, planned, and financed some of the first great buildings of Buda-Pest (including the Chain Bridge, the first permanent — and very impressive — bridge between the two cities). Yet his life, like the national revolution, ended in tragedy. The fiery and unpolitic temperament of his countrymen deserted him. They poured their hopes into the more radical and sentimental nationalism represented by Louis Kossuth. The result was the inspiring but failed Hungarian War of Independence of 1848—1849, during which Buda and Pest were twice occupied by an avenging Habsburg-Austrian army. Both towns suffered from the bombardments of a siege. But less than twenty years later the Emperor and Empress of Austria and their cabinet chose to offer a Compromise to Hungary, the so-called "Ausgleich" of 1867, whereby Hungary received a very substantial share of the privileges and the independence that its leaders had demanded in 1848. In sum, Hungary got something like near-complete Home Rule. The official name of the Austrian Empire became Austria-Hungary. It was then that the dynamic increase of the people and the prosperity and the building of Buda-Pest began. In 1867 its population was less than 270,000; it more than doubled in twenty-five years. In 1870 it was the sixteenth largest city in Europe; twenty-five years later it was the eighth, larger than Rome, Madrid, Naples, Hamburg, Lisbon, Liverpool, Brussels, Amsterdam. It was the second largest city of the Austro-Hungarian Dual Monarchy, having bypassed Prague easily, and coming closer and closer to the size — and to the importance — of Vienna in more than one way.

It did not become "Budapest" until 1873. Until then there had been three separate towns: Pest, Buda and Óbuda ("Ancient Buda", the smallest of the three). The reason for this was not only the broad dividing flow of the Danube. There were definite differences between their peoples, amounting to misunderstandings and even animosities on occasions. Buda (and to some extent Óbuda) was largely German-speaking, conservative, Catholic, and loyal to Habsburg rule. During the 1848 Revolution many of its people did not share the Magyar nationalist aspirations and the radical enthusiasms of Pest. For it was in Pest that the Revolution began; its leader was Kossuth, who had come from northeastern Hungary, a Protestant. Conversely the left-wing radicals of Pest distrusted Buda and its people. M. Táncsics, a political figure of the extreme left, opposed the unification of Buda-Pest in 1873 publicly; so did many of the people of Buda, though often careful enough not to voice these sentiments in public. To men such as Táncsics, coming from Cisdanubia, the eastern plains, often Protestant and deeply anti-Habsburg parts of the country, Buda represented the German, the Transdanubian, the Catholic and anti-nationalist portion of Hungary, with its inevitable Habsburg connections. These mixed loyalties of the people in Buda (and of a considerable number of people in Pest, too) lasted for a long time. Some of its political and cultural elements were still apparent as late as 1900. But the proportion of the Buda people was decreasing. In 1850 the population of the dual cities was nearly even, with 45 per cent of the people living on the western, Buda side. Twenty years later this proportion fell to 25 per cent. By 1900 only one of every six people in Budapest were inhabitants of Buda. Pest—in 1848 with its still

unpaved streets—was the dynamic side.* Even more important than these changing proportions was the rapidly declining prevalence of the German language. Whereas almost everywhere else in Eastern Europe (and also in certain portions of Hungary) German people maintained their own, at times proud and even arrogant, separation from the other populations surrounding them, in Budapest they allowed themselves to be merged with, and eventually absorbed by the Magyar majority: they became part and parcel of a linguistic, cultural, and even political Hungarianness. And so in 1872–73 there was relatively little open opposition, even in Buda, to the law creating the united municipality of Budapest (whose main municipal and parliamentary architect was, perhaps tellingly, a Hungarian Jewish patrician councilman, M. Wahrmann). The traditional animosities between Buda and Pest were fading, together with the decrease of the German population. Twenty years later, in 1892—upon the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Compromise, and of the Hungarian crowning of Franz Joseph I (ceremonies that, in 1867, took place significantly in Pest as well as in Buda)—his imperial and royal decree proclaimed Budapest to be a “székesfőváros”, a Capital and a Royal Seat, the equal in rank to Vienna.

On New Year's Day in 1896 the bells of the churches of Budapest rang and rang. They were announcing the “Millennium”. In 896, one thousand years before, the Magyar tribes led by their prince Árpád had ridden into Hungary from the east, to occupy the country and settle there. On a beautiful June day Franz Josef and the Empress-Queen Elizabeth arrived from Vienna to preside over the celebrations. They had a sense of the occasion; so had their Hungarian hosts. Franz Josef wore a Hungarian hussar uniform. The melancholy Elizabeth, beloved by all Hungarians, wan and beautiful, smiled through that long day of parades. (Their daughter, the archduchess Stephanie, carried and clicked her Kodak box camera, perhaps the first one seen in Budapest.) There was the ceremonial thunder of cannons, green-trousered heralds blowing silver trumpets, military parades, and a long procession of cavalry bands and regiments from the ancient counties of Hungary, many of them caparisoned in eighteenth and seventeenth-century military finery. (In the regiment of County Heves rode the young Count Mihály Károlyi, wearing a doublet of armor: twenty years later he would be the chief Hungarian gravedigger of the Habsburg monarchy: but who, including himself, would know that in 1896?) The municipality of Budapest had its own mounted delegation. (It included some of the great capitalists of the city: among others, the Swiss-born Haggemacher, owner of the largest brewery, and two ennobled Jewish magnates, owners of mills.)

From Buda to Pest the King and Queen rode in a crystal-paned baroque coach from Maria Theresa's time. The holy object of St. Stephen's crown was brought to the still unfinished monumental Parliament building. (There was a moment of anxiety: the hasp and the lock of the Crown's old iron chest were badly rusted. Two nobles of the royal entourage rode off to find a locksmith who hastened to open it—after he had been put quickly into a tailcoat.) On the great open field to the west of Castle Hill (*Vérmező*: a

*But already during the five years before 1848 the population of Pest increased by more than one-third. Rents were, in the average, 40% higher than in Buda.

Budapest Champ de Mars) oxen were broiled on giant spits for the populace. On the eastern edge of Pest a grand world's fair had been built in the newly laid out City Park, with many impressive buildings, including a fine replica of an entire late-medieval Transylvanian castle on the shores of the lake in the park. There were captive balloons, panoramas, a real military balloon ascending, the first movie newsreel made by a Hungarian, the brilliant blaze of electric illuminations, endless music. Budapest had nearly six million visitors that year, most of them from the Hungarian provinces. Within a few months the Gallery of Fine Arts, the palace of the High Court of Justice, the first electric underground tramway line, the last stretch of the Pest Ring boulevards were completed, and the building of the new wing of the royal castle had begun.

In 1900 Budapest was the destination for most of the foreign visitors to Hungary. Tourism to Hungary was only at its beginnings, amounting to about 130,000 visitors in 1895. (It nearly doubled by 1912: 250,000.) In 1900 there were about fifty hotels, of all kinds, in Budapest. In 1902 the first new type of a modern "pension" appeared.

Many of these visitors were attracted by the pleasantries of a modern city and by the agreeableness of its sight. Elsewhere in Hungary—especially in Transdanubia, in the mountain regions of Upper Hungary and in Transylvania—there were many pretty, old provincial towns, often still partly medieval but that was not where travellers were drawn around the turn of the century. Like Paris (rather than Berlin) Budapest was the central hub of the national railroad network. The express trains from Vienna (and the Orient-Express), equipped with a comfortable dining car, reached Budapest in four hours and forty minutes. Beginning with 1892 the reforms of the Minister of Transports, Gábor Baross, led to an extremely rapid extension of the national railroad network (and also to a new, cheaper schedule of fares). The railroad mileage had grown from 11,240 kilometers in 1890 to 17,011 in 1900, and the number of locomotives from 1,680 to 2,917. By 1900 all of the latter were being built by the Hungarian locomotive and engine factories. The Hungarian National Railroads (MÁV) were separate from Austria; and 85 per cent of the lines were those of the MÁV. The rail density of Hungary (the length of tracks per 100,000 people) came just after France, ahead of Austria and even of the great railroad network of imperial Germany. Accordingly the passenger traffic increased nearly seventeenfold during the thirty years before 1900. There was a phenomenal increase in freight traffic too: from 3 million tons in 1866 to 275 million in 1894. As almost everywhere else in Europe at the time, there were three classes for coach passengers (in Wilhelminian Germany there were four). The two great termini, the West and the East station were, as we have seen, among the largest and most modern ones in Europe, completed in 1878 and 1883, respectively. Their external platforms, siding and branch tracks were constantly extended, nearly doubling in ten years, in part because of the increasing traffic of commuters. The commuter rail lines (HÉV), independent of the national system, began in 1888. In the year 1900 it sold 3 million tickets. From 1896 to 1913 it became electrified, and its traffic had increased thirteenfold.

By 1900 Budapest had become the largest port on the nearly 2,000 mile stretch of the Danube. The national fluvial transportation company (MFTR) overtook the Austrian DGT. River transport was cheaper than rail transport, both for passengers and freight.

