

Britishers. In Hungary at the same time people were considering the possibility of obtaining the London market for Hungarian produce. The marketing in Britain of Hungarian corn depended upon the improvement of our system of communications. This idea was first broached in the thirties.¹⁸ At the same time a company was established — the „British-Hungarian Institute” — for the purpose of furthering the marketing of Hungarian wool and „other products” of agriculture.¹⁹ In Hungary the principal spokesman of the idea of establishing commercial connections between Britain and Hungary was Paul Balogh de Almás. He desired to „thereby lift Hungary out of obscurity” and was bent upon stimulating the Hungarian producers to make agriculture a „national industry”. The Hungarian papers of the time often speak of the „British-Hungarian Institute”, — mainly in connection with the first unsuccessful experiment. Henry Kirk, representing

the firm of Abel Smith, of London, came to Pest with a letter of introduction from Prince Paul Esterházy, Austro-Hungarian Ambassador to Great Britain, for the purpose of collecting and storing Hungarian produce.²⁰ But Kirk came into conflict with Balogh; the Hungarian producers lost on their dealings with him: and shortly after he returned to London. At a later period John Gifford visited Hungary; and when he left for England for a stay of two months, the management of the British-Hungarian Institute was taken over by L. Cunliffe Pickersgill,²¹ from whose activity apparently more was expected. . . . „The only thing left for us to do is to congratulate ourselves on the efforts of Mr. Gifford having resulted in establishing the first direct international commercial connections with the British nation” — so writes Kossuth in the article in the „Pesti Hírlap” referred to above. The connections were unfortunately not so strong as Kossuth thought them to be. . . .

TERCENTENARY OF THE BUDAPEST UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCES

by

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Three hundred years ago the central part of Hungary was under occupation by the Turks. West Hungary had accepted the rule of the Habsburgs; and East Hungary — Transylvania — was under the rule of native Hungarian princes.

The Canterbury of Hungary — Esztergom — was also under Turkish occupation; and the Primate was forced to make Pozsony his seat. It was at Pozsony, on May 13th., 1635, that the Hungarian Cicero, the gifted patriot and noble-minded prelate then at the head of the Roman Catholic Church in Hungary, issued the diploma which was the real foundation-stone of the University established at Nagyszombat in the West of Hungary.

Cardinal Peter Pázmány — Archbishop of Esztergom and Primate of Hungary — gave his University an endowment of 100,000 florins: this amount forming the nucleus of the fund for the maintenance of the university which still supplies the greater part of the money required to meet its expenditure.

On October 8th, 1635, the University of Nagyszombat, was by Royal Charter given all the prerogatives and privileges enjoyed by the universities

of the German Empire and of the hereditary provinces of the House of Austria.

The official opening of the University, which then comprised only two faculties, those of Theology and Arts, took place on November 13th, 1635. At first the work of administration and teaching was entrusted to the Jesuit Order. A third faculty, that of Law, was added later (in 1667) out of funds provided under the wills of two other Archbishops of Esztergom, George Lippay and Imre Losy. It was not until the reign of Maria Theresa that, by the advice of the Dutch Van Swieten, the Faculty of Medicine was established and the University was converted into a veritable „universitas”.

In 1777 Maria Theresa, the Empress-Queen who owed so much to the loyalty and heroism of the Hungarian nation, transferred the seat of the University to Buda. Some years later it was transferred — by Joseph II. — to Pest.

In 1848 the Budapest Royal Hungarian Uni-

²⁰ See „Társalkodó”, 1840, p. 280. See also „Pesti Hírlap”, 1841, Nos. 51 and 52. („Hungarian Reflections on the British-Hungarian Institute”). — Cf. also leading article in „Pesti Hírlap”, 1841, No. 37. In a letter to Döbrentei dated March 15th, 1841, Miss Pardoe asked whether it was true that Kirk was to be married to Count Vay's daughter?

²¹ See „Pesti Hírlap”, 1841, Nos. 41, 63 and 88.

