CHAPTER XII.

SCHEMNITZ AND THE MINES OF HUNGARY.

Waitzen Schlag-baum.—Bishop and Bigotry.—Deaf and Dumb School.—Austrian Financial Measures.—Tobacco.—Inn at Terény and Magyar Host.—Nemeti.—The Hack-bred.—Entrance to Schemnitz.—The Calvary Hill.—Legend of the Miner's Daughter.—Mines.—School of Mines.—Mining Students.—Visit to the Mines.—Roman Mines.—Method of Mining among the Romans.—Direction and Management of the Mines.—Pay of the Miners.—Joseph the Second's Adit.—Washing Mills.—Prince Coburg's House.—Magistrates of Schemnitz.—Impertinence of an Ober-notair.—The Castle.—The Dwarf and his Spurs.—The Haiduk's Roguery.

Our road from Pest to Schemnitz, the capital of the mining districts of Hungary, led us along the sandy banks of the Danube to Waitzen. As we crossed the small stream before entering the town, we had to wait till the *Schlag-baum*, a ponderous bar formed of a whole tree hung across the road for a toll-gate, was slowly raised to let us pass. An unfortunate little town that Waitzen is! Its ill-paved wide streets look poor, and contrast sadly with the rich episcopal palace, splendid church—built, they say, after a model of St. Peter's—and large convents, which tower high above the more modest dwellings of its citizens. In fact, the town is entirely the property and under the government of the bishop and chapter. Monopoly ruins its trade: the bishop interferes in every thing: he kindly fixes the price of wine, to ensure the sale of his own,—and I can answer for its dearness and badness. Now this Catholic bishop is of opinion that he may do what he will with his own, and accordingly he suffers none but true believers to dwell within his walls; the unfortunate Protestants being confined to the suburbs, and the Jews driven to a village at some distance, and allowed to enter the town only at certain stated times for trading. Oh intolerance! intolerance! no matter what thy nation or thy creed, thou art still the same relentless foe to freedom, meet it in what form thou mayest.

In rambling over the town, out of temper with the bishop and his bigotry, I fell in with another object, which excited my anti-

quarian ire against him not a little. The present, or some former occupant of the see, has collected a considerable number of Roman antiquities in Waitzen and its neighbourhood; and has placed them—can you guess where, reader? Perhaps you think in some public museum,—for there are such things in Hungary;—or in his library;—or, at least, in the town-house. No; he has built them into the outside of his garden-wall, just about a foot from the ground, where every little child can conveniently knock off a bit, and every passing wheel obliterate a line of Roman history! They are mostly monumental remains, with basso-relievos and inscriptions. One, of Mars descending to visit Venus, is not without spirit. There are several with figures of Hercules. Among the inscriptions are at least three, which, I think, refer to soldiers of the second legion. (*Mil. Leg. II. Af.*) A piece of frieze is elegant, though not in the purest taste. So much for Pannonian antiquities!

It was pleasant to turn from such objects as these to an institution which would do honour to any country or age,—a school for deaf and dumb children; first founded, I think, by Maria Theresa, and afterwards enriched by private contributions. Unfortunately the capital was not invested in land, and in consequence nearly the whole was lost when the great changes in the currency took place; and the institution was ruined, till the late Emperor restored it a few years since to something like its pristine state.

It now contains about fifty pupils, including the Jews, who are admitted to learn, but not to live in the house. Some of the children are on the foundation; others, whose parents are sufficiently rich, pay 12*l.* per annum for their board and education.

The professors were exceedingly polite, and showed me over the institution with the greatest readiness. The younger children were at work, and I saw their method of teaching them. They learn to write and read letters, to express them by signs on their fingers, and also to pronounce them, though of course imperfectly. They are instructed to associate the ideas of words, or certain combinations of letters, with things, by means of pictures; qualities of objects by comparison. How they are made to understand moral qualities I forgot to ask; but the professor assured me they had very correct notions on moral and religious subjects, and that it was a matter easily taught.

They learn to utter vowels by observing the form of the mouth of the teacher when he speaks; and consonants by the form of

the mouth, the action of the larynx, and the force with which the air passes out as the sound is uttered.

The usual time occupied in their education extends to six years; during which time the girls are taught to sew, and the boys to practise any trade they choose by which they can gain an independent subsistence. Of course there is a great difference in the relative facility with which they learn; one pretty, clever, little girl pointed out to me England and London on the map, and answered her questions with the greatest readiness. They have apparently less shyness than other children; probably because they are more kindly and rationally treated, for shyness has its origin in fear. As soon as they knew I was an Englishman, they flocked round me, and examined my dress and appearance with the greatest curiosity; and the professor assured me that I should for a long time serve as the dumb child's *idéal* of the people who lived on the island. They have curious signs for certain words: for instance, "Hungarian" is expressed by touching the upper lip, indicating a mustache; "German," by touching the knees, because the Austrian soldiers wear knee-breeches; "an Englishman," by imitating the action of scissors at the back of the head, because they say the English wear their hair cut short behind—a sign probably adopted before pig-tails were out of fashion in Austria.

While our horses are slowly dragging us up the long hill which leads from Waitzen, and as we pause to take a last look at the Danube we are now quitting for some time, I may as well tell you, reader, something of that *change in the currency*, as I delicately call it, to which in a former paragraph I alluded. During the long and unsuccessful wars which Austria waged for the cause of legitimacy, her treasures became exhausted, her resources dried up, and her credit quite ruined. To have redeemed herself from this position, but one honourable way was open;—to have called together the States, to have laid before them her distress, to have granted a redress of grievances, and to have demanded support from the interest and affection of her subjects. She preferred committing one of the greatest political crimes by which any government has ever dared to surrender itself to the execration of posterity. This was no less than the reduction of the value of paper-money successively from 100 to 20, and from 20 to 8!—so that a person possessing 100 florins in 1811, found himself in every part of the Austrian dominions, in 1813, worth just 8! When it is considered that all contracts, loans, trusts,

and debts were to be paid off with the same proportionate diminution, the reader may have some idea of the confusion and misery produced by this infamous act. That hospitals and public institutions, of which Government was the banker, should have been ruined, was a trifling inconvenience, compared to the blow inflicted on commerce, the destruction of public and private credit, and the insecurity which man felt towards man in the fulfilment of the most binding obligations. Had the spirit of evil sought by one act to demoralize a whole people, his ingenuity could scarcely have found a more happy means of accomplishing his object than this master-stroke of policy of the Austrian financier.

The road we were pursuing offered few objects to interest us: it is true, we passed the ruins of the two old castles of Neográd and Honth, but they are remarkable only as giving their names to the two countries in which they stand. It was August, and the peasants were busy in some places gathering the tobacco leaves. This harvest occupies more than a month; as they only pluck the leaves at intervals as they ripen, taking first those from below, and rising as the upper leaves expand and get ready. The first gathering had been finished some time, and its produce was hanging to dry in long festoons under the eaves of the cottages. I know no garlands whose effect, either on the moralist or painter, can be more pleasing than those of the green tobacco-leaf and the bright yellow maize as they cluster in fine contrast round the dark wooden cottage of a rich contented peasant. The best tobacco, however, is not grown here, but in the county of Heves, where its cultivation and preparation are well cared for, and a very superior article is produced. As an old smoker, I must declare that I know nothing equal to a pipe of good Hungarian tobacco, except, perhaps some of the best Turkish.*

* Csaplovics (Gemälde von Ungern) gives the following information on the tobacco of Hungary:—Two sorts are known in commerce: first, the dry yellow leaves for smoking. The best of this kind grows in the county of Heves, and is called the Debröe. Of this, about 15,000 cent. is produced yearly. Debreczin and the neighbouring counties afford from 50,000 to 80,000 cent.; and the county of Honth, from 8,000 to 12,000. Of the second class,—the brown leaves for snuff,—that produced in the counties of Szegedin and Csongrád, known in commerce as the Fünfkirchner, is the most esteemed, and may be reckoned at from 50,000 to 80,000 cent. Besides this, in other parts, from 12,000 to 16,000 cent. of the same kind is grown. A small quantity of fine tobacco, principally known and used in the country, is grown in several different districts to the amount of about 10,000 cent. In round numbers, the whole quantity of tobacco

We pulled up at a poor-looking little village, Terény; where our driver, however, assured us we should find a good inn, and an honest Magyar host. I had so often heard from Germans that there was not a tolerable inn in Hungary but what was kept by a German, and the Magyar was too lazy and careless for such work, and so often observed that my Hungarian friends seemed to doubt if the independent spirit of Magyarism suited the duties of the paid host, that curiosity aided the darkness of the night in determining me to try my fortune at the peasant's recommendation. Nor did he deceive us; the landlord himself was a stout bluff-looking fellow, as polite as a good will and honest purpose could make him; and his house was much cleaner than most of those we had been in. Our supper, too, was good and abundant, though a little rude in appearance. It is true, we heard the unhappy fowls killed to furnish it; but that could not be helped, as the hen-roost was close to our room, and the chickens had not the good manners to die quietly. I should not forget, that our bill next morning was a fair one: a compliment we could not always pay to more obsequious landlords. In justice to the Magyar, I must say he cheats less frequently than any of his neighbours. He is too proud to be dishonest,—except, indeed, in horse-dealing; and there, I believe, his reputation is little better than a Yorkshireman's.

Our horses arrived by good time in the morning, and we followed the small stream which, rising at Schemnitz, falls into the Ipóly, watering in its course a narrow and pretty valley, which occasionally opens into fine meadows, and then again closes on the road and rivulet. We amused ourselves by shoot-

grown may be estimated at 250,000 cent. of which 150,000 may be used in the Austrian manufactory, 40,000 reckoned for exportation, and 60,000 for home consumption. As Government allows no tobacco to be grown in any other part of the Austrian dominions except Hungary, and as all her subjects are smokers, she buys nearly at her own price in Hungary, and sells absolutely at her own price in Italy, Bohemia, &c. It is difficult to ascertain how great a revenue she obtains from this monopoly: the expense of collection, the roguery of her contractors, (said to exceed all belief,) and the contraband trade, must considerably diminish it: but, I believe, it does not average more than from 600,000*l.* to 800,000*l.*! The expense of collecting this paltry sum alone, is said to equal the expense of collecting all the customs revenue of Great Britain! Yet the smuggling carried on is now immense; and it is well known that little tobacco is smoked by the higher classes in Vienna but smuggled Hungarian. Hungarian tobacco has very lately been admitted into Austria, but only at an exorbitantly high duty.

ing at the turtle-doves and earless marmots, which occur frequently on the dry hill-sides. At Nemeti, the first stage, we heard with consternation that all the horses of the village were at work, two hours off, on Robot, and that we must wait till they were fetched back. What was to be done? There was no inn; and the village was but a miserable collection of Sclavack cottages, ill-built, ill-thatched, and ill-kept. In the centre of the village stood the wheelwright's shop; and that, too, bore little but signs of dilapidated wagons. H—— found amusement in sketching the misery, while I summoned up my most patient humour, and wrote my notes. The only variation to our occupation, during the four hours we remained at Nemeti, was when the soldiers, who were quartered on the peasants, came out and beat the call. We had often before seen at the cottage-doors a small board fixed between two poles, called a *Hack-bred*, to which a couple of small hammers were appended, but had never been able to make out its use. It now appeared that it was used to show that the soldiers were in their quarters; for at a certain hour every one was obliged to come out, and, by drumming on the board, testify to his presence.

Some time before we arrived at Schemnitz, the traces of mining were visible at every step; roads made of the broken slag, drunken miners, washing-sheds, smelting-houses, heaps of broken ore, and the heavy sound of the crushing-mills, all told us where we were. The town itself is entered by an old and strong gateway which conducts to a long, narrow, steep street, which was once evidently a mountain torrent, and is so hemmed in by the sloping hills that there is scarcely room for a single row of houses on either side. At the end of this street the mountains form a magnificent amphitheatre, the *proscenium* of which, to follow out the simile, is occupied by the churches and other large buildings; while the hill-sides are covered with the white cottages of the miners peeping out from amongst the green trees in which they are almost buried, giving to this part of the town the prettiest appearance possible. The whole of this mountain is traversed by veins of silver ore, and it has been so worked that one might walk to almost any part of it under ground. The pavement of the long street we had to traverse was so bad, and the ascent so steep, that we took pity alike on the poor horses and our own bones, and walked up it. I really do not know how to give any idea of its badness to an Englishman: to an Hungarian I should say that it was much worse than that of Presburg, which is

allowed to be the worst in the world. The reason they give for it here is, that in winter, which lasts seven months, the street is often one sheet of ice; and the holes and hillocks, which I complained of falling into and over, are then their only protection against a slide from the top of the town to the bottom every time they set foot out of doors. I pleaded for a Macadamized road; but they said it would not hold against the torrents of rain which flood the street in a few minutes several feet high, and which come down with such force as to carry men and every thing else before them. I suspect, however, there is another reason: the expense would fall on the town, and not on the peasants; and the honest burghers, like the nobles, have too great an affection for their own property to expend it on benefiting the public at large.

After engaging rooms in Schemnitz' best inn, the *Hohen Hause*, and changing our dusty vestments, we found we had still time for a walk before sunset; and, following the plan of an old officer, who always mounted a hill or a steeple to reconnoitre the ground before he took up his position and commenced action,—as he called hunting out and seeing sights,—we strolled up to the square watch-tower, from which we had a fine view of the town. After the dry brown plain of Pest, it was refreshing to see the cottages stuck on the mountain's side like swallows' nests, each in a pretty garden and half hidden amongst fruit-trees, with here and there a fantastic steeple, the ruins of a fine old castle—to be ransacked at our leisure—or the high roof of a modern smelting-house. Beyond the town a magnificent view opens over wild mountains and pretty valleys to an interminable extent; while, nearer, the Calvary hill rears its steeple crest and bids its devotees approach.