There was a pleasant overnight trip from Vienna to Budapest on the large white-painted paddle steamers; the cabins of First Class were very commodious. The increase of freight traffic was also due to the regulation of the Iron Gate narrows on the lower Danube. The Danube boats were interesting to watch. Their funnels were slightly angled and hinged, since they had to be bowed down to pass under the bridges. The funnels of the freight steamers were higher than was customary at the time; the silhouettes of the passenger boats were portly and broad-hipped. Except for the above-mentioned "propeller" ferrying passenger to and from Buda and Pest, they were paddle-wheeled. The barges were pulled rather than pushed. Shortly after 1900 the construction of a large freight harbour with docks primarily for the purpose of loading and unloading agricultural goods, began to the south of Pest.

Automobiles were still rare in 1900. The old Vienna-Budapest highway was only partially paved. The first motor car, (a Benz, owned by a visitor) pattered along the streets of Pest in 1895. By 1905 there were 159 private automobiles; and the construction of the Hungarian-made "Marta" taxis had begun. Some of the private automobiles were electric ones: high-wheeled, boxy, resembling elegant hansom cabs, with tufted plush seats and small glass vases affixed to the interior windowframes, usually holding a single rose. (One of these the electric car of the then president of the First Commercial Bank, Leó Lánczy, graced—if that is the word—the streets of Budapest for nearly forty years: a trademark of sorts.) In 1896–7 János Csonka, an excellent engineer designed small electric cars for the Budapest postal service. In 1900 the Royal Hungarian Automobile Club (KMAC) was founded. Of course most of the private traffic in 1900 was still horse drawn. It consisted of private carriages, licensed and numbered one-horse and two-horse hack coaches (the "konflis", "fiáker" and "komfortábli") and unnumbered ones. In 1904 there were 856 one-horse, 456 two-horse and 539 unnumbered carriages. The last were the more expensive ones, hired not only for special occasions but by people who were loath to give the impression that they did not have a coach of their own.* On Sundays, except in mid-winter, the elegantly curving Stephanie Avenue in the City Part was the place for the carriage corso, not unsimilar to that of Hyde park in London. The equipages and the occasional mounts of the aristocracy and some of the upper classes were espied and followed with great interest by the assembled families of the carriageless and horseless.

The first electric street car ran along a one-mile stretch of the Ring, starting from the West Station, in 1887. By 1900 electric trolleys were replacing many of the older horse cars. The total length of electric trolley lines grew from 110 miles in 1896 to nearly 200 miles by 1905. The upper classes eschewed these, perhaps because of their frequent crowdedness, unwilling to rub elbows with the proletarians of the city (trolley fares were cheap). Exceptions for their limitations of patronage were the lines running to the outer

*It is interesting, and perhaps significant, that left-side drive was the rule in Hungary (until 1941, when the German military requested that it be changed to the right). This may have been yet another result of the wish to assert Magyar independence from Austria; and there were Hungarians who argued that it was a natural consequence of the habit of Hungarian horsemen, whose sabres and scabbards hung on the left, to be lifted by the right arm when needed.

districts of the city, the elevated line to Castle Hill, the cogwheel railway to the Svábhegy and the already mentioned, spacious, clean and comfortable "Franz Josef" underground line.

By 1900 most of the public services of Budapest, including its public transportation, were already municipally owned, governed and financed. Budapest, like Vienna, was served by city water works that produced truly excellent water. This was a great change from earlier decades when the filtration of the water of the Danube, especially in Pest, was insufficient and unsanitary. The quality of the Budapest drinking water was so good that by the 1890s some of the companies bottling the celebrated mineral spring-waters of Buda (and of Margaret Island) decided to shift their marketing to exports. Indeed, unlike in many other European cities, mineral water was disappearing from the daily tables of Budapest, save when its bottles were meant to accompany wines. The average inhabitant's consumption of water increased considerably, from 157 litres per person in the year 1896 to 231 litres in 1910.

In 1900 most of the streets, houses and rooms of Budapest were still gaslit. Around dusk the lamp-lighters, with their long sticks, were a common sight in the pavements. The purification and densification of piped gas had made progress, which was a great help for housewives and their cooks: gas-fired stoves and ranges in the kitchens had begun to replace the dirtier and more laborious coal-fired ones; gas-fired hot-water tanks (so-called "geysers") were installed in the more modern apartment houses. The first electric streetlights appeared in Pest as early as 1873. Electric lighting took a great surge upward during the glamorous illuminations of the Millennium exhibition. In 1900 the ratio of private electric light to gaslight was one to four; and it was not until 1909 that electric street-lighting replaced the gaslights in most streets. The city electric power stations were thoroughly modern at that time, even in the design of their architecture. The municipal fire service of Budapest was excellent. The city suffered no serious fires for over a decade. The number of mailboxes doubled in the decade before 1900; the increase of letter traffic was very considerable (from 3.6 million in 1895 to 14.2 million in 1913). The first telephone in Budapest was installed in 1881 (its inventor, Tivadar Puskás of wide renown, was highly esteemed by Thomas Edison). By 1890 long-distance calls to Vienna were possible; by 1900 such connections were extended to Berlin. Private subscribers were still few, about six thousand. (By 1913 there were more than 27,000.)

Mention must be made of a fairly unusual municipal service, that of the city ambulance corps (*Mentők*), reliable and much respected till this day. Its establishment was a consequence of the tremendous improvement of the standards of medical training in Budapest, where the Medical School of the university had come up to the highly reputed standards of Vienna. Here we must at least mention the progress in public health services, including the standards of medical care and of medical equipment in the public hospitals of the city. At the same time, the middle and upper classes depended much less on hospitals than on the services and house calls of family doctors; (and such house calls were available to all classes of the population). When members of the middle- or upper-class families were in need of operations or for more intensive medical care they took a room in a private sanatorium.

To this general and statistical portrait of the progress of municipal services in 1900 belongs mention of the establishment of public comfort stations in Budapest. They were serviced by old women, public employees, who were in charge of the cleaning and of the keys to the private toilet booths, dependent on a pittance of a municipal salary and on tips. These sheet-metal pavilions, invariably painted pea green, were more private than the *vespasiennes* of Paris. Tar-paint was applied to their urinals, attempting to drench, or at least overcome the foul smell of their interiors, usually with indifferent results. There were 32 of them in 1893 and 50 in 1902, often hidden among the trees and copses of the public squares.

1900 was a turning point for Hungary and for Budapest. But we can see this only in retrospect. No one knew then what was to come: that the outbreak of the Great War in 1914 would mark the end of an era that for Hungary and Budapest so definitely started in 1867. It was then that the glorious rise and prosperity of the city began (another illustration of the condition that material prosperity is a consequence of psychic and social and political climates, rather than the reverse). Two-thirds of this 1867–1914 chapter had passed by 1900. The seeds of troubles were already there – socially, politically, psychologically. Indeed, they had already begun to appear in the 1890s somewhere near the half-mark of those forty-seven years. Yet historical life has its momentum: the self-confident progress went on with increasing speed, largely unaware of the turn of the road; and so it was only a few years after 1900 that the speed began to slacken somewhat and all kinds of troubles had grown enough to appear on the surface. The still largely untroubled climate of Budapest in 1900 reflected the condition of the generally still prevalent confidence of its leading classes. The *fin-de-siècle* pessimism, the drastic break with the nineteenth-century habits of thought and perception that had appeared in Vienna and Paris and even London during the last decade of the passing century was not yet evident, let alone predominant, in Budapest. But only a few years after 1900 the symptoms of a malaise—in the literal meaning of the word, an uneasy ill feeling—began to clutch at the hearts of people. It was there in national and city politics: latest by 1904 the difficult, though generally accepted, equilibrium of the Compromise was broken. We can glimpse this from the rhetorical question posed by the Prime Minister István Tisza in the Parliament, in 1904: “Just contrast the picture of our country in 1866 with that of 1896! Thirty years of such flourishing, such growth, such increase of material, spiritual, moral and intellectual capital! Should it be so easy to tear out such thirty years from the life of a nation?” The tone of this statement was not plaintive—Tisza was too severe a character for that—but it was censorious as well as regretful: and that regretfulness already depended on the perspective of retrospect.

In sum, the grounds for optimism were no longer solid—even though material progress was still going on. And that progress was still considerable. Within Hungary at large the main national product, wheat, was more than double in 1900 than what it had been thirty years earlier; the yields per acre had doubled too; so had the cattle population. What happened by 1900 was that Budapest finance had caught up with that growth of agricultural and industrial production. In the 1870s many of the capital investments in Budapest (and the industries of Hungary at large) still depended on Parisian and Viennese

banks; but high finance had come to Budapest by 1900, so that Budapest had become the banking center of Eastern Europe. The number of Hungarian banks alone increased from 11 in 1867 to more than 160 in 1900. Some of these banks, such as the First Hungarian Commercial and the Hungarian Credit Bank were now in the same league with the great Central European financial institutions—as indeed their palatial buildings showed. Savings institutions grew, too, from 29 in 1867 to 455 in 1890. Sixty per cent of the machine industry of the country was in Budapest. Some of these were very modern: the Ganz factory, for example, was well-known in Europe: its manufactures included the first electric-railroad engines in the world, delivered to the Valtellina railroad in Northern Italy. The number of industrial establishments, ranging from small machine shops to the giant factories of the Manfréd Weiss works more than doubled during the four years from 1896 to 1900 alone (from 11,796 to 28,980); the number of their workers rose accordingly, from 63,000 to 100,000 within four years, rising further to 177,00 during the following decade.

