

POLITICAL MOSAIC

RUMANIAN CULTURAL LIFE IN NORTH TRANSYLVANIA

We are informed of the cultural manifestations of the Rumanians of North Transylvania by a publication issued by the Minority Institute of the Pécs University, which gives an account of the manifestations in evidence among those Rumanians in the period between the Second Vienna Award and May 31st., 1943. The book has been compiled by Joseph *Pusztai-Popovics* and is entitled "*Rumanian Cultural Festivals in North Transylvania*". The book refers to all the Church and secular concerts, Rumanian lectures, debates, meetings of social and cultural unions, entertainments, exhibitions of the works of painters and sculptors, school exhibitions etc. arranged during the said period of well-nigh three years by the Rumanians re-incorporated in the mother-country, — *altogether 158 cultural manifestations*. This is a really great achievement when we take into account the fact that after the announcement of the Second Vienna Award the men who had previously been the intellectual leaders of the Rumanians of Transylvania retired from North Transylvania of their own free will, the Rumanian minority re-incorporated in Hungary being in consequence deprived of the guidance of their intellectual *élite*. A certain time had therefore to elapse before the Rumanians remaining in Hungary could find one another and begin a new cultural organization. *This work of organization was undertaken in North Transylvania primarily by the two Rumanian Churches — the Greek Oriental (Orthodox) and the Greek Catholic (Uniate) Churches.*

The Magyars too co-operated intensively in the cultural activity of the Rumanians; Magyar children, for instance, very frequently played in Rumanian theatrical pieces. Magyar village school-teachers arranged Rumanian cultural festivals; and Magyar conductors led the singing of Rumanian choirs. At the festivals arranged in schools using Rumanian as the medium of instruction which are maintained by the Hungarian Minister of Education, poems by the greatest Rumanian poets, *Michael Eminescu, Peter Carp* and others, were recited. *The Magyars have never shown themselves averse to the cultures of other nations; they have always highly esteemed — and still esteem highly — the values of the Rumanian culture of North Transylvania.* According to the information supplied by *Pusztai-Popovics* the 158 Rumanian cultural manifestations were distributed as follows: — 29 concerts, 39 lectures and addresses in Ru-

manian, 34 amateur theatrical performances, 52 matinées and soirées, and 4 art exhibitions. The scenes of the most recent Rumanian cultural manifestations were *Kolozsvár*, *Nagyvárad*, *Szamosújvár* and *Beszterce*. These lectures, arranged with the co-operation of the spirit of understanding of the Magyars, have contributed to encourage on an extensive scale Rumanian intellectual production and to further a reciprocal appreciation of that production.

PORTUGUESE ARTICLE ON HUNGARIAN REGENT AND CONSORT AND ON EMINENT QUALITIES OF HUNGARIANS

The Portuguese daily, "Solidared", has published a long article dealing with the great services rendered by the Regent of Hungary. We quote the following passages from the article in question: —

"The people of Hungary has just celebrated with cordial enthusiasm the seventy-fifth birthday of Admiral *Horthy*, their Regent, embracing the occasion to give expression to their profound gratitude for *His work in re-organizing the country ruined by the devastations of Béla Kun's Bolshevik hordes*. Nicholas Horthy's Consort has acted as her husband's constant and faithful collaborator in this arduous work. She is a devout Catholic and plays a prominent role in Catholic Hungary as the helpmate of the Regent, the scion of an old Calvinistic family. Nicholas Horthy never for a moment loses sight of the duties devolving upon Him as the Head of a Catholic State, taking part in all church ceremonies at which it is the duty of the Head of State to be present. And Nicholas Horthy's Consort has important tasks to perform socially too. *Twenty years ago she organized the relief action for the betterment of the living conditions of the working classes, centralizing in the Royal Palace the activity of all the women's unions and charitable institutions which during recent years have done important work in the social field*, distributing grants for the benefit of children's refuges, hospitals, homes for the aged and homes for poor widows. The Regent's Consort *devotes her energies in particular to the care of wounded and disabled soldiers*. One of the most interesting of the institutions under her patronage is the schoolchildren's *Red Cross Society*, within the framework of which the pupils of all the schools in Hungary are making dolls and other toys for poor children. *Nicholas Horthy's Consort is a genuine mother and Christian wife who has shown the country what a real Hungarian woman must be, — though without allowing herself to become involved in politics*. She has thereby earned the respect and homage of the whole nation."

The Portuguese papers have recently devoted considerable space also to events in Hungary and to the Hungarian question. They watched with keen interest the doings of *Joao Ameal*, the

Portuguese Deputy and writer, in Hungary, and published exhaustive reports of his visit. In their July 8th. issues the papers gave front-page prominence to reports of Ameal's visits to several large provincial towns, describing how, after his return from Szeged, he was received by the Prime Minister and the Minister for Internal Affairs, reporting also that a dinner was given in his honour by Stephen Antal, Propaganda Minister. Under the title "Political Idealism" the "*Pester Lloyd*" published a statement made by Ameal respecting the political philosophy of Salazar; while in their July 18th. issues the papers published exhaustive abstracts of the statement made by him to a correspondent of "*Magyarország*".