I know not whether the reader is aware what a Calvary hill is; but in every part of the Austrian dominions, as well as in Hungary, they are very common. A steep, but not high, hill is generally chosen, on which a chapel is built, or three crosses erected, bearing a representation of the crucifixion in a manner generally disgusting both to good taste and religion. The ascent is often formed by steps; and at certain distances are placed small chapels, each containing a picture or statue of one of Christ's sufferings. In Lent, the penitent sinner is commanded to pay his devotions here, and sometimes to ascend the hill on his bare knees! The one at Schemnitz has a handsome church, and, being in repute, is rich in offerings.

But I must not leave the old tower without mentioning the tradition which is connected with it, as it is characteristic enough of mining fortunes and miners' superstitions.

There lived in Schemnitz, many years ago, when the mines were so good and the miners so rich that all of them had silver nails in their boot-soles, a lucky fellow who had found out a way of getting rich faster even than his neighbours; so that they strongly suspected it was not all so honestly come by as it should, for in a very short time he became so rich that he could not count his own money. And this was the more readily believed, because his only son died suddenly, and soon after he himself dropped off, and then there was no one left to inherit all the money but his daughter Barbara. Now, during his life the old man had kept his daughter in a very quiet and modest manner; but no sooner was he gone than Miss Barbara determined to be a great lady and enjoy herself. She soon found a set of "loose lemans" who were glad to feed upon the rich miner's daughter; and a sad life they led of it. At last, some of these gentry went so far that they got into the judge's hands, and from his into the hangman's; and sure enough they were gibbeted on this very hill.

Now, although the ill-luck of her friends rather checked Barbara for a moment, she soon fell into the same evil courses again. It so happened, that from the windows of her house, where she and her companions were wont to feast and revel after their unholy fashion, the bodies of their former friends could be seen dangling to and fro on the leafless tree; and at times the rattling of chains was heard above their loud mirth, and gave rise to disagreeable pauses in their merriment. In vain did Barbara solicit the judges to remove the ghastly corpses; they had sent them there for her benefit, and there they must hang. At last, however, she promised to build a strong castle on the spot, and to leave it to the town after her death, if they would consent; and so the judges yielded, and the present tower was built.

But poor Barbara did not live long to enjoy her castle. Notwithstanding many warnings she still led a lewd life, and continued to make an open mockery of holy things. As she was entertaining a large part of her friends on the pleasant banks of the Gran on the very day the foundation-stone of the tower was laid, a letter came from a priest, one of her relations, warning her of her sins, and the certainty of poverty if she did not give over her riotous mode of living. "As sure as I shall never see

this ring more," said she, casting a valuable ring into the river, "so sure will my riches last as long as I want them." When the tower was finished, another great dinner was given; but in the midst of the feast Barbara turned pale with fear; for, on carving the fish set before her, she found on her plate the very ring she had thrown into the Gran.

From this time, nobody could tell how, but Barbara's money vanished as it were from her,—all her wealth seemed to be melting away in spite of her. Another misfortune, too, fell upon her; her favourite lap-dog—on which she had bestowed all that care and charity which she ought to have given to the poor—died; and a great trouble its death was to her, though every body else was glad enough that such an ill-tempered cur was gone. Nothing would content its mistress, however, but that it should be buried like a Christian; and a great to-do they made of it. The very next night a terrible storm arose, and a flame of fire came out of the dog's grave, and in the morning a bottomless pit was found where the grave had been! What with her poverty and her loss, and the bad things her former friends now began to say about her, Barbara fell sick too, and died, without so much as confessing her sins. Some charitable souls were still willing to bury her, and off they took her in secret to the churchyard; but a terrible hail-storm arose on the way, and the thunder rolled, and the lightning shot over them, so that they were forced to lay the body down and to seek for shelter. No sooner had they done so than a cry was heard in the air, and the hailstones seemed turned into dogs, which all fell on the carcass of poor Barbara, and carried it off to the bottomless pit, where they disappeared and were never seen more. "This," adds Mednyánsky, "happened in the year of our Lord 1570, and was written in the chronicle of Schemnitz; and, as proof thereof, the maiden's tower may still be seen."

On our return we fortunately met an old acquaintance, who introduced us to some of the students and professors of the school of mines, and made us at once free of Schemnitz. Some of the information we gathered from these sources, relative to the mines, I may as well now put together, and give the reader the benefit of it.

Schemnitz may be considered as the mining capital of Hungary. The mines are divided, from their position, into four districts, the Schemnitzer, Schmölnitzer, Nagy Bányaer, and Baiater; of which the first is by far the most considerable. Each

district has its government, and its separate establishment of smelting-houses; but all send their produce to Kremnitz, in the Schemnitzer district, to have the gold and silver separated, and the crude metal coined.

A school of mining, in imitation of that of Freyberg, in Saxony, was founded at Schemnitz in 1760, and has attained considerable celebrity. It now contains about two hundred students, who receive their education free of cost, many of them being assisted with an annual donation of from twenty to thirty pounds for their support, and all being supplied with drawing-paper and pens, &c. at the expense of Government.

There are five professors, who deliver lectures on chemistry, *Hütte-kunsk* or metallurgy, mineralogy, mining, mathematics, surveying, and drawing. The course of study lasts three years, besides two years' practice in the mines; after which an examination must be passed in public before a certificate can be obtained.

The lectures are entirely in German, and indeed most of the students are German or Sclavackish. The professors give a very favourable account of the state of the school and the industry of its scholars. The students have access to a good library, where every new work of importance bearing on the subjects studied may be obtained, and where a considerable number of French and German periodicals are received.* The students give rather a different account. The younger students, they say—of course my informants were seniors—are generally better acquainted with the coffee and billiard rooms than with the halls of their professors; and the public examination is a farce, as it is well known that any one can purchase the *primam classem* (the highest certificate) by a bribe to the professors. How far these statements may be true, I know not; but I am inclined to believe that Schemnitz not only does not lead, but is far behind Freyberg, and indeed most other schools, in the adoption of modern scientific improvements. A strong proof of this is the very bad manner in which the Austrian mining establishments are said, by those who understand the subject, to be conducted in almost every part of the Emperor's dominions, and particularly in Hungary.

The students wear a neat uniform of dark green cloth turned

* To the disgrace of Schemnitz be it spoken, there is no good collection of minerals, either public or private; that of the college is below criticism. There is no dealer in minerals in the place.

up with red. The jacket has padded sleeves from the shoulder to the elbow, to protect the arms from the sides of the mines, with buttons bearing the crossed hammer and pick-axe. Behind is a large piece of leather, something like the tails of a coat, strapped round the waist, and forming in fact a posterior apron. In full dress they have gold epaulettes and a sabre.

Of course, one of our first objects was to see the far-famed silver mines. One of the *Practicants*, or more advanced students, accompanied us, to show and explain what was most interesting. To those totally unacquainted with mining operations, few things can be more uninteresting than to grope along wet narrow passages under ground, with a greasy candle stuck between the fingers; alternately breaking their heads against the top, or their shins against the bottom of the level. To me, however, it was interesting, from being able to compare these mines with those of England and some other countries. But the miner and geologist will be disappointed if they expect a scientific description of them; I neither possess nor pretend to the necessary knowledge; to know sufficient of a science to amuse oneself in its pursuit, and to be able to instruct others, are very different things.

With the usual mining salutation, "*Glück auf!*" we entered the *Spital-gang*, a fine nine-foot level, where we visited some of the new workings. Below this level a greater quantity of ore is obtained than from any of the other mines which properly belong to the town of Schemnitz. There is little difference between the manner of working here, and in England; and, though a miner might find the hammer heavier or longer in the handle—very important points—in one place than the other, they seemed to me to knock and blast the rocks just as we do. The ore contains gold, silver, and lead, and is often mixed with iron, copper, zinc, and arsenic, though the first three only in any considerable quantity. To raise the ore and clearings to this level, an ingenious water-wheel has been constructed,—I believe the first of its kind. It is furnished with a double set of buckets, one of which would turn it forwards, the other backwards; and the wooden canal, conveying the water, moves readily from one to the other, so that a constant motion is maintained. As soon, therefore, as the laden scuttles of one side arrive at the level and are emptied, the action of the wheel is reversed by the water being directed on the other buckets: the empty scuttles descend, and at the same time other full ones come up. An interesting point was remarked to us, where the green-stone is traversed by a gang

of shale, with slight traces of coal. From this point a fine railroad level runs to the daylight, as the miners call the opening; on which horses are employed, with trains of low carriages. The ore is broken to a certain size, by hand labour, before it goes to the crushing-mills; and is assorted by passing through a riddle, about the shape and size of the ordinary wooden bridges in England.

As we came out by the railway level, we found ourselves just without the gate at the bottom of the town. We then ascended the hill; and, about the middle of the town, entered the Theresia level, now little worked, and without much interest; this, however, as well as one higher up, is connected with the lower ones by shafts and workings.

The Rosalia is the highest and oldest of these mines, and is said to have been worked before the time of the Romans. Many of the ancient levels still exist in parts, and are easily known by being worked out with the chisel and hammer, instead of being blasted with gunpowder. The labour which this must have cost, is scarcely conceivable, as they are mostly ten feet high, made very wide at the bottom, and narrower towards the top. In many parts, both of Hungary and Transylvania, I have seen the same work, which, from its beauty and durability, cannot be mistaken, and it is always ascribed to the Romans; indeed, the Roman lamps, coins, instruments, and articles of dress, frequently found in such mines, place the matter beyond doubt. Further on, we came to an immense cavern, ascending to a great height beyond what the eye could follow, aided only by the feeble light of the miner's lamp. This is supposed also to have been the work of the Romans, but to have been effected by fire, as many rounded holes are observed, in which form the fire would have softened and broken up the rock. Going off from this cavern are many small passages, scarcely large enough for a man to creep into, which were probably formed in following offsets from the main vein. It is believed that nothing was taken away by the ancient miners but the pure silver, as the cavern is filled to a great height with the refuse of the workings, which is said to contain a large quantity of ore.

I must confess, I had for a long time considerable doubt as to the employment of fire in the mines. That the Romans did make use of fire in breaking up rocks, in other circumstances, the well-known passage of Livy ("*Ardentiaque saxa infuso aceto putrefaciunt,*") in the account of Hanibal's crossing the Alps, is suf-

ficient proof,—notwithstanding what ill-natured critics say of that historian's disposition for romance; but I had great doubts as to the possibility of its application to mining. The want of a draught of air, and the impossibility of making the huge fire Livy speaks of, and, more than all, the dreadful sufferings which the miners must necessarily have endured from the quantity of smoke and sulphurous vapours created, were such strong objections, that it required nothing less than the express words of Pliny to convince me; but they are too clear to be denied. "Hard rocks occur every where," he says; "these they split by means of fire and vinegar,* (*igni et aceto rumpunt;*) and, lest the smoke and vapour should be too great in the passages of the mine, the masses thus loosened are broken up with a hammer of one hundred and fifty pounds' weight; the ore is then carried out on men's shoulders day and night; they pass it in the dark from one to another; only the last sees the daylight." The miseries of the poor captives who were thus forced to labour, must have been frightful. Bishop Hene,† who has collected some interesting information on the government of the Roman mining establishments, and the then state of mining, quotes the following passage from Lucretius, (lib. vi.,) as confirmative of their miserable condition.

> "Quidve male fit, ut exhalent aurata metalla?
> Quas hominum reddunt facies, qualeisque colores?
> Nonne vides, audisve perire in tempore parvo
> Quam soleant; et quam vitæ copia desit,
> Quos opere in tali cohibet vis magna?"

I need not tell the reader that here, as well as in England, the state of the miner in the present day is quite as good as that of the peasant or labourer. In Schemnitz, he does not work more than eight hours a day; his occupation is healthy, and he lives as well as he could by any other employment.

The management of all the mines in Hungary, which belong

* I am aware that these statements of the use of vinegar have been ridiculed; but, although unable to explain in what way it could have been applied, I do not think we have the right to deny two such positive assertions of its use. I have been told that fire is still used in the Hartz mountains. A great fire is made by the workmen on the Saturday evening, and allowed to continue till Monday, when the men return to their work. From the quantity of sulphur contained in these rocks, there is no difficulty in making them burn, though it is often very difficult to extinguish them when once ignited.

† Beyträge zur Dacischen Geschichte.—Hermannstadt, 1836; p. 97.

to Government, is under a chief, called the *Oberst Kammer-Graf*, assisted by a council composing the *Oberst-Kammergrafenampt*, which itself is subject to the *Hof-Kammer* in Vienna. Each district has besides this its own *Bergampt*, or council, composed of the chief mining officers of the district. The number of inferior officers is much greater than with us, and this is probably necessary on account of the voluminous written reports which they are obliged to draw up. This has the disadvantage, not only of adding much to the expense, but of lessening also the feeling of individual responsibility, and consequently, the stimulus to individual exertion. In general, the Oberst Kammergraf, who is of high rank, understands nothing at all of the matters he directs; and, therefore, of course, trusts them to others; and it is allowed that they have been, and even still are, grossly mismanaged. Many of the officers themselves are best aware of, and most lament this state of things; but so many petty interests and ignorant prejudices impede improvement, and the Austrian Government itself has so unmeasured a dread of change, that the exertions of individuals avail but little. From the new Oberst Kammer-Graf, however, whose appointment was very recent, great hopes were entertained. I believe he is a man possessed of considerable scientific knowledge, united to a strong desire for improvement.

Austria has not yet learned that it is good economy to pay her servants well. The salaries of the mining officers, which even in Reformed England would run from 100*l.* to 1,000*l.* a year at least, do not average more than from 50*l.* to 100*l.*; and, though provisions are cheap in Hungary, yet the clothes which the station of these officers obliges them to wear, cost as much there as here. Where so much gold and silver slips through the fingers, it is not, therefore, wonderful that some has occasionally stuck to them. A few years since, a well-conceived, and long-undiscovered system of robbery was laid open, in which six of the Government officers of Schemnitz were concerned, and by which they had defrauded the state to a large amount.