These figures indicate how after 1900 the momentum still prevailed, but at a considerably slower pace than during the feverish years before 1900. Before 1900, for example, Budapest was the largest city of mills in the entire world. (In that year Minneapolis passed it.) Wheat from the great plains of Hungary, and also the grain products of the Balkans, were turned into flour in the great mills of Budapest. But many of the successful entrepreneurs who had begun their careers as grain traders earlier in the nineteenth century and then became founders and owners of the mills were switching their interests and enterprises and capital to other investments around 1900. The Hungarian export of flour—predominant in Europe in the 1870—was beginning to decline, even though after 1900 its volume and its destinations were still impressive. (Among other things, Hungary was the main exporter of flour to Brazil!) This was generally the case with other agricultural products, too. The big slaughterhouses and abattoirs of the Tenth District suffered from a plague of hog fever around 1890, and the phyloxera ravaged the vineyards of Buda in the 1880s. Yet, by 1900 these damages were recovered. In 1896 Hungarian exports were still three times those of 1874. After 1900 this progress began to diminish.

There was a compensation for this—for Budapest, rather than for Hungary at large. This consisted of the fact that the increasing population of the city meant an increase of consumers; production followed consumption and producers consumers. Thus the agricultural ring around Budapest went on growing, despite the transformation of the city into an industrial metropolis. The vineyards within the municipal boundaries of Budapest still grew, from 355 acres in 1900 to 401 acres in 1910, despite the condition that the development of the national railroads brought cheap wine to the metropolis from faraway Hungarian places and that by 1900 few families of Pest owned their own vineyards in Buda, a custom that had been prevalent as late as 1890. Into the outer districts of the city a new agricultural population was coming. Hundreds of thousands of peasants were leaving their villages in search for better fortunes in the ring around Budapest. Some of them went to work in the factories, a country-to-city migration that was typical of the nineteenth century throughout Europe, though this happened in Hungary later than in western Europe; but many of them worked to produce and sell vegetables, fruits, and

other kinds of food for the people of the new metropolis. This new increase of the population had definite effects on the demography of the city. Even more than in other cities of that time, Budapest had not only spread out along concentric circles, but the farthest suburbs (except for the residential villa districts) were often those of the poorest people. From 1890 to 1910 the population of Hungary increased by nearly 20 per cent, of Budapest by 79 per cent, and of its suburbs by nearly 238 per cent. It was thus that from the Great Compromise to the Great War, from 1867 to 1914, Budapest was the fastest growing city in Europe, even though after 1900 the birth rate among its population had slowed down.

It was a European city. No haughty Viennese would say in 1900 what Metternich had suggested eighty-five years earlier, that Hungary belonged to the "Orient". For a Viennese to go to Buda or to Pest in, say, 1820, was an expedition. By 1900 a Viennese who had some business in Budapest found it pleasant to go there, perhaps especially in the summer. He may have been critical of Budapest, and of Hungarian politics (as Viennese often were) but the criticism would contain elements of respect and perhaps even of jealousy. There were comforts and pleasures to be had in that city that were at least equal to those of Vienna; prices were somewhat cheaper; and their sojourn would be seasoned with a peculiar spice of Hungarianness, including a pungent soupçon of paprika. When in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries a traveller from Greece or from the Balkans was packing his bags to travel northwest, to Trieste or to Vienna, he would say: "I am going to Europe." In 1900 he might have said the same when going to Budapest.

It was, at least in some sense, a cosmopolitan city—and not only because of its hotels and restaurants but because so many of the people foreign travellers would meet spoke the languages of Europe. Most people knew German and many people spoke some French. This was not only due to the loneliness of the Magyar language which has no relative among the great families of European languages, whence the frequent linguistic abilities of Hungarians. It was also due to the cultural appetites of the generations around 1900 and to the requirements of *bon ton* among the upper classes.

During the nineteenth century, as we have seen, Budapest and Berlin were the two fastest growing cities in Europe; and between 1867 and 1914 Budapest was *the* fastest growing one. Let us once more sump up the increase:

1720	about	11,000 people
1831		103,000
1867		280,000
1900		733,000
1910		880,000
1913		933,000

In the ten years before 1900 the population of Budapest grew by the amazing rate of 45 per cent. In 1867 Buda and Pest were the seventeenth largest city in Europe, by 1900 the sixth. The proportion of the capital city to the country at large was not unusual: the people of Budapest amounted to slightly more than 4 per cent of the population of Hungary (the proportion of Paris to the rest of France, or of London to the rest of

Britain were larger). What was unusual was the comparison of Budapest with other cities of Hungary, of which the second largest, Szeged, amounted only to 13 per cent of the capital city.

After 1900 the rate of rise was slowing down. The people of Budapest now had fewer children. To bring up children in the city was more difficult, burdensome and expensive than to bring them up in the country where there was often a place or a function for them in the barnyards and the fields. The crowding in the apartments was a factor. There were two other developments, one negative, the other—perhaps—positive. The minds and the habits of many of the families who had moved into the city were governed by their religion less than before. This happened not only among Catholics but also among Protestants and Jews. Large families were becoming rare. As in other European countries, notably in France, the availability of male prophylactics had nothing to do with this; something like “birth control” was widely practiced among more and more married people in one way or another. The, perhaps positive, factor was that the diminution in the number of children meant that they had become the subjects of increasing attention. More interest and more money could be spent on their education. Certainly among the middle and upper class families it was taken for granted, latest after 1880, that their children would not leave the family circle and would not begin to earn their way until sometime during the third decade of their lives. But among the lower classes, too, children were sent to school for a much longer period than before; and the requirements of the schools were such that young people could not keep up their studies while having a job, on the side. Among the middle classes the—often unspoken but generally observed—belief reigned to the effect that their children, whether boys or girls, must not attain a social, educational, or professional status that would be, even to the slightest degree, beneath that of their parents. It was desirable and proper that they—especially boys—should rise above them. Such family ambitions were not typical of the old aristocratic families. Yet, with all of their self-confidence and social position, their children, too had to maintain not only the social but the educational status of their parents, whence the frequent employment of private tutors, to which I shall return.

Some of these matters were not peculiar to Budapest in 1900. What was singular to it was the high rate of increase in its population even when a drastic decrease in the size of its families took place. One of these reasons was the continuous growth of the agricultural ring around Budapest. Another element was the large improvement in standards of health. In 1867 the Pest death-rate was one of the highest among comparable European cities. Notwithstanding the conditions of urban overcrowding, during the twenty-five years before 1900 the death rate in Budapest dropped by half. Infant mortality also declined by fifty per cent from 1869 to 1900. The mass killers of the nineteenth century, infectious diseases such as tuberculosis, were fading, while life expectancy was rising, though only slowly. In these respects Budapest in 1900 had caught up with Vienna, which is remarkable when we consider that proletarian overcrowding in Vienna was less than in Budapest, and that the Viennese municipal health services were a model for much of Europe.

In 1900 the number of illegitimate children in Budapest was still unusually high. Another peculiarity in the composition of the people was the unusual imbalance between women and men: in 1900 1088 females for every 1000 males of the city. One explanation for this is the large number of domestic servants, who were almost all women (male servants, such as butlers or coachmen, existed only in the households of the aristocracy). As late as 1870 every fifth person in Buda and Pest was a domestic servant—a proportion twice as large as that in Vienna, and three times larger than in Berlin. One consequence of this was that among the poorer classes men and women married late. In 1900 among people over twenty years age only 56 per cent of males and 44 per cent of females were married, a proportion much lower than elsewhere in the country. But because of the rapid industrialization of Budapest there came a change after 1900. Because most of the industrial workers were young men, the average age of the population remained fairly young, younger than that of the generally aging urban population of other European cities;* but industrial workers now included many females, too. From 1900 to 1910 the number of women employed in domestic service rose only by 24 per cent, while the number of those employed in industry rose by 37 per cent. Whereas in 1880 only one of every three working women in Budapest was employed in industry, their proportion had grown to more than half in 1900, and to more than two-thirds in 1910.

The working classes were the largest portion of the people of Budapest; but by 1900 the tone of Budapest was that of a bourgeois city. Perhaps within all of Eastern Europe it was the only bourgeois city. Its atmosphere, its ways of life were more bourgeois than St. Petersburg and Moscow; but Russia was geographically, rather than culturally, part of Europe. (If we exclude Tsarist Russia from "Europe", then Budapest in 1900 was already the *fifth* largest European city, after London, Paris, Berlin, Vienna.) There exists a descriptive novel about the Rumanian capital city of Bucharest around 1900 by the Rumanian novelist Ion Marin Sadoveanu. The differences between the atmosphere, the people, and the habits of Bucharest and Budapest were not only immeasurably greater than those between Budapest and Vienna; it is almost as if the differences were larger than those of two neighbouring nations; it is the difference of two civilisations.