¹⁸ See „Hasznos Mulatságok”, 1839, II., pp. 117—9. („British-Hungarian Corn Trade”).

¹⁹ See „Hasznos Mulatságok”, 1839, I., pp. 149—50.

versity of Sciences was placed by special Act under the immediate control of the Ministry of Public Worship and Education. But it preserved its autonomy, which it has ever since guarded most jealously; and it is an independent fictitious person still possessing the full prerogatives and privileges conferred upon it by the Emperor-King Ferdinand in 1635.

During the days of the so-called „Bach régime” which followed the overthrow of the Hungarian struggle for independence in 1849, attempts were made to „germanise” the Budapest University too; but these attempts suffered shipwreck owing to the determined resistance of an institution which had become so characteristically national and Hungarian in essence.

After the conclusion of the Compromise of 1867, which restored Hungary to the possession of her ancient political rights and established the equality of that country as a contracting Party, the Budapest University came to its own again and enjoyed the full and generous support of Francis Joseph I. and of his large-hearted Consort, the Queen Elizabeth of sainted memory who lost no opportunity of showing her affection for the Hungarian people and her personal interest in their cause.

Since then the Budapest University — now named, after its eminent founder, the “Peter Pázmány” University of Sciences — has developed continuously and consistently. Today its Faculty of Medicine is one of the best in the world alike in efficiency and in reputation; many Members of the Faculty have made names for themselves the whole world over.

The premier scientific institution of Hungary, which is this year celebrating its tercentenary, has rendered signal services both to the cause of universal science and to that of national culture. We know that the first dynamo was the invention of Anyos Jedlik, the gifted Benedictine professor of physics who is one of the most brilliant names in the records of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Budapest. We are told that the circulation of the blood was discovered, not by Harvey, but by a Hungarian scholar, and that Hungary used vaccination prior to its introduction in England. We know that the world-famed libraries at Wittenberg and Vienna were founded by the initiative of Hungarian scholars. And the name of Semmelweiss, the discoverer of the cause of puerperal fever, at once reminds us of the service to humanity rendered by the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Budapest.

What that University has done for Hungarian

culture will be evident at a glance to anyone who takes the trouble to inquire into the number of leaders of Hungarian public life and Hungarian public opinion during the last three centuries who have been educated by the premier scientific institution of the country. The roll of doctors of the University will be found to contain almost all the names of those who have contributed to the scientific and cultural development of Hungary.

Surely the great Cardinal who first appreciated the need for a focus of national scholarship and national culture would be proud and gratified to survey the glorious achievements of the institution which owes its existence to his generous patriotism and to his recognition of the power of learning to enhance the vitality of national resistance.

The activity of Cardinal Peter Pázmány reminds us vividly of the benefactions of Matthew Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury, whose gifts to Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, are a similar proof of that appreciation of the value of a focus of learning and culture which has always been the peculiar mark of intellectual eminence.

There is much in common between the University of Budapest and the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. In both cases the debts to the generosity and enlightenment of great Churchmen are incalculable. In both cases the worship of tradition and reverence for authority are the pillars upon which the security of the universities rests. All three universities alike may justly boast of having contributed to a noteworthy extent — Budapest University to an extent quite out of proportion to the size of the country and the number of inhabitants — to the advancement of general human science and civilisation and to the development of national culture and the fostering of national selfconsciousness.

And let us not forget that the foresight shown by Cardinal Pázmány was all the more remarkable at a time when his country was really divided against itself — torn into three separate parts ruled over the Habsburgs, the Turk and national princes respectively. The great and wise prelate realised the importance of a centre round which the national forces would be able to concentrate in an effort to finally bring about national re-union.

Thirty years later the dream of the farsighted Cardinal was converted into reality: Hungary once more became a united people with a firm confidence in their future that was to no small extent the result of the activity of the Archbishop of Esztergom who by his oratory as much as by his actions encouraged his compatriots to believe in the coming of a brighter future.