The amalgamation process, which is universally acknowledged to be the best for separating the gold and silver from the baser metals, was obliged to be given up, because the officers could not resist the opportunity which it offered them, of defrauding their employers in the article of quicksilver. Let me state, however, that such of the officers as I had the pleasure of knowing, appeared to be men quite incapable of any such conduct, and they

lamented the badness of a system which threw so many temptations in the way of the needy.

The common miners, amounting in the Schemnitz district to twenty thousand, are exposed to the same temptation. They are not allowed to gain more than three florins per fortnight, or three shillings a week! As if it were to check any disposition to industry, it has been reckoned how much the miner can do comfortably in the fortnight, working eight or sometimes six hours a day. This quantum he is bound to perform, but he is allowed to perform no more; the Government finding him in oil, gunpowder, and instruments. This gives the miner many opportunities of peculation in these articles, which do not tend to improve his honesty, though rather a useful quality where gold and silver are in the case. The loss sustained in these articles alone, by the united rogueries of the labourer and his superiors, is said to be considerable. The method of paying the miner is not less defective: he is sometimes paid according to the amount of the material brought out without regard to quality, in which case he defrauds his employers by working where it is most easy to himself; sometimes, according to the quantity of metal produced, when he is apt to work the mine unfairly, taking only the richest parts, and leaving much good material behind. In either case a premium is offered for roguery.*

I have often heard it stated that Government gains so little by these mines, that it does not allow more work to be done than is just sufficient to maintain the miners; how far this may be true it is difficult to say, for they are not too anxious at Vienna that Hungary should know precisely the state of her revenues; but after what I have stated, it would not be astonishing if such were the case. The private enterprises, however, maintain themselves, in spite of the ten per cent. they pay the king, and the losses in smelting, &c.—a pretty good proof where the fault lies if those of his majesty do not succeed better.

One of the Government officers, after a tour of inspection

* I am sorry that I cannot contrast with this, the system adopted by John Taylor, Esq., in the mines under his management in England, but it would lead me too far away from my present subject. It must suffice to say, that he has made the master's and workman's profit coincide; and while he enables industry and talent to gain its due reward, he so excites the attention and enterprise of all engaged, that every head is working for the discovery of new sources of profit and means of economy. To those who are interested in this subject I may refer to a lecture of Mr. Taylor's in the Mining Journal, No. X. and to Mr. Babbage's little work on Manufactures.

through the principal mines of England, in which he had been at first much astonished to find such comparatively great improvements, and such certain profit, from such very inferior means, solved the problem thus before he left our shores:—"The reason of your advance and gain, and of our delay and loss, is simply this: when it is necessary to do any thing, you do it at once, while we are obliged to send long written reports to the Bergampt, to wait till those who know little of the immediate circumstances deliberate about them, and if consent is at last obtained, it is frequently so late, that the advantages to be derived from it are lost." Without confidence in subordinate agents it is impossible to act with effect. One would have fancied Austria had proved in her wars the truth of this proposition too bitterly ever to have forgotten it.

About one half of the Schemnitz district is in the hands of private individuals or companies, who are said generally to lack capital and spirit. The laws of Hungary, respecting mining, are exceedingly liberal. Any one, on applying to the Kammer, (as the exchequer is called,) may receive permission to work any mine which does not interfere with other workings, no matter on whose estate it may be, paying only a moderate sum to the proprietor for the land used for buildings or necessary works. Likewise, any mine already worked, if left unworked during fourteen days, may be taken up by any one else. One-tenth of the clear produce is payable to the Crown, and, generally speaking, though I think not necessarily, the ore is smelted in the Government smelting-houses, for which a deduction is also made. The metal must all be coined in the country. I remember an old gentleman, who was telling me some of these facts, was very bitter against the English for not having sent some of their superfluous cash to Hungary instead of South America, whence there would have been some better chance of a return. I do not know that the Austrians would look on an English company with jealousy, and, if not, I think their chance of success would be very great.

I had an opportunity, thanks to the politeness of the chief of the surveying department, of seeing the plans of the mines, which, however, would be unintelligible from description. The most interesting plan was that of Joseph the Second's adit, a magnificent work. It is twelve mining feet high, by ten broad, and extends from Schemnitz to the valley of the Gran, a distance of nearly ten English miles. This adit will carry off the water

from mines now quite unworkable, and will lay open great riches to the miner. It is so constructed, also, as to be used either as a canal or railroad, by which the ore may be carried to a point better adapted for smelting than Schemnitz. It has already been forty years in hand, and is estimated to cost 400,000*l.* before it is finished. The most difficult part, under the hill of Schemnitz and the Erzberg, has yet to be encountered.

The next day we dedicated to visiting some of the more distant works, and one or two interesting geological points in the immediate neighbourhood of Schemnitz. We followed the road to St. Antal, by the Francis shaft, and went from thence to the smelting-house, where there is a curious steam-engine, with a moveable cylinder, apparently a whim of the engineer's. There is but little smelting carried on at Schemnitz, for want of wood, most of the ore being sent to Neusohl, where fuel is in great plenty. Not far from the smelting-house, they have discovered a vein of coal, of which they have obtained some, but in very small quantities, and of an inferior quality. Another great desideratum at Schemnitz is water, to supply which immense reservoirs have been constructed in the hills; but, after a dry season, they are quite inadequate to supply all the crushing-mills and washing-machines. Nothing can be more rude than the washing process as carried on in Schemnitz; it is a disgrace to a school of mining, especially when it is managed so much better in the duchy of Salzburg, and even in other parts of Hungary itself.

We passed a quarry of fine greenstone porphyry, and further on, in the trachyte, examined a vein of opal. I should have said that the Erzberg (mountain of ore,) containing the principal mines, is of greenstone, which generally, in Hungary, bears the richest ores, and below it lies the trachyte. The trachyte covers a great extent of country, and we observed it several times in the course of our walk; in one place, near Kolpack, it occurs of a fine red colour. About mid-day we stopped at St. Antal, a village of Prince Coburg's; and, wandering through the gardens of the castle, found a green spot too tempting for rest and lunch to be passed at such an hour. As we crossed the court I observed a curious-looking bench, the use of which did not immediately occur to me; but, on inquiring of a gardener, his answer "the flogging-board," and his look of surprise at my ignorance, reminded me that at Arva I had seen something very similar. We called to a man who was at work in the gardens to bring us

a pitcher of water, and were not a little struck to find he was a prisoner, wearing heavy irons. I have often seen in German and Italian towns, the disgusting spectacle of a string of chained prisoners, employed in sweeping the streets or in other public works, but this was the first time I had seen them in the employ of private persons. Every Hungarian noble had formerly the right to have his prison, and to confine his own peasants, both before and after condemnation: how far he may have the power of appropriating their labour during this period I know not; but it would seem to be a power liable to great abuse, and it is one therefore of which the greater number have been wisely deprived. In some few families the right still exists. But we will leave the subject of prison discipline, or rather want of discipline, for another time, and return to Schemnitz, which we reached after a long walk, late in the evening, quite ready for our suppers and pipes.

I must not forget to state, however, as I have mentioned this subject, that an exhibition of public flogging takes place every Sunday morning at Schemnitz, and it rarely happens that some women are not among the sufferers. As far as I know, such barbarity as the public flogging of women is confined to Schemnitz, and the plea urged there for its necessity is, the protection of the young students' morals. Skeptics may doubt whether the exhibition of brutality by those who from their position ought to be respected and imitated, would tend materially to moralize the youth they govern, unless indeed the worthy magistrates of Schemnitz choose to take upon themselves the part imposed by the Spartans on their slaves,—but then those skeptics doubt every thing.

Another circumstance, which occurred the day before we quitted this "City of the seven hills," as some father-land-loving writer calls it, gave us no great idea of the wisdom of its municipal officers. As H—— was quietly sketching the ruins of the old castle, a bustling little body who called himself "*Ober-Notair* of the royal burg of Schemnitz," came up to him and demanded with great impertinence, by whose authority or permission he had ventured to draw there. Swelling with all the pomp of offended dignity, and growing more loudly indignant as he felt the quiet contempt with which H—— treated his remonstrances, he threatened the utmost vengeance of the law against one who had taken such a liberty with so important a place; and, hastening off to the inn, denounced us as a party of spies, who he declared

should not leave the town till he had examined their passports, and discovered their villanous intentions. To be taken for a spy by the peasants in Hungary would be to run a fair risk of ill-treatment, if not of death, and, therefore, the moment I returned, I hastened to the *Stadt-Hauptman* (the captain or mayor of the town,) and, mustering up all my very wickedest words in German, placed so forcibly before his worship the enormity of the Notair's crime, that he put himself into a dignified rage at the unlucky wight, and promised us most summary satisfaction,—nay, if we would wait till the next day, the pleasure of witnessing it. Our revengeful feelings, however, were not strong enough to detain us, but we left him with the persuasion that the next traveller in search of the picturesque would meet with a more civil reception.

Of course we could not leave Schemnitz without visiting the castle; and, accordingly, the custode, who was wondrous proud of the dignity of his office, attended with his huge keys, and led us to its ruined gateway. The castle itself is a square building of no great size, enclosed by a high wall with four bastions, besides the new tower which the town has erected for a watchman, whose shrill whistle gives evidence four times within the hour, of his noisy vigilance. The centre building was formerly a church, and traces of its original destination are still visible. In the part formerly used as the chancel, is the date 1491; while, in another, evidently later, and added for the accommodation of soldiers, is 1559. Sufficient still remains to show that the church was built in a good and somewhat rich style of pointed Gothic, which in England would be considered to belong to the fourteenth century: one of the spiral staircases has much beauty. The governor, for I believe the honest man considered himself rather as such than as simple custode, told us bloody tales of Turks and Templars,—how the Christians fought, and the heathens fled; and, when he showed us in one of the under rooms a mill, he assured us the knights had ground the corn there during the siege with their own hands; and a seven barrelled field-piece, a quantity of hand-grenades, small arrows for the steel-bow, spears, swords, and a heap of old weapons, which are still preserved here, were all he said to "discomfit the heathen, and drive the wicked ones from the wallls." I cannot vouch for the authenticity of this account, as I was too lazy to make application to examine some half-burned archives which still exist in

the public library, nor, indeed, am I quite certain it would have been worth while—is not the romance of history its better part?

In one of the bastions some prisoners were confined, among whom was one shocking villain, then in chains, for a most extraordinary and horrible crime,—no less than that of hammering some score large nails into the sitting part of an old woman!

One of the oddest of the wonders of Schemnitz is a large-headed, broad-mouthed, bow-legged, deaf and dumb dwarf,—just one of those caricatures of humanity which so often fill up a foreground of Paul Veronese, and set off so well the elegance of the figures which surround it,—a merry creature, with a strong predilection for spirits and tobacco. In early childhood he was stolen from Schemnitz, and travelled over great part of Europe as a show. Restored by I know not what accident to his native land, he vegetates to cherish an enormous pair of steel spurs, which, by day, he attaches to his legs by a strange complication of straps, and at night lays under his pillow lest some one should rob him of his treasure. I could not help thinking, that, if some Hungarian friends of mine had seen the little dwarf in his spurs, they would scarcely have maintained their own so pertinaciously, especially as they were no cavaliers, and made as little use of them as he did.

We had spent nearly a week at Schemnitz, and it was time for old Stephan to repack, and for us to recommence our wanderings; but I must tell one tale more against the Schemnitz police before I quit them. The Haiduk, or town-servant, who had been sent to order horses for us, and to whom, as is frequently the case, the vorspann money was paid in advance, had pocketed an extra sum allowed on this station, on account of the distance the peasants had to come, and only given them the ordinary sum, of which they justly complained. I left a note for our friend, the City Captain, with a recommendation not to forget the Haiduk, when he called the Notair to account; the which, some of his fellows assured me, would procure him his five and twenty blows. I had no mercy for one who robbed the peasants, and I should not have been sorry to have extended the punishment to some others of their oppressors.

CHAPTER XIII.

SCHEMNITZ AND THE MINES OF HUNGARY.

Departure from Schemnitz.—Sunday Dress of the Miners and their Wives.—Neusohl.—The Landlord's Room.—The Market.—The Sclavack Belt.—Dyetva Peasants.—Visit to a Country Gentleman.—Kind Reception.—Smelting-house.—Collection of Minerals.—Beet-root Sugar.—Manufactures in Hungary.—Castle of Lipcse.—Field Nursing.—Mysteries of the Castle.—Sliács.—Bathing in Company.—Altsohl.—Mathias Corvinus.—Prisons and Prisoners.—Flogging.—Werbőczy.—Burnt Village.—The Veil.—Kremnitz.—Mines.—Mountain Fall.—Mint.—The Silberblick.

It was about seven in the morning as we left Schemnitz; and, though in the middle of August, bitterly cold. The traveller in Hungary should never be without his fur cloak, summer or winter, for, during the hottest days, the mornings and evenings are often very severe. It was Sunday, and the people, mostly Germans, were already flocking to the churches. The women wore their *Peltzröckel*, or short sheep-skin coat, fastened in front with a silver chain and clasp, and ornamented with large silver filigree buttons, while the Hessian boots with high heels, like those on the shoes of our great-grandmothers, peeped from under their dark petticoats. In every part of Hungary, the woman in her holiday dress has a pair of high boots reaching to the knees,—red, yellow, or black, as the taste may be; and to those who have seen the state of the village road and streets in winter, when the mud is knee-deep, the utility and decency of these boots will be evident. The men wore the Hungarian dress, which, indeed, the German settlers have every where adopted, richly braided, and ornamented with the same profusion of silver buttons and chains. The miners complain that the good old days are gone for ever, when the workmen had so much silver that the heels of their boots were shod with it; but, if not quite so plentiful as formerly, it is evident, from the luxury and comfort of their dress, that the sober and industrious can still accumulate a sufficiency of it.