But these are matters for which the illustrative evidence of statistics is no longer sufficient.** We are facing qualities of life, not quantities. The bourgeois classes of Budapest were a minority in 1900; a numerically lesser minority than the proportion of corresponding classes in Vienna or Paris. Yet their influence—not only their material or

*It is significant that the characteristics of internal migration and of external migration (that is, of emigration) in Hungary coincide on one point. Around 1900 most of the young people who came to Budapest to seek their fortunes came from the same counties and regions (mostly from the north of Hungary) wherefrom most of the people left to seek their fortunes in America.

**The Budapest City Office of Statistics was one of the most reputed in Europe, led by a great statistician, József Kőrösy, whose important (and pioneering) works in modern urban statistics were also published in Paris and in Vienna. It is melancholy to record that one of the ablest successors at the head of that office of the Jewish Kőrösy, after 1920, was the determinedly anti-semitic Aladár Kovách.

financial but their mental influence—was dominant. Evidences for this existed on all kinds of levels. There was the prevalence of bourgeois buildings, that sea of apartment-houses. The rooms of the working classes were, of course, dreadfully poorer in comfort and even in sanitation than those of the bourgeois; but they, too, lived in apartment-houses, for the first time in their lives. The clothing of the great majority of the people of Budapest, including the working classes, also followed middle-class standards and habits by 1900. Unlike in most of the provincial cities of Hungary, unlike in other large cities of Eastern Europe, peasant clothing and other rural habits were disappearing fast. By 1900 the street-wear of most industrial working men in Budapest was that of a dark sack-suit. It was the custom of some of the advanced workers, especially of foremen, to wear a black derby even at their work-benches or lathes. The cloth-cap or the beret were still rare. This conformation to bourgeois fashions was more frequent among the men than among the women of the lower classes. The broad skirts, the boots, and the black kerchiefs of the Hungarian peasantry were worn not only by the older married women of the working class; they were ubiquitous among the women and girls of the factories and of the agricultural suburbs; and they were the off-duty clothing of most of the domestic servant girls.*

In 1900 the class structure of Hungary was highly articulated and consequently complicated. The class structure of Budapest reflected this national stratification, but its proportions were different.

Budapest was largely urban; Hungary was still half-feudal. There were, at that time, two aristocrates in Budapest: the older landowning one, and the newer financial one. But the use of the word "aristocracy" is inaccurate, since it applies to both groups only in a broad sense of the term. In Hungarian usage "aristocrat" meant a member of the high nobility: a prince, count, or baron. A "financial aristocrat" could be respected or envied: but the term was hardly more than an epithet; it even carried within itself a slightly pejorative sense, a touch of the critical. Around 1900, the high nobilitarian and the financial aristocracy could coexist rather well, and even collaborate or commingle on occasion; but the financial aristocracy—including those of its families who became ennobled by the King—was well aware of its relative social inferiority compared to the old nobility. After the French revolution the brilliant French writer Rivarol overheard a socially ambitious emigré, in the company of aristocratic emigrés in a Hamburg boarding-house, beginning a sentence with: "Nous aristocrates", "we aristocrats". Rivarol

*It may be of interest to note that there was no coincidence, or synchronization between the development of Hungarian architecture and that of Hungarian fashions in clothes. Neo-classical and Biedermeyer architecture (and Biedermeyer fashions among the women of Budapest) were still dominant at a time, before 1850, when male clothing was often pronouncedly national and Hungarian. And when after 1900 Hungarian national elements appear in the very styles and forms of buildings, the bourgeois uniformity of European styles of clothing is ubiquitous, except for the occasional ceremonial "díszmagyar".

On the other hand, the strenuous attempts at the creation of a Hungarian architectural style after 1900 coincide in the, much more praiseworthy and enduring, attempts of Bartók and Kodály towards deeply expressive Hungarian folk music, separating the latter not only from German and Austrian influences but also from the gaudy virtuosity of gypsy strings.

broke in: "This usage of the plural is very singular." No financial aristocrat in Budapest, even if ennobled, even if in possession of the title of baron, would have ever said "we aristocrats", no matter where.

The old nobility were the great landowner magnates of Hungary. They held a very large proportion of the Hungarian land. By 1900 the value and the income of their large estates have begun to decrease; but that decrease was uneven and they were not, as yet, threatened by the full devolution of feudalism into capitalism. There were only a handful of Magyar princely families. (Franz Josef elevated many counts, even more barons, but only one Hungarian prince, Tasziló Festetics, who did not live in Budapest.) The divisions among the high nobility lay elsewhere. There were a few non-Hungarian counts and barons who had very large estates, mostly in northwestern and western Hungary, residing often in Vienna but seldom, if ever, in Budapest. There were the members of the old Hungarian nobility who held positions in the high ranks of the Austro-Hungarian government, many of them in the diplomatic service. There were other members of the Hungarian nobility, mostly of eastern Hungary and Transylvania, whose estates were smaller and who were considerably less wealthy than the others. And the best known, and perhaps the most respected were the high noble families who were long and deeply rooted in Hungarian history, families whose members had associated themselves with the causes of Magyar patriotism and independence both before and during the nineteenth century—Batthyányis, Széchenyis, Eszterházys, Andrássys—even as all of them were unreservedly loyal to the Dual Monarchy in 1900. This was the group which, in addition to their great country houses, chose to establish their houses in Pest (unless they possessed ancestral houses on Castle Hill) during the nineteenth century. Their patriotism, and their political interests were the sources of that choice. The urbanization of Budapest and its culture contributed further to that inclination. A few of them took part in the government of the city; one of them, the eccentric Count Frigyes Podmaniczky, served as the vicepresident of the Council of Public Works. They had their own club, the National Casino, which remained restricted and exclusive, its membership dependent almost exclusively on birth. They married mostly among themselves; the sources of their wealth and income was still predominantly land and forestry in 1900; but their intermarriages with the financial "aristocracy"* and their financial and political independence with Budapest high capitalism had already begun.

Still their ways of life were quite distinct. For one thing, their sons and daughters were educated at home, by private tutors, often till their twelfth year. Then their sons were customarily sent to the gymnasiums of certain religious orders, and their daughters to convent schools till the ages of seventeen or eighteen. Most of these families were Catholics; they often employed a family priest. There was at times a small private chapel not only in their country houses but in their small places in Budapest. They were more cosmopolitan than the other classes. They had connections with other European noble families, often well beyond the frontiers of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. They were

*These intermarriages were occasionally those of aristocratic men with the daughters of rich, often Jewish families; the opposite was rarely the case.

taught French at an early age, which almost all of them spoke faultlessly and fluently. Their sons also learned riding, fencing, shooting, hunting. Their clothes were often cut by English tailors, one or two of whom travelled to Vienna every year for that purpose. Much of this was not very different from the lives of other continental noble families of the period. Yet there were differences, sometimes significant ones. In 1900 many of these Hungarian nobles no longer saw their Budapest residences as temporary or secondary. In Germany or Poland or Italy (the Roman aristocracy excepted) such families chose to spend little time in the national capital; often they had no houses of their own there at all. In Budapest there was no such thing as a "season". Only during the high summer months could one be sure to find these families in their country seats, away from the capital. Nor was there a definite aristocratic quarter of the city, save for some streets on Castle Hill and in the streets around the Museum Ring. Another matter: unlike in Vienna, many of these families were not indifferent to currents of urban and national culture. They were interested in politics; on occasion there were writers and even painters among them. They frequented not only the Opera but also the flourishing national theaters. Unlike in France of 1789, and unlike in other European nations around 1900, in this still half-feudal nation popular hatred for the high nobility was generally absent.

Yet we must not exaggerate their merits. Their patronage of the arts was limited. They had few remarkable collections of art. More important was the condition that some of the younger men of these families, surely around 1900, were fairly idle, having no taste either for the management of their estates or even for the diplomatic service. The careers that members of such families had espoused earlier—that of high military, or high civil-service positions—no longer drew many of them. Perhaps one of the reasons for this was their liking for the pleasures of Budapest. A frequent vice among them was gambling. It was after years of remarkable dissipation, and after more than considerable losses in gambling, that the Károlyi family helped to launch the young Mihály Károlyi's career in politics. He became a national figure soon, mostly because of his vocal proposition of radical and "modern" ideas.

Among the high nobility the women were, generally speaking, more sedate than the men. They were more religious and conservative. The fiery Hungarian temperament notwithstanding, extramarital scandals among the high Hungarian nobility were relatively rare at the time. There was little of the raffishness of the Edwardian aristocracy among them, perhaps because life and the diet of daily pleasures in nineteenth-century Hungary was less constrained than that of Victorian England.