In its July 20th. issue the "*Diario da Manhã*" gave front-page prominence to the first of Ameal's articles dealing with his visit to Budapest. In the introductory part of this article the writer stresses the importance of the visit which took him from the shores of the Atlantic to the vicinity of the Carpathians, where he enjoyed the hospitality of the Hungarian Government and received much valuable and interesting information respecting questions with which he proposed to deal in the columns of the Portuguese papers. "Above all" — he wrote — "I must express my gratitude to the Hungarian Government for the invitation to visit their beautiful country. The Hungarian Government accorded a Portuguese writer a reception, showing him a courtesy and a warmth of affability which is eloquent testimony to the qualities and high standard of culture of the Hungarian people. *Many among us are familiar with the value and power of the Hungary of today, the worthy representative and continuator of the glorious Hungary of St. Stephen, St. Ladislaus, Louis the Great and Matthias Corvinus. We Portuguese should be conscious of the connections binding us despite the distance separating us to this nation, which — for all the world like our own Portuguese nation — came into being under the shadow of the Crusades and the defence of the West, consecrated by sacrifice on the field of battle and by historical events. I shall avail myself of all the means at my disposal to further a knowledge of these facts, being as I am sincerely convinced that thereby I am serving the cause of justice. I shall be inspired by the sympathy due to the home of Rákóczi, Kossuth and Petöfi. After my return that sympathy developed into friendship; of this I shall in the future offer indisputable evidence.*"

THE BUDAPEST RED CROSS

The head office of the Budapest Red Cross undertakes to make inquiries about prisoners of war, obtain money, and send it to foreign countries. It also undertakes to find and examine the documents required by Magyars living abroad. So long as

diplomatic intercourse existed between Soviet Russia and Hungary *the Magyar Red Cross day after day received news from that country about men who had disappeared in the last war.* And day by day people came, mothers who were inquiring about their sons and wives who wished to go to Russia after their husbands.

One of the most interesting cases on record was that of Franciska. She was a little Magyar orphan girl from Czecho-Slovakia, who had lost both father and mother. After the 1918 revolution she had been sent to an orphanage in Budapest by her grandparents. Meanwhile all the girl's papers had gone astray and her native village had become occupied territory. She lost all touch with her grandparents and by degrees forgot everything about her infancy. She had no difficulties, however, until she grew up and married a public official with whom she lived a happy married life until, in terms of the new laws, she had to produce proofs of her Aryan origin. This she could not do, for the only paper in her possession was a certificate from the orphanage stating that she was a legitimate child. This was not enough, for her husband's post depended on the document required. She was desperate, for she could not even remember the name of the place where she was born. As a last straw she appealed to the Red Cross, and strange to say, just at that time the Red Cross received a letter from former Czecho-Slovakia saying that, now that that part of Upper Hungary had been restored an old couple was looking for their granddaughter Franciska, who 24 years before had been sent to the Children's Protection League in Budapest. The grandparents and Franciska were touchingly grateful to the Red Cross through whose instrumentality they had found each other again.

Another function of this office is to help people to go abroad. *Parents who have emigrated to England often ask the Red Cross for help in getting permission for their children to follow them.* Until the war broke out there was no difficulty about this: 10 or 15 children were sent to their destinations with a suitable person accompanying them. Today, despite the fact that the Red Cross here is in touch with the London Red Cross, this is impossible. Day by day beseeching letters keep on arriving in which parents beg to have their children sent out to them. The story of Veronica, a little protégée of the Red Cross, is touching. *One day a letter arrived from the local branch of the Red Cross in Gary, Indiana,* asking the Budapest branch to make inquiries in a village of the Great Plain for a girl called *Veronica Toth* whose sister, dying of an incurable disease, wished to see her. There were no other data about Veronica, and yet in a week's time she had been found in a tiny village of the Great Plain. She was only fifteen years old, and it was very difficult to procure a visa for her. But the Red Cross used all the influence of which it had command *and finally induced the American Consulate to*

allow her to set out on her long journey. (This of course happened before Hungary was at war with the United States.) As the child was so inexperienced, the Red Cross did not like to let her travel alone, and as they could not send anyone to accompany her, they applied to the Red Cross in the countries through which she travelled. It thus happened that little Veronica was given a warm welcome, not only in Budapest, but also in Hamburg, Cleveland and at all the stations on her long journey to Indiana. *She arrived just in time to take leave of her sister and promise to be a mother to her children.*

The pendant of this case happened with *Boriska Varga*, who was born in Detroit, and who after her father's death wished to go to her grandparents living near Budapest, because she felt very lonely in the New World. The American Red Cross sent her to Hungary and asked the organization here to look after her when she arrived and help her to get accustomed to life in her father's native country. Boriska arrived, and her first visit was to the Red Cross to ask advice about how to fit into her new surroundings. The head of the foreign section of the Red Cross gave her motherly advice and sent her to a commercial school, whence, thanks to her knowledge of the English language she got a post with a big firm. *In a short time she left so much at home in Hungary that she never gave America another thought.*

It is well known that The Red Cross sends the dried blood that has saved so many lives to the soldiers behind the front. The blood-donating centre was established there years ago, *during which time fifty thousand persons offered their blood to be used for wounded soldiers.* Of that number twenty thousand, mostly women, because, they are usually at home and available at a moment's notice, are on the list of regular blood-donors. At home in the hospitals direct transfusion takes place, but at the front dried blood is used with excellent results, as reports from the field hospitals show. The following lines were written by a doctor in one of them:— *"For months I have been doing surgical work in a hospital on the Russian front, and I see and know to the fullest extent what blood transfusion with the dried blood collected at home means. It means life."*

Last but not least mention should be made of the Civilian Inquiry and Welfare Section of the Red Cross, which would deserve to be treated in a separate article. Every minute somebody comes asking help or advice, looking for a job, inquiring about relatives at the front, bringing gifts for them or for other soldiers. *Then there are those who wish to have news of relatives in far-off lands, in Japan, China, Egypt, the United States, Brazil, etc.* it is possible to correspond with over thirty countries by way of the Red Cross, of course only on a printed form containing not more than twentyfive words.