The first village we passed, as we pursued our way to Neusohl, was Bela Bánya, a part of the township of Schemnitz, and possessing mines and crushing-mills. The valley soon becomes exceedingly pretty: the mountains are small, and the vales narrow; but the former are well diversified with rocks and woods, and the latter variegated with a bright meadow or a narrow strip of yellow corn. Smiling valleys, however, do not always make happy people; and the two half-starved hags, the only inhabitants we could descry among the miserable huts which constitute the village of Kozelnic, proclaimed any thing but prosperity here. We passed, later in the day, several wagons full of peasants, apparently returning from some distant church: in one, an elderly peasant was reading prayers, while the others were listening respectfully, uncovered, though it was dreadfully cold, the thermometer being at 50° of Fahrenheit. Further on, we crossed the Gran by one of those long wooden bridges so common here, and followed the river to Bucsa, at which place we got fresh horses. Two hours more brought us to Neusohl, where the *Krebse* furnished us one poor room, and that indeed the landlord's, every other being filled with travellers. Never, reader, in the course of your travels, where the German language is spoken, or the German stove used, accept the landlord's room; rather sleep in your carriage; for, by so doing, you decline an obligation at which they grumble, and for which they make you pay,—and you escape feeding the host's host of hungry vermin. These rooms, from their dirt, heat, and constant occupation, are perfect nests for all sorts of venomous insects; as we proved by a wretched sleepless night of feverish agony at Neusohl.

Neusohl is a wide-streeted, tolerably well-built country town; rather imposing in its appearance, because all the houses appear to be in the Italian style, with flat roofs, though I believe it is only a high parapet carried up to hide the roof. In this parapet false windows are generally painted; and, in one case, an artist, whose adherence to the truth of nature was admirable, had painted the Venitian shutters as in a very broken and dilapidated condition; no doubt, thinking it most natural they should be so. The use of Venitian shutters is common in every part of Hungary; more so, perhaps, than in any country I know. All houses, above the cottage of the peasant, and sometimes even these, are furnished with this luxury.

Our first morning at Neusohl was fully occupied in observing the peasants at market. The night before, we had noticed some

hundreds of the small light wagons of the country, each with four horses, filling the large market-place; their owners making their beds, in, under, and around their wagons. Though only the ordinary weekly market, the concourse of people seemed to us very great; but in the neighbourhood of the mining towns more money is in circulation than elsewhere, and the markets are consequently better attended.

The different trades had each its separate quarter. Just under our windows were the sellers of broad-brimmed hats; and Bicknell and Moore never had Bond-street loungers more difficult to please than the cunning Neusohler found his Sclavack customers. This crown was too flat; that brim was too narrow —not being more than eighteen inches wide! "Who would buy so ugly a hat as this?" said one, as he stuck it jauntily on one side over his greasy locks; or "Who, so thin a felt as that?" said another, as he gave it a thump that would have tried the strength of Mambrino's helmet itself. And then the cheapenings the poor merchants had to undergo; though the price of a good hat, large enough to form two or three of any other country, was only half-a-crown! The cobblers exhibited a goodly array of boots and shoes, almost as much peaked at the toe as a Turkish slipper; and, when yellow, bearing a very close resemblance to it. The best Hessian boots cost about seven shillings. Among the principal traders were the dealers in articles of red leather. Their ware was chiefly composed of the great belts worn by the peasants; nearly a foot wide, and so thick and hard that I think they would turn a pistol ball. The Sclavack does not feel comfortable without this huge incumbrance buckled round his waist; he thinks its support strengthens him: he uses it for a pocket; he conceals his knife and fork in it; he hangs his flint and steel to it; his tobacco-bag is generally stuffed into some corner of it; and, if he does not find his short wooden pipe stuck into his boot, or between the back of his neck and shirt, he even searches for that too in his belt. As the Sclavacks have adopted the Hungarian fashion of short shirts, the belt serves to fill up the interval between the shirt and the trowsers, which, however, it effects but imperfectly. Large leathern wallets formed another important commodity; these the peasant uses to carry his bread and bacon in whenever he goes to any distance from home. These, and many other articles with which their booths were filled, were, as far as the leather was concerned, exceedingly well made; but the buckles, though showy, were rudely fashioned, and broke almost immediately.

Some pretty sheep-skin jackets with the wool inside, highly ornamented with flowers sewed in coloured leather, of which I asked the price, were ten shillings each.

There were several different kinds of wheat and barley; as well as, oats, rye, buck-wheat, white beans, peas, dried prunes, poppy seeds (used in making puddings,) and a small round farinaceous seed called *prein* or *gelbe kása*. The fruit-market was poor; some unripe ill-looking water melons declared the mountain air agreed but sadly with them.

The dress of the peasants was excellent: the morning was cold, and many of them had their peltz röckels slung over their shoulders after a very Spanish and most picturesque fashion. It is here a short cloak with sleeves, generally of a dark colour, lined with fur and braided. As it hangs over the left shoulder, leaving the right arm free, often fastened in front with a silver band, and descending about half-way down the thigh, it gives considerable grace to the figure. The leg is encased in thick white pantaloons, finished by a rude sandal strapped round the ankle; while the whole man reposes under the shadow of his hat, which is literally wider than any part of his body.

The women are generally worse clothed than the men; often with bare feet, and a very scanty portion of petticoat. The more wealthy, however, have knee-boots, and sheepskin jackets. Among the Sclavacks the women are hardly treated; I have frequently observed them carrying heavy burdens while the men were quietly smoking beside them. The general covering for the head is a handkerchief, which reaches behind down to the waist, and in front ties under the chin. The unmarried girls wear their hair in a long plait hanging down the back; the married have it tied up, and wear a band across the forehead.

Old Stephan, after a good deal of difficulty, persuaded two very fine fellows to come into H——'s room that he might sketch them. They were from Dyetva, a district in the neighbourhood of Neusohl, celebrated for the beauty of its men and the ugliness of its women; the honesty of the parties being in the inverse ratio of their comeliness. Although Sclavacks, they had remarkably black hair, oval faces, and arched noses. Some of our friends, on seeing the sketch, protested against a pair of boots worn by one of them; declaring that no Dyetva man had ever come fairly by such articles. They were fine fellows, however; and seemed to like the joke of being drawn, although they objected to standing still so long; and declined taking any thing for the trouble we

had given them till Stephan suggested that a few glasses of Sliwowitz might not be amiss on so cold a morning.

We had sent early in the day a letter of introduction to the family of Mr. R——, who resided near Neusohl, with our cards and a request to know when we should find them at home; for luckily we were aware that in Hungary, as I believe generally on the continent, etiquette requires that the stranger should make the first visit,—a knowledge, the want of which has sometimes excluded our countrymen from society. The answer was, that they dined at one, and a carriage would be sent for us a little before that time.

Accordingly, at the hour fixed, a smart hussar came up to announce the carriage; and in about half an hour we found ourselves entering the gateway of an old castle—one of those four-cornered buildings enclosing a large court, and bearing a square tower at each angle, so common in Hungary and Transylvania. Part of it had been somewhat modernized: but on one side was still the open staircase and corridor, communicating with a whole suit of rooms; and on the other an old black tower, preserved quite in its ancient state, in honour of Francis Rákótzi II., who is said to have held a Diet within its walls of the Protestant chiefs who had taken up arms in his cause.

We found a party of eight or ten persons already assembled, —most of them, like ourselves, chance visiters; a circumstance which makes little matter where housekeeping is conducted on so plentiful a scale as in Hungary. Nothing could exceed the kindness of our reception; and it was not long before our host, having first got out of us the plan of our journey, and the possible length of our stay here, observed, "Well, I am sorry it is not longer; but I can manage to show you something of the neighbourhood, even in the time you mention: for the rest, rooms are ready for you here. By-the-by, why did you not come here yesterday? you would have found it more comfortable than the inn. There are horses to take you about, and my son will be happy to show you what is at too great a distance for me; and, when you must leave us, I hope you will allow me to give you some hints for your route, and letters of introduction to render it more easy." Now, who in the world could feel himself a stranger when so addressed by one of the most good-natured old gentlemen in the world, who did not make any one of these offers with the least thought of trouble on his part, or refusal on ours?

We were now in the house of one of the higher class of Hun-

garian country gentlemen; like their prototypes in England in many respects, the best specimens of their countrymen. But it should be remembered that we were also in the house of a highly educated and very well-informed man, and it is of such only I speak. Proud of their country, they are not blind to its wants; ready at any moment to draw their sabres in defence of their constitution, they are by no means ignorant of its defects; and it is they who boldly stand forward in the support of liberal opinions in the lower chamber. Mixing more with the peasants than the absentee magnates, they know what are their real wants, and they would fain remedy them. Retaining a strong love for their own language, they do not neglect the cultivation of others, especially the German and French; but they are not the apes of every folly of foreign growth, and they think it no disgrace to eat, drink, speak, or dress as their fathers did before them. I am not one of those who would maintain national prejudice, for it is national ignorance; nor who would oppose the introduction of any foreign improvement, for that were to oppose the progress of civilization; but I despise the man who can see nothing good at home, and I hate him who is ashamed of a country which his own neglect tends every day to injure.

During our sojourn with our hospitable friend, we had an opportunity of seeing most of the wonders of Neusohl and its neighbourhood.* The smelting-house, in which six or seven huge furnaces are constantly at work, is the largest in Hungary. From the facility with which wood is obtained, most of the ore from Schemnitz is brought here to be smelted, as well as a considerable quantity of copper ore obtained in the immediate vicinity. The ore is for the most part very imperfectly separated from the matrix, as indeed might be anticipated from the bad state of the crushing and washing mills we have before alluded to. On its arrival here it first undergoes a process of roasting in the open air, by laying alternate layers of ore and charcoal one above the other, and so exposing it to a slow combustion, by which the sulphur and arsenic are sublimed and driven off. The slag which is supposed still to contain any quantity of metal undergoes the same process, and is again smelted. A large quantity of

* The mines of Herrengrund we did not see, partly for want of time, and partly from not knowing all the interest they possess. The produce is 1,500 cwts. of copper, with a small quantity of silver; but the *cementwasser*, and the formation of ice-beds, are the objects which I most regret not having examined at Herrengrund.

pure lead is used at Neusohl as a flux; a great part of which is lost,—it is said, to the amount of twenty pounds for every mark of silver,* which, as the lead is from Styria, and costs nearly twenty shillings the cent. is very considerable. They have now constructed chambers through which the smoke passes, and deposits a small portion of the lead; but the loss is still much greater than it ought to be.

The magazine of wood is such as might be expected where so many fires must be fed. The trees are floated down from the mountains during the floods singly as they are felled; and are here, by a particular arrangement of canals, flood-gates, &c., brought to any point desired, collected and arranged, previously to being reduced to charcoal. I believe the charcoal is made here, as elsewhere, by piling immense heaps of wood in a circular form, leaving only a very small opening for air, and covering the whole with fine dust to prevent a too rapid combustion. The principal part of the wood so employed is fir and beech.

I must not forget to mention Professor Zipser's collection of minerals; its own intrinsic value, as well as the politeness with which its learned owner shows it to strangers, are both deserving of notice.†

Within this last year or two, a company has been formed at Neusohl for manufacturing sugar from beet-root. The sugar they produce is white and fine, but it is said to be inferior in flavour to that of the cane. The process of manufacture is simple: the beet is torn into very small portions which form a pulp; this is reduced to a syrup by evaporation in a double cylinder, and the vegetable particles and colouring matter are removed by repeated refinings with milk or blood.

Tempted by the high duties imposed on our sugars by Austria, and encouraged by the success of the beet cultivators in France, they have commenced a system which, if followed by others, would be most injurious to Hungary. Our host was one of the shareholders; rather, as he said, to avoid the imputation of slackness when others thought the country might be benefited, than

* The mark of silver is worth 24 florins, or 2*l.* 8*s.* according to the report of the miners: authors state it at 25 florins, or 2*l.* 10*s.* The mark of gold is 366 florins, or 36*l.* 12*s.*

† It may be useful to English collectors to know that the mineralogists of Hungary are much in want of collections of English fossils, for which they would gladly exchange their rich minerals.

from a persuasion of the utility of the undertaking. "I should not regret," he observed, "losing the little I have ventured to-morrow to have commerce placed on a more natural footing. Would to God I might see the day when we should receive the sugars of England, and she take our wine and corn in return; how quickly would improvement march, how happy might Hungary still be!" Such are the opinions of an enlightened man: the generality of Hungarians, however, are full of the idea that nothing but manufactures can ever make them rich; they do not see why they should not prosper there as well as elsewhere; but, unfortunately, those who have tried have found out the fact to their cost; but then they have a most happy way of shutting their eyes to facts, and declaring that the Austrian Government will not let them prosper! Poor Government! though far from being your admirer, I must confess much more is laid on your shoulders than you ought to bear. Mischievous you very often are, but I believe more frequently from stupidity than intention. Want of population, want of manufacturing habits, want of education, of mechanists, of capital, of industry, and the existence of a much more agreeable, easy, and comfortable way of employing both time and capital,—that is, in production,—are quite sufficient causes, without accusing the Austrians of the failure.

Nor is success to be desired, unless indeed it is desired to buy dear and bad what might be bought elsewhere cheap and good; and to remain isolated in barbarism, rather than mingle in intercourse with civilization. In a Diet which took place as far back as 1405, in a preamble probably to some foolish restrictive act, it is declared, "Quum quodammodo pars sit magna dementiæ, id quod de suo quisque habere potest ab aliis mutuare;"* and such is unfortunately the state of political economy at the present day in the heads of the greater part of Hungarian country gentlemen.