Beneath them on the social but not on the financial scale stood the families of the Hungarian gentry. People regarded them, as they regarded themselves, as categorically superior to the financial aristocracy (and not only because many of the families of the latter were Jewish or Jewish in their origins). In this respect the society of Hungary resembled Poland in some ways and England in others. The gentry families, especially in Budapest, had less money than the financial aristocracy and less than much of the bourgeoisie. But then in Hungary an unusually large proportion of people were "nobles"—according to some estimates, as many as one of every ten people as late as in

1848—mostly because of a peculiar constitutional law dating back to the early sixteenth century. They lived on the land; they had many petty privileges and constitutional rights; their titles—true, stretching the category somewhat—were the Hungarian equivalents of a *von* or a *de*. In essence, they were a *petite noblesse terrienne*, with a fierce desire for independence, both personal and national, and with many acquired handicaps and inherited vices. The word “gentry”, borrowed from English (“dzsentrí” in Hungarian) did not become current until the 1880s. There was, at that time, a proud and widespread accepted idea in Hungary (corresponding with some of the ideas that Englishmen had about Hungary at the time) that the Hungarian constitution resembled, if not paralleled, that of England, because of the chronological near-coincidence of the rights that the nobles of England had extracted from their king in their Magna Charta in 1215, and Hungarians from their king in their Golden Bull in 1222; and because of the belief that the main source of English and of Hungarian freedoms resided in the existence of an independent landed gentry class, with its inherited sense of freedoms and with its practice of self-government, and with its taste for country life. We need not analyze the validities and the shortcomings of this agreeable, and not entirely untruthful, comparison—except to say that at the very time when this word “gentry” became widespread in Hungary the social structures of England and Hungary could hardly have been more different. For by 1880 the Hungarian petty nobility was in considerable, and often grave, financial and material decline. They were in trouble for many reasons. Their land holdings, the quality and the profitability of their agriculture could not compete with that of the larger, better-run estates. Consequently many gentry families migrated to Budapest, without relinquishing their sense of pride and of importance, and without giving up of what remained of their estates and of their, alas, often run-down country houses. But they did not wish to go into commerce, finance, industry, business. What was open to them was a new source of income: that of civil service positions. Outside Budapest leading governmental positions remained in the hands of the gentry, in many ways as late as 1944. In Budapest the centralization of government, and the establishment of many government institutions included other possibilities. The Austro-Hungarian as well as the particularly Hungarian civil service consisted of twelve grades. Member of the nobility, functioning as ministers, ambassadors, chief judges, generals, etc. were in Grades 1–3; the jobs occupied by the gentry usually spread through Grades 4 to 10. These jobs gave them authority, security, pensions. But they were not a moneyed class, and their income meant less and less as the nineteenth century drew toward its end.

Consequently, they were inclined to become critical and jealous of the more successful and rising people of the capital, and perhaps especially of Jews. But there was more to these nascent animosities than mere financial frustration and material envy. The gentry saw themselves, with some reason, to have been the truly national and historical class, the flag-bearers of Hungarian independence. They were apt to be critical of most features of the 1867 Compromise with Austria. They looked down on most private occupations, including administrative ones. For every Hungarian Jew employed in the governmental, civil, or municipal services there were eight non-Jewish civil servants, usually from the ranks of the gentry; among white-collar employees in private firms the ratio was nearly

the reverse. In Budapest the number of state and municipal employees increased fivefold from 1867 to 1900. There was a rising need for auditors, and accountants. The sons of the gentry were uninterested in such jobs. As late as in the 1870s they were filled by clerical arrivals from Austria and Germany. Meanwhile the gentry were becoming less sure of themselves. Some time after 1890 the term and meaning of "gentry" in Budapest—though not yet in the provinces—began to overlap with another term, that of the "gentlemanly middle-class" (*úri középosztály*), suggesting at least an increase of their identification with urbanity. A decade later came another change which is significant, and perhaps ominous, in retrospect. People began to refer to their class as "the Christian middle-class", "Christian" in this sense being a negative adjective, meaning, simply and squarely, non-Jewish.*

It was thus that while there were few evidently and predominantly "gentry" districts in Budapest in 1900, there were certain gentry streets and predominantly gentry houses. We know more about the lives of the Magyar gentry than about those of the aristocracy, because of the many novels (and even studies) that dealt with the, sometimes tragic, and often tragicomic fortunes of that class. Many of these dealt with the amplitude of their pretensions and the emptiness of their purses; the title of Kálmán Mikszáth's "Fancy Misery" (*Cifra nyomorúság*) is alone telling. But Mikszáth wrote mostly about their lives in the small towns of the provinces. The lives and the workings of the minds of the gentry civil-servant in Budapest were more complex. The best thing we can say about them is that they were strong-minded, reliable and proud. Their shortcomings were those of a narrow nationalism which had grown out of the older, county-related patriotism, and a consequently narrow cultivation of a nationalist culture that was as intense as it was shallow. It included their fondness for gypsy music, for nationalist literature, for declarative rhetoric, whether in poetry or in politics. Their sons were now, for the first time, required to have a university degree (usually in law), for the proposal of acquiring a civil service position; but their education was, more than often, rigid and narrow. This middle-class was far less cosmopolitan than either the aristocracy or the Jewish bourgeoisie: and this was, for them and for Hungary, ultimately disastrous, since they had eloquent but insubstantial illusions about the world and about other nations, with fatal consequences for Hungarian politics and the destiny of the nation. Yet this class represented a bridge between the city and the country. They brought some of the agreeable atmosphere of the countryside into their Budapest houses and apartments. There was something in the atmosphere of Budapest in 1900 that was both provincial and

*Another element worth noticing consisted in the then extant suspicions and animosities between Catholics and Protestants. While the aristocracy was predominantly Catholic, the gentry was both Catholic and Protestant. (The Protestants of Hungary, and of Budapest, amounted to 25 to 30 per cent of the population.) These religious affiliations were represented in politics. Most Hungarian Protestants were nationalists and anti-Habsburg. Even among the gentry marriages between Catholic and Protestant families posed certain difficulties, mostly because Catholic families insisted on the Catholic baptism and religious upbringing of children in mixed marriages. Since 1895 the Catholic church could no longer insist on this as a condition of legal marriage; but many families kept insisting on it, often to the extent of including it in a contract.

gentry-like: the "green" restaurants of Buda, for example, or the erect bearing of their often beautiful young daughters at the university balls, or even some of their other habits, good and bad (including duelling) that some of the men of the urban bourgeoisie were inclined to emulate. For the latter the aristocracy was too far above them in the social stratosphere, whereas the gentry were, after all, almost within hailing distance. This, and perhaps only this, explains how the Magyar gentry in Budapest represented something similar to the squierarchy of England: proud rather than fashionable, they seemed to represent the essence of the race.

Thus there were three factors—all of them mental, not material—that put the gentry above the financial aristocracy in the estimation of people even in 1900, at that time of the peak of capitalism, of the Money Age. One of them was the still accepted idea that the gentry were the flagbearers of Hungarianness, the prime representatives of the nation. The other was race: the gentry were not Jewish, while the financial aristocracy was largely Jewish, at least in their origins. Yet anti-semitism is an inadequate explanation for this: had the majority of the financial aristocracy not been Jewish, this social hierarchy would not have been different—because of the low Hungarian esteem for commerce and finance. A country gentleman was more respected than a banker—at least as long as he paid his bills (even after a long delay) and left good tips. The bankers knew that. What mattered was a certain style of behaviour and of bearing.* Consequently many men—rather than women—were attracted to some of the gentry habits and adopted them. The financial aristocracy, and many families of the upper bourgeoisie brought country houses and estates; they sought a noble predicate (about which later); on occasion their sons fought a duel or two. But there was a certain reciprocity. It was not merely the usual reciprocity of the attraction of wealth for birth and of birth for wealth. It was a reciprocity of attitudes. The wives and daughters of the gentry took notice of the cosmopolitan elegance of the women of the financial aristocracy and adopted their fashions and clothes when they could afford them and there were younger sons of the gentry who took interest and pleasure in the intellectual and cultural commerce of Budapest because, not despite, its cosmopolitanism. In 1900 the elements of a fatal discord and division between the urban and the populist, between the commercial and the agrarian, between the cosmopolitan and the nationalist, between the non-Jewish Hungarian and the Jewish-Hungarian culture and civilization of Budapest were already there. But the break had not yet come. Their coexistence was still generally peaceful and obviously fruitful. Notwithstanding the differences and the jealousies, the misunderstandings and the animosities were not yet profound; and the flourishing of Budapest around 1900 was the outcome of that.

Above the middle-middle and the lower-middle classes stood the wealthy citizenry of Budapest: a class to which "financial aristocracy" and "patricians" would be equally applicable in 1900, despite the occasionally still extant shades of differences between these terms and their subjects. By 1900 these differences had faded; and this was due to a historical development. Because of the old Hungarian attitudes and, perhaps of the

*A typical Hungarian conversation, reported by my mother. She asked a family friend: "You seem to be downhearted a bit." He: "Ah! If I could only afford to live the way I live!"

Hungarian temperament, the national disdain for commerce and finance lasted for a long time. In the first half of the nineteenth century the financiers and manufacturers and wealthy traders and artisans of Pest and Buda were mostly non-Magyar families. During the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, taking advantage not only of evident commercial opportunities but of their chance of emigrating from the then domains of the Ottoman Empire, Greek families established themselves in Pest. These families (Sina, Sacelláry, Lyka, Mannó, Agorasztó, Haris, Muráthy became their Magyarized names) were among the first of the Pest patricians. Around the middle of the century other enterprising foreigners came to Buda and Pest and soon established fortunes there, mostly in the building and manufacturing industries: the Norwegian Gregersen; the Swiss Ganz, Aebly, Haggemacher (and Gundel); an occasional Rumanian (Gozsdu) or Serbian (Petrovics, Vrányi, Grabovszky, Bogosich, Mocsonyi—again, Magyarized names) families. But most patricians in Buda and Pest were still German. It was a largely German patriciate that ruled the city of governments of Buda and at times even of Pest. Some of these families (Luczenbacher, Wagner, Wurm, Heinrich, Röck, Drasche, Dreher, Kauser) were not only respected; they became both Magyarized and rich. Most of them were builders and manufacturers. Around 1830 a few Jewish families began to rise. Their names (Wodianer, Ullmann) have an honorable place not only in the financial history of Pest but in the political and cultural history of Hungary. They identified themselves with the 1848 Revolution and War of Independence, often at great risk to their fortunes and freedoms. Most of their fortunes had come from the grain trade. After 1867 things changed, and not only because the law establishing the emancipation of Jews in Hungary passed with a very large majority. From grain-trading some of these families shifted their interests and investments into mills, manufactures, industry, ultimately to finance. Thereafter other Jewish entrepreneurial families (Hatvany-Deutsch, Herzog, Strasser, Kornfeld, Weiss, Chorin, Fellner, Tafler-Györgyey) joined their ranks. When Budapest, by 1900, had become the largest financial center of Europe east of Vienna, these banks were directed mostly (though not exclusively) by members of the Jewish financial aristocracy.

Much of this was reflected in the politics of the city. What happened in Budapest from 1870 to 1900 reflected, as in a microcosm, the rise and the decline of the overall relationship of capitalism with liberalism in the world. In 1871–72 the city fathers voted law, according to which half of the city deputies—two hundred men—would consist of the payers of the highest taxes on the city rolls. This was not such a crude materialist step as it might seem in retrospect. To the contrary: it was a progressive and liberal step at the time. Its purpose was to reduce the influence of the feudal elements in the city assembly, including the presence of the ancient entrenched guilds. In 1871–72 it was generally agreed that this reform of the city assembly was “anti-reactionary”. Still there was some opposition to it, with the effect that the original proposal of the law was slightly revised; the presence of the largest taxpayers in the city assembly would not be automatic: they would be elected from among the 1,200 highest taxpayers. The precise, painstaking researches of the fine urban historian of Budapest, Károly Vörös, reconstructed the devolution thereafter. For about fifteen years there was no radical change in the general

profile of the highest taxpayers, that is, of the richest people in Budapest.* There were many aristocrats among them, many of the German builders, and a number of rising capitalists.** After 1888 the Budapest building boom changed this. The old patriciate was beginning to disappear from the rolls of the highest taxpayers. At the same time the newer kind of capitalist: owners of real estate, mostly of houses, were rising. In 1888 211 of the highest taxpayers came from the latter group, by 1903 466. By 1900 house-owning landlords constituted the largest group among the 1,200 leading taxpayers: 34.05 per cent. After them came the category of merchants: 21.85 per cent. No other group amounted to more than 10 per cent. (The third group were bankers: 8.46% and factory-owners: 7.14%.) The composition of the wealthiest class in Budapest had changed drastically. The problem was no longer that of the remnants of the feudal order; it was that of the, largely unbridled, capitalist order, or disorder.

This was a sociological phenomenon, not very different from the rise of urban capitalists, including Jewish ones, in Berlin or Vienna or Paris around 1900. But there also existed a cultural condition in Budapest that was perhaps unique. The assimilation of this financial aristocracy—and also much of the Jewish upper-middle-class—in Hungary was perhaps the most complete in Europe. It was not only that (as also elsewhere) some of these families had intermarried with the gentry and with the aristocracy. It was not only that some of these families had converted to Christian religions during the nineteenth century—and, so far as we can tell, out of deeper convictions than mere social ambitions.*** The ambitions, habits, and even manners of the financial aristocracy wholly conformed to those of the gentry—to the upper families of the gentry, rather than to the nobility. By 1890 it was almost *de rigueur* for the financial aristocracy to acquire a country estate—which they managed very well, and often with considerably more consideration for their tenants and peasants than the landowners of other classes. In Vienna or Berlin or London or New York the atmosphere and the tone of the drawing-room of a Jewish financier was perceptibly different from that of a Gentile magnate. In Budapest, and in the Hungarian country, these differences were subdued to the extent of having been hardly perceptible: foreign visitors could not recognize them until they were reminded of the social origins of their hosts. What we may see here, in retrospect, are certain admirable characteristics of a class of people who were seldom ostentatious or arrogant, who took great pride in the strict probity of their financial operations and in the cultural and moral standards within their families. Conversely—and this is another, perhaps unique, phenomenon—respect for some of these families, with their well-established names, continued in Budapest for a long time. It survived the rise of middle-class and,

*As elsewhere in the world, statistics of taxation, i.e. the figures of *declared* taxes were not always, and not inevitably, an accurate reflection of true assets or income.

**The ratio of the highest taxpayers between liberal Pest and conservative Buda remained substantially the same for more than twenty years: one to eight. (By 1912 the share of Buda dropped to one in twelve.)

***In 1900 the exclusively aristocratic National Casino had seven Jewish members, the upper-gentry Country Casino a few more. They were not necessarily converts. This, again, was unique. Aristocratic clubs in Vienna, Paris, Germany would have no Jewish members at the time.

later, of popular anti-semitism, lasting, in some ways, through the worst years of the Hitler period and the Second World War.

That financial and manufacturing aristocracy was, of course, but the top layer of the Jewish population in Budapest. That population was unusually large, having grown from 16 per cent in 1872 to 21.5 per cent in 1900. Karl Lueger, the selectively but definitely anti-semitic Mayor of Vienna allowed to deliver himself of the epithet "Juda-pest" on occasion. (His dislike of Hungarians was at least as strong—if not stronger—than his dislike of Jews.) During the last decades of the nineteenth and the first decade of the twentieth century three thousand Jews, on the average, arrived in Budapest each year. In the beginning many of these came to Budapest from the West, from the Bohemian and Moravian provinces of the Habsburg Empire. After 1867 many of them came from the East, from the more primitive villages of Galicia in eastern Poland, and also from Russia. Until about 1860 Jewish traders and artisans in Buda and Pest were often handicapped by discrimination. Their licenses and their trade were restricted by the older, mostly German, guilds. Apprentices of the latter rioted against Jews in 1848. This was one of the reasons why almost all Jews in Hungary identified themselves with the Magyar national cause in 1848 and thereafter. The other reason was the ease of their Magyarization. Because of the earlier decrees of the Emperor Josef II most of the Jews in Hungary had German names; but a considerable minority—one-third, or more—Magyarized their names during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. There were a few identifiable Magyar-Jewish family names and first names; but these were a minority. An even smaller minority were those, recently arrived, Jews from eastern Europe who spoke Yiddish. Among the Jewish congregations the modern-liberal "Neolog" were predominant; Orthodox Jews were relatively few. Ninety per cent of Austrian Jews lived in Vienna whereas only about 20% of Hungarian Jews lived in Budapest. Most Jews in Hungary were dispersed, many of them assimilated among the Magyar population in the small towns of the provinces. There were, however, districts in Pest where the population was considerably Jewish; in a few streets 60 or 70 per cent. In 1900 there existed typically, and predominantly, Jewish clubs, Jewish coffeehouses, Jewish restaurants: but not exclusively so. The Leopoldstadt Casino of the Jewish upper bourgeoisie had a fair number of Gentile members. Political and popular anti-semitism began to appear on the surface in the early 1880s. But it was not yet particularly popular in Budapest. Theodor Herzl, the founder of modern Zionism, was a Jew born in Hungary; but his career as a journalist, and his discovery of Zionism—out of his shock of recognition that, because of ineradicable antisemitic sentiments, the ideal of total Jewish assimilation in liberal Europe was an illusion—occurred in Vienna, not in Budapest. There were, of course, Jewish elements in Budapest who evoked popular dislike and distrust: usurious landlords, fast-talking schemers in business, comer-cutters, successful skaters on thin ice—and on thin paper. Yet as late as 1900 the large proportion of Jewish lawyers and physicians in Budapest inspired little resentment by the population. Many people in Budapest would depend on these Jewish professionals, whose standards of learning and of practice were generally high. Few occupations were closed to Jews, most of these by unspoken custom rather than by fiat: certain high positions in the civil and diplomatic service, for example.

This does not mean that antisemitism did not exist at the time. Its expressions and manifestations were beginning to surface—within political parties and in cultural affairs.