About ten miles above Neusohl, along the pleasant banks of the Gran, stands the village of Lipcse, and, on a rock above it, the old castle of the same name. Four large long-tailed horses of our host's own breeding, put to a light britschka which a pair of ponies would have sufficed for, soon brought us to the foot of the hill. In our drive up the valley we observed a new style of nursing, which necessity—ever fruitful mother—had taught the Sclavack women to have recourse to when engaged

* Engel. Geschichte von Ungarn. Part ii. p. 245.

in the business of the harvest. Three strong poles are planted into the ground, and made to meet at the top; and from these is slung a kind of hammock, in which the child lies; while a blanket is thrown over the whole to protect the little nestling from the sun. The castle of Lipcse is still in good preservation, and is used as a dwelling by the Government steward, who has the care of the forests in this neighbourhood, as well as a prison for offenders. Its exterior is difficult to describe; its high walls, small windows, and peaked roof distinguish it from any thing we have in England; while its little corner towers, with sugar-loaf top and unturreted battlements, remind one of those small castles so common in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh.

As we were still admiring the dark arches of the old gateway tower, two young ladies, sisters of the Burg Herr, came down to welcome our companion as an old acquaintance, and to invite us into the castle. As in many other strong places, the entrance door to the castle itself is midway up the wall, to be reached only by a temporary staircase of wood, which in the present case conducted us to the part inhabited by the family, where we found all the comforts of a modern house enclosed within walls of six feet thick. It formed so beautiful a picture, that ancient chamber with its richly groined ceiling, as the light of the setting sun fell through the arched window on the figures of its fair habitants, that H—— sighed as he thought how little time he could stay, and how fine a study it would make. A door in this room communicates with a secret staircase which has an opening in the outer wall of the castle; and by this means it is said that Szécsi Maria carried on a secret intercourse with her lover Wesselényi, then a young knight in her father's service. I am rather inclined to doubt this legend; though it appears that the Palatine did at one time reside here, for on the stairs is a huge similitude of a bull's head carved in wood, to commemorate a feat of Wesselényi's, who is said to have killed a tremendous wild bull in the neighbouring forests with his own hand.*

Our pretty hostesses kindly volunteered to act as our guides to the mysteries of the castle. In one part was a chamber constructed below the floor of another room, and only to be entered by a secret trap-door, where three unfortunate knights were once

* The Aurochs, (Bos Urus,) formerly a habitant of the great forests of Germany and Hungary, and of which this was undoubtedly a specimen, is now extinct in those countries, though still found in one forest of Poland.

held prisoners, and who, on the castle being suddenly stormed and taken, were forgotten in the haste of flight, and unknowingly starved to death by the conquerors. Here was the little Gothic chapel preserved unhurt by the lapse of years, or by the rude hand of man. There was the well cut in the solid rock, and I know not how many fathoms deep. They have a good plan of showing such things here, by throwing down a lighted bundle of straw, which the draught made by its passage causes to blaze up and illuminate the dark secrets of dungeon, mine, or well.

In an upper room we found one of the prisoners who had been engaged in the Schemnitz mining robbery: he was a locksmith, and was allowed the use of his tools, with which he was working very comfortably for his own profit. As his conduct had been irreproachable while here, he was allowed every liberty he could desire.

Near the top of the castle were some originally very handsome apartments; one room, with its large bow-window projecting from the corner of the castle, and looking on both sides far and wide over the beautiful valley of the Gran, stretched out as upon a map below, must have formed a delightful saloon. This was evidently the favourite bower of "some faire ladye" of former days; for a small open hearth and chimney—rare luxuries in those days—were constructed in the bow itself. How easily can fancy recall the scenes of by-gone times in such a spot! Youth and beauty occupied in working the arms of some favoured knight on the silken scarf; and, ever and anon, as the sun cast his last rays over the valley, watching the windings of the road with hopes of his long-delayed return, or, at least, that some wayworn pilgrim would demand her hospitality, and wile away the weary hour with tales of war and love from foreign parts. It requires little imagination to draw such a picture in Hungary: travelling is difficult and communication tardy; in the country, where books are scarce, and society distant, ladies fill up their time with embroidery, and a stranger who can talk to them of distant lands is not unfrequently looked upon as a God-send in such remote places.

It would have been a disgrace to have left this neighbourhood without having visited Sliács, a favourite bathing-place only a few miles from Neusohl, had not indeed an invitation to a large dinner given by some of the bathers to the rest of the company induced us to go. Sliács is not too well provided with the means of lodging those who seek its healing waters; but our friends had

kindly bespoken rooms for us, and we found ourselves at once comfortable. Not that our apartments were magnificent; from some Englishmen the cold whitewashed walls, bare floors, odd chair or two, rough table, and plain box bedstead filled with clean straw, might scarcely extract that meaning adjective: but we were old travellers, and had fared worse; besides, the rooms, such as they were, had just served during a much longer residence one of the most young and beautiful brides of Hungary. It is wonderful how contentedly an Hungarian lady quits the luxury of her own home, and submits to sleeping in her open carriage, or suffers all the inconveniences of such wretched accommodations as those of Sliacs, without a murmur.

Every body comes to a bath with a full determination to enjoy himself, and to-day was especially one of festivity. The dinner, long and ponderous, with speeches and toasts in abundance, occupied from one till nearly four. Toasts are not given as with us, after dinner; but between the courses, and always in the presence of the ladies; the speeches are the same complimentary convivial affairs that after-dinner speeches are with us. Some mountebanks and riders, attended by the ever-ready band of gipsy musicians, filled up the time till sunset, when the ball was to begin. Here, again, we were fortunate enough to receive an invitation, and enjoyed till midnight as much heat and dust as a summer ball could possibly produce in any other part of dancing Europe.

In the course of the day we visited the different springs; some cold, and others tepid. They contain an oxide of iron with carbonic acid, besides salts of lime, magnesia, and soda. The cold springs are considered highly tonic, and are recommended for nervous complaints. The warm are alterative and tonic. They have deposited here, and in the neighbourhood, a large quantity of magnesian limestone: indeed, the upper layer of the strata, on which the bathing-place stands, has been formed by its own waters. The principal bath is about fifteen feet long by nine wide, under cover of a large wooden building, affording room for promenading and music. I was astonished to hear that it was the fashion to bathe here in public: but, conceive my horror, precise reader, when some very pretty ladies quietly informed me that they took their second bath in the evening, and hoped I would join them! Supposing that I had misunderstood the matter, I could only bow, and look as an ingenuous youth should look on such an occasion; and it was not till some of my male

friends assured me of the fact, and offered to supply me with a bathing-dress, that I might make my appearance in the received costume, that I fully comprehended the invitation. Accordingly, about six in the evening, my nether man encased in a wide pair of linen trowsers, and the upper in an equally wide linen shirt fastened close at the neck, and covered up in a cloak, I marched down to the bath. On each side are separate tiring rooms for ladies and gentlemen, where the cloaks and slippers are removed, and the bather then descends the stairs, and enters the water before he is admitted into the bathing-room, so that the figure is entirely concealed, and nothing but a new head is seen to enter. We were a pleasant party of about fourteen up to our necks in hot water; and we amused ourselves for an hour—the prescribed time—in moving about and talking, just as in a drawing-room. I do assure the delicate reader, that, as far as I could see, nothing occurred that could shock any one:—a "*soyez sage!*" or two, sotto voce, or an occasional contact which produced a kind of electric thrill through one's frame, might perchance occur; but, as for the latter, it was only from want of habituation to it that such an effect was produced; for a thin old gentleman of sixty, who had used these baths for many years, assured me such accidents did not thrill him at all! Let me say, however, that many ladies object to this admixture; and it is so much unknown in some parts of Hungary, that they doubted me when I mentioned having seen it. One poor girl, though strongly recommended by her physicians to bathe here, had never been able to persuade herself to enter, and told me she wept with shame the first time she saw it. Such baths are common in Austria, and, I believe, in some other parts of the Continent.

The quantity of gas emitted from the water is so great, that a woman is constantly employed in waving a flag over the heads of the bathers to produce a current of air, and so remove it. The gas was still strong enough to give me a headach in a few minutes, and the current of air starved our heads and shoulders to perfection. Some drink the waters, as well as use them in bathing; and it is considered best to do both together. For this purpose a stream is constantly running from a pipe above the bath, round which the drinkers flock to fill their glasses. A trick very neatly played on an unfortunate Austrian Countess, whose pride and ill-temper had rendered her the enemy of the whole bath, deterred me from venturing. A mischievous wight, who offered to fill her glass for her, by a cunning sleight of hand exchanged the

clear water of the spring for the dirty contents of the bath; and, if the homœopathic doctrine be true,—*similia similibus curantur*, —gave her an opportunity of getting rid of some dozen horrible diseases at a single draught. The effects of the Sliács baths are said to be almost miraculous; but I cannot vouch for half the wonderful things I have heard of their efficacy.

The next morning we paid our visits and made our adieus to our friends in the bath, after which four miserable peasants' horses dragged us slowly back to R——. We felt exceedingly sorry when the time arrived that we must quit our friends at R——. By our host and all his family we had been received and treated in a manner which, as passing strangers, we could scarcely understand; had we been acquaintances of years' standing, they could not have taken more interest in us, or behaved to us with more genuine kindness.

Our way now lay towards Kremnitz; but we determined to deviate a little from the road to visit Altsohl, formerly a place of considerable importance, and still interesting from its castle, once the favourite hunting-seat of Mathias Corvinus. I had too great a respect for the memory of the "Good King Mathias," as the Hungarian peasant still calls him, to pass the spot where, laying aside for a while the severe rigour of his reforming spirit, and allowing to his nobles some repose after the strict discipline in which he held them, Mathias bent all his energy and determination—great minds are always energetic, however trifling the object of their pursuit—against the unhappy bears and wolves of the forests of Altsohl.

Corvinus, placed on the throne by a succession of fortunate incidents, rather than by right or merit,—for the power usurped by his father, John Hunyad, as governor of Hungary, during the minority of the weak Ladislaus, could scarcely entitle him to the former, while his extreme youth at the time of his election precluded the possibility of his having, then, proved the latter,—still knew so well how to maintain and adorn his exalted position, that he would seem one of those rare instances in the history of the world, where fortune has awarded a crown to one whom nature has formed to wear it. In vain Austria and Bohemia pressed him on the west; in vain would Poland, on the north, drive him from his throne; in vain did the warlike Mahomet, with his infidel hordes, ravage the southern provinces of his kingdom; as vain were domestic conspiracies and civil wars as foreign plots and hostile invasions: Mathias, feared by his nobles and loved

by his peasants, overcame by arms or diplomacy all his enemies, and extended his conquests till Vienna itself was subjected to his rule.

There are few instances in which great men have directly aided the progress of constitutional liberty—when, though governing others, they have known how to govern themselves; and Mathias had this failing of great minds—he would fain have been despotic. The checks which a constitutional form of government often imposed on the execution of his plans, or the stern voice of reproof in which a representative assembly sometimes dared to address even this dreaded monarch, suited but ill with his determined disposition. Fortunately, however, Mathias was as politic as proud; and, when pressed for men or money,—the budget has ever been the best bulwark of liberty,—no one knew better how to obtain them by timely concessions than the wise King of Hungary.

His encouragement of learning and the arts was equal even to that of the Medici; he employed the best artists from Italy; he founded a university at Presburg; he established the first printing-press at Buda; and the library of MSS., containing fifty thousand volumes, which he collected at an enormous expense, was a monument of his liberality of which few princes can boast an equal. These MSS., the greater part transcribed in the most beautiful manner by the copyists he maintained at Florence and in other parts of Europe, were richly gilt, and uniformly bound, and may still be considered as gems of biblical taste. During the period the Turks occupied Buda, the barbarians used this library to light the stoves of their baths; and in 1666, when Lambecius obtained permission to search there, he found only three or four hundred dusty volumes hidden in a dirty cellar: the bibliomane secured three of them: and a few years afterwards, when the Turks finally evacuated the place, some more were recovered, most of which have been presented to the public libraries or foreign courts. Bitterly was the death of Corvinus lamented by the Hungarian peasantry; and the "*Meg holt Mátyás, el múlt az igazság*,"—Mathias is dead, and justice gone—is still a common proverb in their mouths when oppression escapes unpunished.

It is probable that the castle of Altsohl was built by John Hunyad in 1457, when, after the defeat of Giskra and his Bohemians, he burnt the old castle, of which some few remains are still visible. It has been long neglected, and the necessary re-

pairs it has undergone have not been such as to improve its appearance. It is melancholy to see how little either the Government or people seem interested in preserving these monuments of past times, so important to history and art. Altsohl is royal property, and is used for the residence of some Government officers as well as for a prison. The old gateway is degraded to the purposes of smoking bacon: in winter a large fire is made; the double gates are shut; and the bacon, hanging from the top, becomes well cured by a repetition of this process every night for some months. There are some Gothic arches of rich and elegant workmanship, as well as several old doors, which have escaped the hand of barbarian improvers, and still proclaim the former magnificence of the building. I like the open balcony which runs round the interior court of this and almost all the old castles in Hungary; it gives a life and lightness to the large court-yard, which almost reconciles one to its manifest inconveniences.

We were shown some villanously whitewashed rooms; in one of which the ceiling is considered embellished by a series of terrible-looking figures, called Roman Emperors and Kings of Hungary. Our guide assured us the great Diet—meaning the celebrated assembly of Polish nobles under Louis I. to establish the order of succession in the two countries, in 1382,—was held in this room; though, if I am not very wrong in my notion of the age of the castle, it was not then in existence. Below the floor, in another room, is a small secret chamber, where Bethlen Gábor is said to have concealed the sacred crown of St. Stephen. It is singular that, although twice chosen king, and in actual possession of the crown, this champion of Protestantism never placed it on his head, though it is highly probable that it might have secured him the throne.

The castle is now used only as a prison, and steward's house; and its solid gateway is, as usual, hung with handcuffs, leg-irons, whips, and other notable instruments of torture,—one of which was new to us, and excited our curiosity. It was a flat board, of the shape of, and, from the resemblance called also, the Violin, with a hole in the centre, and two smaller ones at the end; the former, as we afterwards learned, for the head, and the latter for the hands of unfortunate transgressors of the law. The violin is used only for women; and they are generally made to promenade the town, bearing this clumsy substitute for a collar round the neck, amidst the laughter and abuse of the whole place.