When we contemplate the large, broad, lower part of the social pyramid of Budapest around 1900 we are facing gradations that are perhaps less subtle but not less complicated than those distinguishing some of the relationships of the upper classes. There was one, rather definite, though not entirely leakproof barrier separating those families who had at least one domestic servant, and those who had none. It was this difference—not differences in income, and not differences in occupations—that divided what we may call the lower-middle class of Budapest from the working-class. But even this line was less definite than before, say, 1880 when it may be said that the majority of the people of Budapest were engaged in serving a minority, in one way or another. We have seen that the proportion of those engaged in domestic service began to decrease after 1900, while the proportion of industrial—and of agricultural—workers was rising. The wages of domestic servants were increasing, too, though they were still abysmally low. The crowded conditions of the middle-class and lower-middle-class apartments allowed for less and less space for the purpose of harboring even a single, and pathetically undemanding, peasant servant girl. More important was the rapid industrialization of the city, and the consequent opportunities of other, better-paying, work. The industrial working-class now attracted tens of thousands of young men from the provinces. It nearly doubled between 1890 and 1910. By 1900 it had brought about a new class: a—fairly self-conscious—Budapest proletariat, whose members (especially the men) rather quickly adopted many urban habits, from their clothing to their everyday language. As early as in 1868 a working-class speaker raised a serious voice of protest against the then new conditions: he said that workers were no longer humans, they had become mere material. In the 1890s the first strikes occurred, including a large-strike-movement by bricklayers in 1897. There were occasional demonstrations in the industrial districts, involving, among other things, demands for the reduction of the twelve (sometimes fourteen-) hour working day. Closer to the inner districts, in some of the apartment-houses the tenants of tenements demonstrated against their landlords. On other occasions the demonstrations of the working-class approached the Inner City: they took place on and around the central sections of the Ring. Such occurrences were still infrequent in 1900; but the palpable presence of a new kind of working-class was already there. There were a new kind of people in some of the streets and districts of Budapest, even though this was seldom visible in Buda and in the Inner District of Pest.

There were differences in class-consciousness not only between domestic servants and factory-workers but between either of them and the multiple layers of the lower classes, which included the considerable group of janitors and assistant janitors of the private houses and public buildings, the very numerous low-grade employees of the civil, municipal and other institutions (*altisztek*) including policemen, firemen, trolley-conductors, street-sweepers, garbagemen, etc. Few of them were unionized in 1900; even among factory-workers only 8,666 belonged to unions in 1901, but six years later there were already 130,000 of them. There were important differences separating foremen from other workers, and workers in some occupations from others. Printers had relatively

the highest reputation and the best pay. In 1900 there were nearly 8,000 printers in Budapest, in 560 printingshops, many of them using the modern linotype machines. A list of the different occupations would be interminable; and it would not be very different from that of other European cities of that time. There were perhaps only two disparate groups that were peculiar to Budapest around 1900. One was the already mentioned, and still rapidly growing agricultural population, often within the metropolitan confines of the city. The other was the peculiar institution of the guild of porter-messengers (*hordárok*), one of the few physical occupations that included many Jews. There were jacks-of-all-trades, their duties encompassing a wide variety, ranging from the discreet transportation of love-letters to that of heavy baggage. And on the bottom of the social scale and pyramid lived the floating population of destitutes, amounting perhaps to two out of every ten people in the bourgeoning, flourishing city. One of every three inhabitants of Budapest had no dwelling of their own: sub-lessees, many of whom were not even occupants of a cramped airless chamber. They were renters of a bed or of a mattress for the night.

There was, however, much social mobility in Budapest in 1900. It was social mobility that drew many people to the city; it was social mobility, too, which deeply disturbed others, out of various motives ranging from respect of tradition to pulsations of envy, and often with a hardly divisible human mixture of both. Here was the duality of the city: liberal in many ways, but with the social democracy rising; bourgeois with feudal elements; urban with provincial features; a place marked by rapid and even astounding change, yet one in which the desire for stability was very widespread. Historians must not overlook the dominant, though often invisible, sentiment of the nineteenth century,—the desire for respectability, which involved *all* classes of the population. In Budapest—unlike in other cities of Eastern Europe, and also unlike in many of the smaller towns of Hungary—it was possible for the poorer classes to emulate, imitate, actually adopt certain urban and bourgeois habits and standards. For many of the working-class women this had become a desirable thing to do. Another element in social mobility, in the—relative—democratization of the people of Budapest was that of their schooling. Illiteracy declined, amazingly so. In 1870 one-third of the people of Buda and Pest were illiterate. By 1900 less than ten per cent were. Illiteracy was much lower in Budapest (and also in Hungary at large) than not only in Eastern Europe but in many Western European countries: Italy, Portugal, Spain, lower even than in certain south-central *départements* of France.

An important element in social mobility, and in the consequent fulfilment of certain aspirations, was the linguistic homogenization, the rapid Magyarization of the language and commerce of Budapest. It was—and this duality reflected the complexity of the Dual Monarchy itself—a city where very many people spoke German; yet it had ceased to be a predominantly German-speaking city for at least a generation. As late as in 1851 German was the main language of a slight majority in Pest, and five out of six people in Buda. This was also true of the majority of Jews at the time. But after 1860 this changed. Among other things, German ceased to be the main language of the Jewish population. Generally speaking, Magyar-Jewish Pest was outstripping German-Hungarian Buda. As late as in

1870 those whose first language was Magyar amounted only to 46 per cent of the peoples of the two cities; but they had become a predominant majority in Pest, though not yet in Buda. By 1900 the number of those who *only* spoke German had fallen to 4.3 per cent. (Those who only spoke Hungarian amounted to 38.7 per cent.) Thus the majority of the peoples of Budapest was still bilingual, at least to some extent; but in 1900 those whose first language was Hungarian amounted to eight out of ten people, and those whose first language was German only to one out of seven. There was no longer a German theatre in Budapest. Among the daily newspapers, too, 17 or 18 were Hungarian and only 4 or 5 German. There was only one important German language paper, the *Pester Lloyd*, a kind of "Wall Street Journal" of the times—owned and edited by a Hungarian Jewish newspaperman of great intelligence. In 1896 the most celebrated and loved long-ruling Lord Mayor of Budapest, Károly Kammermayer, retired. He was a typical descendant of the solid German patrician families; but throughout his public career he identified himself with the Hungarian national cause. His funeral, a year later, was accompanied by public mourning and ceremonies only second to that of Kossuth three years before.* This rapid change from German-speaking to Magyar-speaking predominance produced relatively few animosities at the time. During the second half of the nineteenth century the city of Prague, too, changed from predominantly German-speaking to Czech-speaking: and the result was an increasingly tense and adversary relationship among Germans and Czechs in Bohemia and Moravia. In Budapest other animosities were appearing: but as late as 1900 they were still beneath the apparent surface. In any event, these did not involve troubles between the still German-speaking and the Magyar-speaking elements of population. At any rate, the triumph of the Magyar language was nearly complete. Even the Slovak-language families (they were particularly numerous on the lowest levels of the building industry) ceased to speak their ancestral language. Their children would consider themselves wholly Hungarian.

This was, by and large, the case with most of the thousands of recently arrived Jews from the East. In Budapest by 1900 (unlike further to the east, and in New York, for example) Yiddish speaking among the Jewish population was rare. Around 1900 a German- or Slovak-accented Magyar speech was not only easier to recognize but it was even more often a butt of jokes than a Jewish-Hungarian accent. We find evidence of this in the literature of the period, including the comic weeklies and the newspapers. On the other hand a certain kind of Budapestian street-language was in full development, a kind of argot** that had both proletarian and *boulevardier* elements, with a sprinkling of—often Magyarized—Viennese, French, Gypsy and even some Yiddish words and idioms. It is perhaps significant that in 1900 elements of this kind of speech had been adopted by almost every class, and perhaps especially by the younger generations among them. A

*After 1896 came a rapid succession of lord mayors: Károly Ráth and József Márkus. Both of them died soon after their assumption of their high offices. But the old City Hall was demolished, too; a new city hall and a new kind of city politics came into being after 1900.

**Argot, not jargon. The Hungarian word "jargon" (zsargon) at the time meant Yiddish-speaking.

conscious insistence in using the more ornate idioms and lengthier phrases and even the much slower pace and rhythm of the older Magyar habits of expression was kept up only by the older families, and by others on certain official occasions: for, as in Austria, there were many bureaucratic and ceremonial phrases and expressions in the official language of the government (and also of the military). As in other matters, a displeasure with the quicker, more irreverent and more superficial habits of Budapest, including its speech, was sometimes evident among those of the gentry who had relatively recently moved from their country habitations to the capital city.

The rapid Magyarization of Budapest was a welcome thing, with many fruitful consequences to the national culture and literature. At the same time it could contribute to a kind of Magyar self-centeredness, amounting to provinciality. The aristocracy and much of the bourgeoisie were aware of this. They knew how Hungarian was an orphan among the European languages, having no relationship to the great Germanic and Latin and Slavic families. Thus, while Latin and German and some Greek were still required subjects in the Gymnasiums, the habit of private tutoring in European languages had spread from the aristocratic to those of the upper- and middle bourgeois families. Many of these had a German-speaking governess for their children. These "Fräuleins", unmarried women from Austria or Southern Germany, many of whom eventually became members of the family, confidantes of the woman of the house, and stayed on even after their erstwhile charges had grown to adulthood. There was much private tutoring in French (which was a required subject in most of the convent schools for girls), just about none in English. There was another group of customary tutors: the music-teachers. The piano teacher (again, more than often a woman) would ring the bell of the apartment door on a prescribed weekly afternoon, behind which door her student would cringe, conscious of not having done the prescribed exercises for the week, those endlessly boring difficult etudes by Czerny or Diabelli.

The social stratification of Budapest was manifested, too, by the different places of vacations. Some of the wealthier families owned or rented summer houses on the high hills of Buda wherefrom the head of the family could descend to his business in the city because of the improvements of roads and of public transit by 1900. But the very people who could afford such a second dwelling in the high summer months were, in most cases, the same people for whom a summer vacation abroad was social requirement. "Abroad" meant Austria or Bohemian watering-places, the then famous spas of Karlsbad, Marienbad, Ischl, Gastein, the Simmering, etc. Within Hungary there were few places where the standards of hotels would fulfill the requirements of the haute bourgeoisie: those in the Tatra mountains, in Pöstyén in northwestern Hungary, and in a few places along lake Balaton whose attractions for summer vacations were only beginning, and where soon the families of the gentry and those of the Jewish middle-classes would establish separate places for themselves. Generally speaking, the further abroad the vacation, the higher its social prestige. A family trip to France meant more than a visit to Italy, and a summer sojourn in the high Alps of Switzerland more than one in the Bavarian or Austrian Alps. In 1900 winter vacations were still rare, except for an occasional brief sojourn on the French Riviera.

In these respects the high nobility and the upper-middle class had something in common. They were more cosmopolitan than the other classes. At least in cultural matters (and also in the extent of their loyalty to the monarchy) they were less nationalists than other classes and than the gentry. This was not only reflected in their linguistic training but also in their cultural interests. In 1900 the few considerable private collections of art existed in some of the houses of these people. Far more general and widespread was the theatrical culture of Budapest. In 1900 the city had at least six theaters of which three had opened during the ten preceding years. Most of these, including the Opera, were frequented by all of the educated classes. A historical reason for this was the role that the Magyar theatres, their actors and actresses, assumed already in the early nineteenth century, when they were visible and important instruments of the national revival. In 1900 the theatrical culture of Budapest—ranging from the quality of the playwrights, the literary erudition of the directors, the efficiency of the stagecraft and the excellence of many of the actors and actresses—was on a very high level.* In addition to the *varietés*, cabarets, orpheums there was, too, a peculiarly Hungarian form of thespian culture, that of the *népszínmű*, popular plays often favoured by the less sophisticated gentry and by the lower-middle classes. Their plays were nationalist, provincial, and often shallow. By 1900 they had begun to disappear—as had, too, the former German-speaking theatres.

In this portrait of the people of Budapest around the turn of the century it is perhaps not improper to say something about the relations of the sexes. The double standard, prevalent almost everywhere in the Western world at the time, was a matter taken for granted in Hungary, too. Virginity and chastity of girls before marriage was not only desirable, it was so demanded. For young men it was not. A sexual adventure for a married man was, on occasion, overlooked; for a married woman, customarily speaking, it was not. Divorce was rare—even though, unlike in other Catholic countries, after 1895 the legal possibility for it existed. In these matters there were no significant differences between the Catholic and Protestant and Jewish families—and, somewhat surprisingly, not many differences between the upper and the middle classes. Most marriages were still arranged between families. It was unlikely that an engagement would take place without the family of the bride having some connection with, or at least substantial information about the family of the groom. A broken engagement could amount to a tragedy, to an—often wholly undeserved—stain on the social position of a young woman; in many instances she would give up the idea of marrying for good. It was difficult, nay, almost impossible for a young girl to meet a young man outside of the social circles arranged by her family, and outside certain accepted places: the dancing-classes, the skating-club, the balls of the various university faculties, the county balls (for the gentry), and perhaps a family introduction in the foyers of the Opera or of the theaters. Unmarried girls were chaperoned everywhere, including their shopping in the streets or even their midday walk home from their schools; the chaperones ranging from a governess or a stiff old-maid of

*In 1900 a celebrated actress (actress, rather than actor) was seen as a national asset. In some instances streets and public squares were named after them.

an aunt to a slatternly maid, since this practice reached down to the lower levels of the middle-class.

Much of this was not different from life in, say, Vienna or other European cities around 1900. There were, however, certain different nuances in the daily lives and in the mental climate of Budapest that may deserve attention. We have seen that there were many illegitimate marriages and illegitimate children among the lowest classes, where illegitimacy was less of a stigma than elsewhere; the same thing was true of the rigid observance of female virginity.* Yet the double standard was even stronger among the lower classes than elsewhere—when it involved life after, not before, marriage. An erring working-class wife would run the risk of being severely beaten by her husband, and of finding herself an outcast among neighbours. Another condition in Budapest that was different from other cosmopolitan capitals of the world in 1900 was the relative absence of a demi-monde: of a class of women of easy, rather than deprives, morals, long-range mistresses haughtily above the short-range prostitutes. Save perhaps for the liaisons of certain actresses, *cocottes* and *grandes horizontales* in Budapest in 1900 were rare. (Those young women who were attracted to such careers had gone to seek their fortunes abroad.) Unmarried young men and married men satisfied their sexual desires with visits to the various brothels, whose prices and arrangements ran from the richest to the poorest, reflecting the social gradations of the city. Extramarital affairs would involve, on occasion, the wife of someone you knew, that is, from one's own social class. (Since there were few inns or hotels that would rent rooms during the day it was very difficult to find a place for such assignations.) It was even more difficult, nay, impossible to keep them secret: because in spite of the growing population and the crowds, Budapest in 1900 was still a place where—at least within the confines of a class—everybody knew everybody.

A liaison of a man of the bourgeoisie with a shopgirl or a *modiste*—a frequent practice in Vienna or in Paris at the time—was relatively rare. So was the practice of part-time prostitutes. Another rarity in Budapest (and in Hungary) was the evidence of homosexuality among males. In all of the records, including those of the police and, even more significant, in the rich and gossipy journalism and literature of the period, we find very few examples of it. There are more—often cautiously suggested—evidences of homosexuality among females. The reason for that may have been that in Budapest around 1900 masculinity and virility were still very dominant; the supremacy of the male was unquestioned and unquestionable, sometimes to the detriment of feminine sensitivities.**

*Interestingly enough illegitimacy (as well as divorce) were occasionally overlooked among the gentry families (but not among the bourgeois ones). The writer Sándor Hunyady, was the love-child of the author Sándor Bródy and of the actress Margit Hunyady, the latter the daughter of Transylvanian gentry. Discriminations experienced by Sándor Hunyady in consequence to his illegitimate condition were minimal (perhaps because of the high professional and moral reputation of his mother).

**The language—or, rather, the then prevailing usage—of the Magyar language reflects this. Two: equally frequent and acceptable, words for one's husband were *férjem* ("my husband") and *uram* ("my master"; or "my lord"). The second usage has now almost disappeared—but only during the last few decades. "Wife" in Magyar, however, has the lovely meaning of "my halfness"—a proper noun and not, like "my better half", a phrase.

Sensitivities: yes. Desires: perhaps. What separated the mental and psychical climate of Budapest from nearby Vienna around 1900 was the still largely absent sense of a spreading neurosis, even among the bourgeoisie. A fin-de-siècle malaise began to appear in some of the arts and in politics. But the psychic worlds of Freud or even of Schnitzler, were much farther than that 280-minute train ride to Vienna. In 1900 Budapest was more optimistic than Vienna, even though the traditional streaks of a dark Hungarian pessimism were extant. These ways of thinking, and the psychic atmosphere of Budapest, had much to do, too, with the declarative character of the Magyar language. Whether optimists or pessimists, the people of Budapest, they wore their bourgeois period, were expressive. They wore their minds, if not their hearts, on their sleeves. Their concerns, their problems, their strengths and their failures, were evident in their conscious expressions of all kinds, rather than suppressed or submerged on subconscious levels. We have seen how, by 1900, the change in the tone of the city, the rapid replacement of some of the older patricians by more and more parvenus and nouveaux riches was perhaps the most disturbing development in the social climate, and that it would have many baneful consequences in politics. Reaction against this development came through expressions of outspoken, rather than through suppressed, envy. Yet that disturbance, too, was social rather than financial, psychic rather than material, because of the frequent cavalier (and, on occasion, nonchalant) Hungarian disinterest in money as such—something that may, again, seems to be reflected in the Hungarian idiom. How much money do you *make* a year? an American will ask. How much do you *earn*? (“verdienen”) asks the German. How much do you *win*? (“gagner”, “gagnare”, “ganar”) say the light-spirited Latin tongues. “Mennyit keresel?” “How much are you *looking for*?” says the Magyar language, for reasons that the excellent three-volume etymological dictionary cannot really explain, except to inform us that the desire to achieve, the effort, was originally implicit in the verb “keresni”. “If I could only afford to live the way I live!” In 1900 that was not the problem of everyone in Budapest—surely not of the bourgeois classes, where financial probity was often unexceptionable, and who were seldom ostentatious. It was the problem—and the affliction—of Hungarian politics at large.