While on this subject, I may as well say something of the prisons of Hungary, and the treatment of prisoners.

Many of the buildings used for prisons are old castles now no longer inhabited; or, in other cases, the lower part of county-houses, where the magistrates meet for the transaction of business. Several prisoners usually occupy one room, which generally does not appear deficient in size or light, though always unclean, and commonly ill-ventilated. There may be some still worse places than these—travellers often talk of horrid dungeons; but I never happened to see such, and cannot therefore speak of them. Any very dangerous ruffian, whose escape is much feared, is put in irons and secured in some strong place whence escape is impossible. In ordinary cases nothing would be easier than to get out of an Hungarian prison, though I believe it is rarely attempted.

The common prisoners in the towns are made to do the work of scavengers, and are also employed in other ways, such as drawing water, carrying mortar and stones for public buildings, and in performing any other labour to which the county officers choose to set them. In some places they are the only labourers to be observed, and the clanking of their chains follows you at every step: sometimes they may be seen threshing corn, at others driving cattle, and in one case I remember to have been ferried across a river by a prisoner in chains. They are allowed, frequently, even in small towns, and always in the country, to go about without any guard; the only restraint being the iron ring round the ankle, united by a chain to another ring round the waist. According to the character or crime of the prisoner, his chain is light or heavy. Where the prisoner is an artisan, he is generally allowed his tools, and carries on his labour for his own profit.

It must be remarked that I do not speak of the Austrian political prisons; one of which, Munkács, is situated in Hungary: of them I know nothing from personal observation, nor is it probable I should have been allowed to visit them, had I applied.

The charge of intentional cruelty cannot be supported against the prison discipline of Hungary, but it is sadly wanting in efficiency. The most galling restriction of the prison ought to consist in the deprivation of liberty, and in the observance of strict order and sobriety; which are not only severe punishments to the disorderly, and much dreaded by them, but have likewise a beneficial effect on the future character of the culprits: here, on the contrary, the prisoners have a great deal of personal li-

berty, and feel the restraint of confinement almost as little as when free.

The morality of a prison is about the same in one country as another, but the pernicious effects of bad example are greater here than with us, because the moral ignorance of the peasantry is deeper, and their habits have much more of that wandering and adventurous character which lends such a charm to the robber's life, and they are, therefore, more easily led into adopting it. It is rarely a shepherd gets into prison that he does not learn some new and improved plan of stealing his neighbours' sheep before he comes out, and it is commonly in the same school that a swineherd acquires those winning ways that makes another's pigs follow him as docilely as did the beasts of former days the pipe of Orpheus. A simple fellow, who had been sent with a large herd of swine into some woods in Transylvania to winter them on acorns, laughed when some of his fellow-herdsmen complained that their flocks grew smaller and smaller in spite of their care. "Why don't you put on bells," said he, "as I do; you would then always hear the ringing of them if any one came among your pigs?" A few nights after, the poor fellow found all his own pigs gone, and the bells left behind them. Sorrowing, he returned to his master's house, and received his flogging without a murmur; but, when it was over, he exclaimed, "If I could but see the man who stole my pigs, I would treat him to a bottle of wine if it took the last kreutzer I had." On his master's inquiring what he meant, he answered, "He must be a clever fellow; he must know some great secrets, and who knows but he might teach them to me? He not only drove my pigs away, but he went among them during the night—and they so savage that I dared not have done it myself,—took off their bells, and coaxed them away without a squeak or a grunt from any of them. Oh, he must be a great man!" A few months of prison education would hardly have been lost on so willing a scholar.

Although I have several times seen the flogging-block, and although every one assures me that it is very frequently and very publicly used, it so happened that, during the whole time I was in Hungary, I never saw a peasant flogged; but I once accidentally saw a soldier under punishment, which I may describe, as the operation is performed in precisely the same manner.

When the prisoner is laid down and secured, the Haiduk stands over him with a long hazel stick, about the thickness of a finger, with which he gives the blow with his full force, waiting a mi-

nute between each stroke. Considerable talent is required to flog well, the object being to inflict the smartest pain with the least bodily injury; and, therefore, no one is allowed to perform who has not perfected himself in the art by practising on a stuffed sack. All this is very disgusting and very savage, brutalizing to the lord even more than the peasant; for the reader will scarcely believe that some of these hardy fellows laugh at such a punishment, and it is a point of honour among them to bear it without flinching. Nothing renders the young peasant so irresistible to his mistress as his heroic support of the five-and-twenty. I believe the greater part of the Hungarian landowners are sincerely glad that this barbarous privilege no longer belongs to them; but with their bailiffs the case is different. They think all order, all law is at an end, declare they can no longer manage the rebellious peasantry, and lament, as the fall of Hungary, the end of their petty tyranny. I could have often laughed, had not the laugh been soured by scorn, at the doleful complaints of these men, so often the oppressors of the peasant, and robbers of their masters' property.

But, if the noble can no longer indulge his spleen in the sufferings of his inferiors, the officer enjoys that right in its fullest extent: if a buckle is rusty, a horse ill cleaned, the soldier a few minutes late on parade, or any other slight infraction of duty committed, the military officer can order him to be laid down, stripped, and flogged before the other men. The occasion on which I witnessed it was as I was travelling, early in the morning, over a plain where a regiment of dragoons had been exercising: the greater part were wheeling off, but one troop I observed remained on the ground. As we drew nearer I could distinguish the officer in front of his corps, and before him a man in uniform stretched on the sand; and I could hear the whistling of the hazel stick through the air, and the dead sound of it falling on living flesh. It was a sickening scene, and I was heartily glad when we had passed out of sight and hearing of it.

The youngest subaltern may at any time, and for very trivial faults, flog the men under his command. A young lieutenant of hussars told me himself, that, having once been reprimanded by a superior officer for the bad condition of a detachment under his care, he told him that, if he did not object to his flogging a little more freely than common, he would have them in order in two months' time. Consent was readily given, and he kept his word; but during that time he had not a moment's rest, nor had

a day passed without several punishments, for, as he said, he had flogged them up to the highest pitch of discipline,—and he was praised!

As a town, Altsohl's best days are gone. A single, over-wide, unpaved street, with some broken walls and towers, are all that remain of its former importance. Its inhabitants were busied in spreading to dry the first drawing of the hemp, which is cultivated to a considerable extent in this neighbourhood; and there was not a stagnant pool near, but was filled with women up to their waists in its black waters.

While we stayed to devour something, which our appetites induced us to suppose a dinner, we again met our mountebanks from Sliács, who gave H—— a proof of their sleight of hand by conjuring away his camp-stool. These people are always either Bohemians or gipsies; the Hungarians having a profound contempt for such occupations, to which scarcely any necessity can drive them. In Hungary, as well, I think, as in Germany, these gentry are called English riders; and the common people so firmly believe them English, that the servant of one of our friends inquired whether we did not all ride upon our heads in England.

I was sorry to leave this neighbourhood without seeing Dobronyiva, where there are said to be the ruins of an old castle, the gift of King Ludwig to Werböczy; but I was told they were so inconsiderable as to be without interest,—an account I have since had reason to doubt. Stephan Werböczy was entrusted by the Diet, in 1507, to draw up a digest of the acts of the Diets and of the customs of the country, that the laws might be known and understood by all. In 1514, he presented his *Tripartitum* to the Diet, and from that time to the present it has formed the chief part of the *Corpus juris* of the Hungarian lawyers. The weak character of the king, and the position of Werböczy as a follower of Zápolya, who courted the favour of the lesser nobles, contributed to render this work extremely favourable to the interests of this class, as well as to restrict the power of the Crown and magnates; but the time of its publication, just after the servile insurrection under Dosa, stamped it with a character of cruelty and injustice towards the peasantry, of which they have felt the ill effects through many generations. It is, however, undoubtedly a work of the greatest national interest, and may almost be considered the foundation of written law in Hungary.

One of the first objects which arrested our notice between

Altsohl and Kremnitz was one of those melancholy pictures of desolation, only too common here, a burnt village. It was almost six months since this village had been burnt to the ground, and as yet not a house was rebuilt. Where the unfortunate inhabitants were lodged in the interval, Heaven only knows. We saw a few women and children about the place with no covering save a short chemise, and just in the state one might suppose them to have escaped from their beds on the first alarm of fire. In many cases of this kind subscriptions are made to aid the sufferers in rebuilding their houses; in others, the landlord befriends his peasants; or in some, as here, they are left alone in their misery. Wooden cottages with thatched roofs, surrounded with corn-stacks and stables, offer such tempting food to the devouring element, that a fire once lit can rarely be put out till it has consumed the whole village.

Instead of pursuing the most direct road to Kremnitz, we made a considerable *détour* for the sake of seeing the opening of the great Schemnitz adit into the valley of the Gran. We found the opening a little beyond Zsarnovia, in a country abundantly supplied both with wood and water; but the working had ceased at this end, though it was still progressing at the other. In this valley of the Gran, which is in some parts so beautiful that I am inclined to compare it with that of the Waag, we more than once observed a curious custom, which, but that the Turks never advanced into this part of Hungary, I should have attributed to their influence,—viz.: that of the women veiling the lower part of their faces. The girls conceal only the chin, but the married women the mouth also. This covering, like the veil of the East, is formed of a long piece of white linen cloth, passed round the head so as to bind it tightly, and then turned round the neck, crossing the face and hanging down over the bosom. It is worthy of remark, that, by the same persons who would consider it immodest to go with the whole face uncovered, the petticoats are worn so short that they do not reach to the top of the boots, and in consequence the brown knees filling up the interval, are exposed without a suspicion of impropriety.

We entered the smoky suburbs of Kremnitz over a pavement almost as bad as that of Schemnitz; one might really believe from the state of the streets, that the inhabitants of these mining towns had their thoughts and interests so deeply buried in the bosom of the earth, as to have quite forgotten to make any arrangements for those who are doomed to wander upon its sur-

face. A fine pair of blue eyes—I always loved blue eyes shaded by black hair—invited us to take up our quarters at the Krone. The best room was occupied; but then the aforesaid blue eyes made such a pretty apology, and offered us so kindly the use of the room they themselves illuminated, that it was impossible not to find any accommodation good. Our letters of introduction at once laid open to us all that was most worth seeing in Kremnitz. The old Hungarian proverb, that "Kremnitz hath walls of gold, Schemnitz of silver, and Neusohl of copper," had prepared us for greater riches than the mines can now boast of. Though still worked for gold and silver, the richest veins are in a great degree exhausted; and of the former workings a considerable part now lies below the water, the pumping machine being no longer used. To clear them would not appear a work of any great difficulty; but how far it would pay is another question; for here, as in Schemnitz, the highest veins have ever been the richest. The matrix, or *gangs-masse*, is entirely quartz, the rock generally greenstone. These mines now produce about 15,000 marks of silver, and 250 marks of gold annually. The washing-floors* we visited belonged to private companies, who hold the richest and best mines here, and are certainly very superior to those of the Government at Schemnitz. They have not as yet any movement in the upper floors; but they are aware of the advantage it gives, and are about to introduce it. Kremnitz enjoys a great advantage in a very plentiful supply of water, for which she has to thank an Archbishop of Gran. In former times the primate of Hungary enjoyed the titles of master and assayer of the royal mint, and was therefore in some degree connected with the mines. The patriotic churchman at his own expense carried a water-course from the county of Thorotz to Kremnitz,

* The process used for separating gold and silver from the matrix in which they are held, is similar to that used for lead or copper. The metal is for the most part mixed up with the stony mass in such very small particles that it can only be separated perfectly by smelting: but, to prepare it for this, it is first of all broken by the hammer to about the size of the pieces Macadam recommended for roads. It is then exposed to the stamping-mill, where it passes under huge blocks which fall alternately and reduce it to the consistence of mud; it is next made to pass with water over slanting frames, where the heavy metal-bearing particles rest, while the lighter run off. The smelting removes the remaining stony matter, and separates the gold or silver from the baser metals; for it is comparatively rare that any metal occurs pure. In addition to this, it is sometimes roasted or exposed to combustion in the open air, to drive off the volatile metals—sulphur and arsenic.

nearly fifty English miles, by which to the present day an abundant supply is obtained from the other side of the Kremnitz mountains.

At a short distance beyond Kremnitz we were shown a curious phenomenon, a slide or falling in of a mountain. The crown of the mountain, about six hundred yards long and two hundred wide, had fallen in so as to occasion a valley of considerable depth. We could gain no information as to the date of this occurrence, but to a certain extent it tells its own tale; for the perpendicular face of the rock is covered with the open mouths of old mining shafts and levels to which no passage now conducts, and which therefore, must have existed before the catastrophe took place. It has been conjectured that the interior of the mountain had been so much hollowed out by the process of burning the rocks, as noticed at Schemnitz, that, the natural support being removed, some slight earthquake had shaken down the overhanging crust. But I think it more probable that it has been effected by an earthquake of considerable force, which must have first thrown up the rocks, and then received them into the chasm it had formed; for on the slope of the hill, down nearly to the town, are scattered some hundred enormous blocks of white quartz—the whole surface of rock exposed by the fall is of the same quartz,—looking more like the ruins of some Sicilian temple than the ordinary position of masses of rock, and for the appearance of which in such a situation no other solution can be given. On this slope are traces of former buildings, the date of which must certainly have been antecedent to the present position of the masses of stone I have mentioned; and it is highly probable that they were mining buildings, and that they were destroyed simultaneously with the mines. Independently of the consideration that the exposed surface bears no marks of any large cavity, the Romans were too skilful miners to have exposed themselves to such an accident. This opinion is further confirmed by the statement of our guide that on the other side of the mountain he believed a similar falling-in to have occurred where no mines ever existed, the space formed by which now serves as a natural reservoir for water.*

In Kremnitz all the gold and silver produced in Hungary is

* I find from a note in Engel (Geschichte von Ungarn, pt. iii. p. 61,) that, in 1443, a great earthquake occurred in Hungary, Poland, and Bohemia, and that the mines in Hungary were much injured by it; so that it is probable this may fix the date of the fall at Kremnitz.

or ought to be coined, whether gained by private individuals or by the Government. The Hungarians always had, and have even to the present day, the greatest horror of their gold and silver leaving the country, and they firmly believe that they should all grow rich if they could but keep it at home; so that many laws have been made at different times with this object in view, and among others one which renders the coining at Kremnitz imperative on the Government. The amount annually coined at Kremnitz is about 250,000*l.* sterling (2,500,000 florins *c. m.*;) but it is probable this is much less than the amount produced, for it is known that a large quantity finds its way to Vienna in bars,—besides the acknowledged 267 marks of gold and 17,812 of silver —of which no account is rendered to the nation. The gold and silver, when brought to Kremnitz, are mixed together in molten masses in different proportions, according to the district whence they come:* here they are separated by boiling in sulphuric acid, by which means sulphate of silver is formed while the gold remains pure, and the acid is again separated from the silver by lime. The process of coining, allowing for the difference of machinery, is pretty much the same I believe every where. The metal is rolled into thin plates, the round pieces punched out, reduced to weight by delicate filing, cleaned in spirits of wine, and then stamped. The stamping-machines now used are new ones made in Vienna from a Prussian model; but they do not work well, the stamp not falling flat on the coin. This might be remedied by a very simple change in the machinery; but they say they have no mechanist here capable of doing it, and consequently they will continue to wear out their stamps unnecessarily for some time to come. The silver is mostly coined into pieces of twenty kreutzers (zwanzigers,) and the gold into ducats and half ducats.

On the morning we were about to leave Kremnitz, the gentleman to whose kindness I had been already indebted for much attention sent down to tell me I might see a *Silber-blick;* which, as it occurs but once a week, and rarely at a convenient time for travellers, was an opportunity not to be missed. I was just in time. Contained in a gigantic caldron was a molten mass of

* It is not improbable (as suggested by Hene) that the noble metals, united in this way in different proportions, was called by the Greeks ΗΛΕΚΤΡΟΝ; for, as far as we know, they were not acquainted with the method of separating them, and therefore could have used pure only what was found in a pure state.

liquid metals,—gold, silver, lead, and copper,—over the surface of which a huge pair of bellows continually drove streams of flame.

The object of this process, which lasts four-and-twenty hours, is to separate the noble from the ignoble metals, which is effected by the oxidation of the latter. At the moment the oxidation is complete, a bright bluish-white metallic lustre spreads itself over the whole surface of the liquid metal, which is hailed with no slight joy by the workmen, as it proclaims that their long and painful task is finished.

The impure metals are then allowed to run off, a stream of warm water is passed over the gold and silver to cool them, the solid mass is taken out, cut up into bars, weighed and sent off to the mint, where the gold and silver are separated, as already described, and coined. The smelting-houses of Kremnitz are the best in Hungary: instead of the common bellows, they have the double-cylinder bellows worked by water, which maintains a constant blast; and the loss of lead, instead of being twenty pounds to the mark, is reduced to twelve.

And here we shall rest for a little space from our travels, and dedicate a short chapter to an important part of the laws and institutions of Hungary, which, although frequently alluded to, has not yet been fully brought before the reader's notice.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE HUNGARIAN NOBLES.

Nobility in Hungary a Privilege, not a Rank.—Bulla Aurea, similar to our Magna Charta.—Privileges of Nobles.—Tenure of Property not Feudal.—The Insurrection.—Non-payment of Taxes.—Classes of Nobility.—The Magnates.—Count Crachat.—The Gentry.—The "One-house" Nobles—their Hospitality.—The Constituency of Hungary compared to that of other constitutional Nations.—The Costume of the Nobles.

"*Nemes ember vagyak!*" (I am a nobleman!) proudly answers the mustachioed Magyar when any question of freedom of speech or action is raised; and, as he does so, he twirls the cherished ornament of his upper lip, strikes together his long spurs, and seems to increase in stature on the announcement of his dignity. Whence flows this pride of rank? Not from the social position conferred by it, for I have seen a noble wear the livery of servitude; not from wealth, for many of them are as poor as the peasantry; not from high name or historical recollections, for the reputation of the greater number never extended beyond their native villages, and the ignorance of these at least is so great as to preclude the indulgence of such associations. No! from none of these—the ordinary attendants upon rank, and for which it is commonly respected,—does the pride of the Magyar arise; but from the solid advantages of civil and political privileges, which, if less poetical, are much more substantial considerations. In fact, the word "noble" has a meaning altogether different from its signification with us. It answers more to our "freeman," and expresses a right to certain political and civil privileges not enjoyed by the rest of the population.

From the æra of the conquest of the country the Hungarian nobles claim to date the origin of their rights and privileges; but the legal act by which they were secured, and by the terms of which the present monarch at his coronation swore to maintain them, was executed in 1222.

This act, "Sacratissimi Regis Andreæ Secundi Decretum," is

commonly called the Magna Charta of Hungary, or *Bulla Aurea*, and was obtained from the weakness of Andreas and his Barons by the great body of the inferior nobles in arms, under his son Bela.

So important a document may claim some notice even from the passing traveller. Its principal enactments are the following:—

1. Personal freedom was secured to every noble, by rendering it illegal to imprison him till cited and convicted before the ordinary tribunals.

2. In civil rights, the lesser nobles obtained freedom from taxation; from the necessity of foreign service, except at the king's expense; defence against oppression on the part of governors of counties; the descent of property without hinderance to the sons; and, on the failure of male heirs, the appropriation of a quarter to the daughters; absolute immunity for the widow, even in case of condemnation, and confiscation of the property of the husband; and some minor enactments, apparently directed against the oppression of the great nobles.

3. In ecclesiastical matters, the priesthood were confirmed in the same liberties and immunities as the nobles, and their right to tithes of corn and wine in kind established for ever.

4. Politically, the condition of the lesser nobles was bettered, by being placed more nearly on an equality with the higher nobles; by the subjection of all to the court of the Palatine, except in cases of life and death, or confiscation, when the King alone could condemn; by the reservation to themselves of the right of admitting foreigners to place and power; but, most of all, by the thirty-first and last article,* by which the right of resistance is fully acknowledged in case the king, or any of his successors, should not observe the terms of this charter.

From that day to this, the Kings of Hungary have sworn, at their coronation, to observe the conditions of the Bulla Aurea; and it is on this foundation that the chief rights of the Hungarians repose.

Since the year 1687, the last article respecting the right of

* The Magna Charta has nearly the same provision. "And the said twenty-five Barons (appointed to watch over the observance of the charter,) together with the commonalty of the whole land, may distrain and distress us all the ways possible, namely, by seizing our castles, lands, possessions, and in any other way they can, till the grievance is redressed according to their judgment; saving harmless our own person, and the person of our queen and children: and, when it is redressed, they shall obey us as before."

resistance has been omitted in the coronation oath; not, as the royal decree says, "from any objection to its true sense, but lest evil-disposed persons by a false interpretation should make a wrong use of it."

The English reader can scarcely fail to be struck by the singular coincidence of two countries, so far apart as England and Hungary, having obtained, within seven years of each other,—the English in 1215, the Hungarians in 1222,—through the weakness of their monarchs, the great charters of their liberties. Nor, if he looks a little further, will he be less surprised to find that at that time the Hungarians were equal, if not before us, in enlightened notions of personal freedom, of civil right, and of political privilege. It would be out of our province to investigate the causes which have produced the different results which we observe at the present moment; but I suspect a fair estimate of them would give us little cause for the indulgence of national vanity. The accident of geographical position has often worked mighty results in our favour and against the Hungarians.

The prerogatives of the Hungarian nobles, as they exist at the present day, are commonly divided into two classes, the Cardinal and the non-Cardinal. The Cardinal prerogatives are three, and are all derived from the provisions of the Bulla Aurea.

1. The person of the noble is inviolable until tried and condemned, except in cases of high treason, or when taken in the fact. Of course, imprisonment for debt is unheard of. The court of the noble—that is, his house and a certain extent of land about it,—is a sort of sanctuary into which no legal officer can enter without permission. Such privileges, however unnecessary where the *Habeas Corpus*, the trial by jury, the right of bail, and the freedom of the press,—so many complicated barriers raised by human wit to protect the liberty of the subject against the undue exercise of power,—exist, are nevertheless of infinite value where such is not the case; and they, in fact, answer nearly the same purpose in a much simpler manner. Our only objection to them is, that they are confined to the few. They may sometimes let the guilty escape; but that is so trifling a fault, compared with the oppression of the innocent, that it is scarcely worth mentioning.

2. The noble is subject to none but his legally crowned king.

3. A noble alone is capable of holding landed property; for which he is liable neither to tax, tithe, nor toll. The legal tradition of tenure, if I may so call it, supposes the Hungarian noble

a descendant of those who first conquered the country, and among whom it was afterwards divided by the king; and from thence is deduced his right to hold it, without any other condition than the duty of appearing in arms under the banner of his sovereign, to defend the country from foreign invasion. We must diverge for a few moments to consider more minutely this Hungarian tenure, and to compare it with the feudal tenure once common in other parts of Europe. The Hungarian noble holds his lands as a gift from the sovereign; and, on the failure of heirs male,* it recurs to the donor, to be re-bestowed on some deserving person. This property cannot be legally sold;† and its disposal is strictly cared for. The sons, on coming of age (twenty-four years,) may demand a certain portion as alimony; and, at the death of the father, the estate must be equally divided amongst them all; a slight advantage only being accorded to one, and that the youngest,—the right of keeping for himself his father's house.‡

It has been a matter of dispute whether this is a feudal holding, or whether, in fact, the feudal system ever prevailed in Hungary. The question depends entirely on the meaning attached to the term: if by feudal be meant merely the holding of land under the obligation of military service, it certainly did exist; but I fancy this would be an incorrect interpretation, for, in every age and

* Female fiefs, or fiefs common,—for, under these, both sons and daughters inherit in equal shares,—do exist: but they are few in number, and generally small in extent. A striking exception to the latter restriction, however, occurs in the county of Arva, almost the whole of which is a female fief.

† Notwithstanding this, estates are sold every day; for a man can mortgage for perpetuity. Although the intention of the law is thus defeated, the title to the property is still insecure; for any member of the family obliged to sell, can at any time redeem the estate by paying the original purchase money, and the sums laid out in improvements. If, for instance, A. B. sold an estate for a thousand pounds to C. D. in the year 1800, any member of A. B.'s family, his nephew's or cousin's descendants, in 1900, may pay the 1000*l.* together with the "ameliorations," and receive back the estate. In order to provide against this contingency, the sum is commonly entered in the title deeds as the double of that really given, and the purchaser runs up such a bill for improvements, and the law is so dilatory, that it is often ruinous to take an estate back again. Still thousands of these law-suits are commenced every year, to the benefit of the lawyers, if of nobody else.

‡ The reason assigned for this provision is, that the younger son may be induced to remain in the father's house, a comfort to his aged parents, after all the rest have left to seek their fortunes in the world, and still have a shelter for his head when they die. He cannot, however, claim it till the death of both parents, the widow having a prior right.

country, the holder of landed property has been liable to be called on to defend, either in person or by deputy, both his property and the country of which it forms a part: but if by feudal be understood that system by which the possessor of every estate was obliged to submit himself to some superior, to do homage to him on taking possession of his lands, and make himself liable to a variety of obligations, in return for which he could demand protection and support, it is in total contradiction to the whole spirit of Hungarian law. Several Kings of Hungary, attracted by the power the feudal system conferred on the monarch in other countries, and either themselves foreigners, or influenced by foreign counsellors, did attempt to introduce it, but always met with the most decided opposition. The very prerogative, "An Hungarian noble is subject only to his legally crowned king," seems expressly intended to prevent the possibility of vassalage, or the dependence of one noble upon another. The feudal system, too, contained gradations of rank innumerable, essentially opposed to the principle that all the nobles have the same rights. The tenure of property then in Hungary is not feudal: and although many of the semi-barbarous institutions of the middle ages, which in vulgar parlance we call "feudal," were common to Hungary with the rest of Europe; and although perhaps these same nobles, whilst they rejected the yoke themselves, may have imposed some of its burdens on their peasants; yet may we safely affirm that as a system feudality never prevailed in Hungary.

The most important among the non-Cardinal prerogatives of the noble are, his exemption from having soldiers quartered upon him, and his exclusive right to sell certain articles within the boundaries of his own estates. We shall now consider how far some of these institutions are adapted to the spirit and wants of the present age.

Every Hungarian noble is born a soldier,—such is the theory of the constitution; and, in former times, when directed against the undisciplined hordes of the Moslem, or engaged with similar forces in the border warfare of Poland and Bohemia, well did they maintain the theory. Since that time, however, a great change has taken place; and the events of the last war showed how ill the institutions of former days were fitted for the present time. When the troops of Napoleon advanced on Vienna, the Emperor quitted his capital, sought refuge in Hungary, and called on his faithful Hungarians to place themselves in the breach

between him and his victorious enemy. All griefs were instantly forgotten; in vain Napoleon tempted them by promises of a constitution, of freedom, of nationality; they remained true to their king, and flocked in thousands to his standard. A strange picture they are said to have presented. Here a rusty sabre, there a broken musket; this man seeking arms, that asking for ammunition; horses and men, alike untrained to service, forming a mass of confusion and disorder which carried the elements of defeat within itself. The first shock was sufficient to scatter to the winds the hereditary defences of the nation. Far be it from us to reproach them for it; they had nothing but a good-will to help them; and one rather wonders at the wild enthusiastic loyalty which brought them to the field, than accuses them of want of courage when obliged to quit it.

The insufficiency of the *Insurrection*, as it is called, however, in its present form, was proved beyond a question; and the next consideration was, how it could be remedied. It was evident to all that either the nobles must be trained and taught the use of arms, be formed into a National Guard, or consent to pay taxes. They have constantly and earnestly demanded the first of these expedients, but the Government as constantly insinuates the necessity of the second. In the mean time Hungary is without defence: for the Government is so jealous of any accession to popular power, and so conscious of the dissatisfaction of the Hungarians with its proceedings, that it will not allow any thing like a national arming to take place; while the Hungarians stoutly maintain their right of defending themselves, and refuse to compound for their personal services by a tax for the support of mercenaries. And a wise, a noble resolution we hold it to be; for what they want in an army is a defence for Hungary, and not an instrument for the subjection of others, which might in its turn be employed against themselves.

Another privilege of the Hungarian nobles, still more cherished, is the freedom from taxation which they enjoy. To pay a tax in Hungary has so long been the duty of the peasant only, that it has come at last to be considered servile and degrading. It is true that the Diet, at the coronation of the king and queen, votes an *honorarium*, which is paid entirely by the nobles; and in like manner, in time of war it has often voted extraordinary subsidies from the nobles; but these have always been received as favours by the Crown, not demanded as matters of right. The legal fiction on which this right is founded,—that they serve

their king in war,—is not tenable for a moment; indeed, it would much better apply to the peasant class, from which the whole sixty thousand efficient troops are now drawn.* But although it is impossible to advocate the right of any one class of men to the enjoyment of privileges at the expense of the rest of the community, and although we cannot therefore say that it is just that the Hungarian nobles should pay no tax, yet we do feel that the more enlightened of them have some show of reason on their side when they declare that they will only yield up the privilege on obtaining a direct influence on the expenditure of the revenue; in other words, a budget and a responsible ministry. As for the arguments of the less enlightened,—the men who ask, "What need have we to pay taxes?"—"Is not the dignity of the Crown amply provided for by the revenues of the Crown?"—"Are not the troops for foreign service finished and supported by the peasantry, and do not the peasantry live on our lands?"—"and are not we ready at any time to come forward in defence of our country?"—we have no sympathy for them. The Austrian exchequer, it is well known, is, and has been for centuries, in a miserably low state; and, there are no arts—except those of enlightened policy and honest administration—which have not been put in practice to improve it. The Hungarians claim the right of a free import and export on the payment of a five per cent. duty, and the right has been as solemnly acknowledged as it was possible to have been by royal oaths; yet, in spite of this, no sooner did the Austrian dynasty ascend the throne of Hungary, than a system of indirect taxation was begun, which has gone on increasing to the present moment, when almost every article imported from any other country than Austria pays a duty of sixty per cent. The effects of this system I shall allude to hereafter; I mention it now to show that the Hungarian nobles are taxed most heavily, and in a manner, too, which leaves them no control over either taxation or expenditure, and which produces ten times more evil than the small profit arising from it is worth. Whenever Austria is reproached with this, she always pleads necessity, and the refusal of the Hungarian nobles to contribute in any more direct manner to the burdens of the state. It is time that this paltry policy was laid aside on the one hand,

* Nor do I think that this is any modern innovation, for the very meaning of the word *Húszár* (Hussar) is derived from *húsz* (twenty;) because, by an act of the Diet in 1458, every twenty peasants throughout Hungary were obliged to furnish one horse-soldier properly equipped for service.

and on the other. Let the Hungarian Diet solemnly pledge itself to contribute its share to the revenues whenever the king shall grant sufficient guarantees for their just expenditure, and Austria would then be forced to give up a system which, while it crushes Hungary to the ground, is beneficial to none, save the smuggler and the hungry and dishonest bureaucrat.

The monopoly of the sale of wine, bread, and meat, which every noble enjoys within his own villages, is more injurious to the country, and more vexatious to the other classes, than even the non-payment of taxes; but we shall postpone the consideration of this subject till we come to speak of the municipal institutions, where its discussion will be more appropriate.

If the law has made no distinction in the constitutional rights of the nobles, custom has established in their social position as marked gradations as are to be found in the various classes of society of any other country. The Hungarians maintain, I believe, that the titled nobles date only from the accession of the House of Hapsburg to the throne, and that the magnates of former times were only so from their position as Barons and Counts of the kingdom, that is, great officers of the court, and governors of the counties. Even the very titles themselves, *Gróf* and *Báro*, are borrowed from the German *Graf* and *Baron*.*

Be this as it may,—at present they are divided socially into three classes: the magnates, answering to our peers; the untitled nobles, a middle class, answering to our gentry; and the "one house nobles," men possessing the hereditary rights of nobility, but in every other respect—in property, education, and manners —little above the peasant.

* It is well known that these titles are now regularly sold by the Austrian court. I believe the common price of a Count's title is 5000*l.*, that of a Baron only 2000*l.* It will be recollected that Stulz—that prince of London tailors—was created a Baron in the list of Austrian nobles for the consideration of 10,000*l.*! The heraldic distinction of nobility is a coronet. That of a Count bears eleven balls; of a Baron, seven; and of a gentleman, two balls and three leaves, something like that of our Marquis. The homagium, or fine for murder, of a magnate, was fixed, at a very early period, at four hundred florins, *c.m.*; that of a gentleman, at two hundred; and that of a peasant, at forty. I need scarcely add, that, though this homagium still exists, it is not a composition for murder, as some German writers would fain have us believe, when they say an Hungarian noble pays forty florins for murdering his peasant. Murder, be the rank of the party what it may, is punished by death, the homagium being added, as a kind of deodand, to the capital punishment.

Among the magnates may be found the most polished and refined manners, and the most elaborate education. Many of them, besides enjoying the advantages of domestic tutors of different nations, spend some years in a foreign university and in foreign travel. Their estates, for the most part of immense extent, if yielding them less revenue (rarely exceeding 10,000*l.*) than many of our peers possess, enable them, from the greater cheapness of living, to enjoy full as many luxuries. The splendid scale on which some of the establishments in Hungary are formed, the number of servants and horses kept,—the two great marks of superabundant wealth,—are scarcely equalled amongst us.

Yet it is from this class Hungary has the least to hope for the advancement of her institutions, and the maintenance of her nationality. To the proud and wealthy, the attractions of a court, where their magnificence may find worthy rivals and admirers, are generally irresistible; but they are only dangerous when they remove them far from those with whom their interests and duties ought naturally to bring them into association. It is unfortunate that such is the case in Hungary. Vienna is essentially German: and although Pest may claim all the other attractions of a capital, its palace has never tempted the Emperor to hold his court there; nor has policy allowed his representative, the Palatine, to assume a splendour which, by creating a personal popularity, might render him obnoxious to the charge of ambition. The wealthier magnates, therefore, flock to Vienna; and absenteeism here, as elsewhere, has not produced kindly feelings, either in the deserters or the deserted. In the one, the repetition of sneers from those they would imitate, against turbulence and barbarism, has led to a disgraceful neglect of political duties, and an affected contempt for the less wealthy and polished of their fellow-countrymen; while in the other a bitter animosity has been engendered, which it requires the greatest exertions of the prudent to restrain within due bounds.

Nor is the absentee magnate always the gainer, either in importance or respectability, by his expatriation. The rich Hungarian often renders himself a fair butt for the smart sallies of the Vienna witlings. Who that has been at Vienna does not know Count Crachat?—a pompous peer, who, on coming to his large fortune, was tempted to Vienna by the smiles of the court; whose wealth made it desirable to retain him in the capital; whose influence it was thought might be dangerous at home; and from whom an insignificant employment, and the glittering bau-

ble which hangs on his breast, have bought forgetfulness of his native land. Aping the expensive follies of richer men, for which he is only laughed at; ambitious of the honours of office, and finding himself put off with a mere nominal dignity; toiling for distinction in the fickle world of fashion, and being dubbed "*le dandy sauvage*" for his pains,—poor Crachat, half ruined and supremely ridiculous, still thinks himself a very great man. He affects surprise how Hungarian gentlemen can speak the same barbarous language as the peasantry; wonders how the people spend their time who live in the wilds of Hungary; considers the Liberals very noisy troublesome fellows who do not know what they want, and the Diet itself a great bore. As for Pest, he supposes it is something like a large village; has heard that robbery and murder are so common that it is unsafe to walk the streets; is shocked at the dreadful state of its society, and laments the lot of some poor relatives who are condemned to dwell there! —And from the same class what a glorious contrast might be drawn! an honourable name, an active patriotism, a pride of nationality, softened by a refined education, and directed by practical good sense! To such a picture I could prefix a dozen names, —and those not fictitious like that of poor Crachat.

Among the magnates we must expect the most striking exceptions from the ordinary standard, whether of good or of evil; but it is to the second class, the landed gentry, that the country must look as her main stay and support. With less refinement of manners, and less of that easy address which nothing but living in the world can give, with a less extended education, especially in modern languages, and with perhaps less freedom from national prejudices, the untitled nobility still possess a much greater knowledge of their country, and a much better will to maintain its rights and improve its institutions, than the more brilliant magnates. In the capital they cannot rival the elegance and splendour of the great Counts and Barons; but in the country, surrounded by all those objects which render the life of the country gentleman the happiest in the world, there are few characters more respectable than that of the *Tekintetes Ur* (respectable sir) of Hungary. Though less polished than the same class in our own country, I can assure the reader they have many of the same characteristics. The country squires of half a century back,—the Squire Westerns, ay, and Tom Joneses, too,—might easily find their counterparts in Hungary. Except in England, I know of no other country where this class can be said to exist; where

men of property, from a love of the country and its manly amusements, prefer it as a residence for the whole year, to the greater comforts and luxuries of the town. It must not be concealed, however, that among some of the members of this class in Hungary there is a mass of prejudice, and an obstinate adherence to antiquated privileges, which, if it once saved the constitution from destruction, now threatens sometimes to stifle the young efforts of reform.

There is occasionally to be found among them, too, a coarseness of manner, which was the more annoying to us, because the elders believed it to be of English origin, and attributed it to the spread of Liberal notions; indeed, I am not quite sure that there was not some idea of *sansculotism* mixed up with it. I have heard of some young Liberal noblemen, a few years since dressing like peasants, living in their cottages, and associating with them on terms of equality; but I never saw any thing of the kind, and I always suspected a rustic amour or some such cause to have been at the bottom of these pranks. Even at the present day, however, a greater elegance of manner is still desirable.

Of the *Egy házy Nemes Ember* (one house noble,) or *Félsarkantyús* (half-spurred) or *Bocskoros* (sandalled,) as they are nicknamed, I know little, as they rarely speak German, and we had seldom occasion to meet with them. They are chiefly Protestants, and very strongly attached to their faith.*

Ignorance and poverty, united to the enjoyment of exclusive privileges, do not offer the most happy combination for the development of the best parts of the human character; but yet they have by no means extinguished all its brighter qualities amongst these men. The Half-spurs, it is true, are generally a proud, unruly, hard-drinking set of fellows, with higher notions of privilege and power than of right and justice; but they are brave, patriotic, and hospitable in the highest degree. I remember once seeking shelter in the house of one of this class, when the snow and darkness had rendered our further progress impossible that night. Right gladly were we received. The mother, with her son and daughter-in-law and their children, occupied a cottage of only three rooms, besides the kitchen and out-houses. There were two neighbours, living some twenty miles off, of the same class, who had dropped in, like ourselves, unexpectedly; and, though the accommodation was rather scanty, they managed to

* The magnates are almost entirely Catholics, the gentry chiefly Protestants, and the lower nobles commonly of the same religion.

provide beds for us all. A good and plentiful supper,—a man must be very poor in Hungary who cannot give his guest an abundant meal,—of several dishes, in which chickens baked and chickens boiled cut a prominent figure, washed down by strong wine, soon put the whole party at their ease. Of Hungarian I unfortunately knew nothing, and they were very indifferent Germans; but the wine helped conversation, and served instead of a dictionary. They pledged us in deep bumpers,—asked us if wine was made in England,—declared we were right good fellows and worthy to be Hungarians,—vowed we should pay them each a visit in turn,—nay, swore they would take the wheels off the carriage, und never let us out of the house till we could speak Hungarian as well as the best Magyar amongst them.

Of these three grades of nobility, making a population of half a million, is formed the real constituency of Hungary.*

It is difficult to calculate how many voters there are in this number; but as the sons have the right to vote during the life of the father, as soon as they arrive at age, and as widows may send their deputies, I think we may state one-fourth, or 125,000, as about the probable number. The whole population of Hungary proper may be reckoned at 10,000,000, so that the proportion of the represented is one in twenty, if the number of adult males only be considered; or one in seventy-five, if the whole population be taken. Now in France the population is 30,000,000; the number of electors is, or was in 1836, 200,000; leaving a proportion of only one in a hundred and fifty. In England, since the reform act, with a population of 25,000,000, the number of voters has been stated at nearly 1,000,000, or one in twenty-five; but, before the reform, I doubt if the proportion of the represented to the unrepresented was greater than in Hungary. Now, though I do not mean to compare the qualification of birth with that of property,—though I believe the sole advantage consists in that the one is acquirable and the other not,—I have been anxious to show the English reader that it is not so small a proportion of the whole which governs in Hungary as we are led to believe when we hear it called an aristocracy,—not so small as governs

* I have not included in this estimate the clergy, citizens, and inhabitants of the Haiduk towns,—all privileged classes, and sending members to the Diet; because the right of vote of their members is disallowed, and I consider them as at present excluded. They do not amount to less than 800,000, and, if taken into the calculation, would far out-number in proportion the voters of almost every country in Europe.

in democratic France at the present moment; and as for the argument that the nobles as a class have the power to oppress the peasantry, and that the interests of the one, when opposed to the interests of the other, are sure to be sacrificed, it seems to be so nearly the same case as that of the rich and poor with us, that it is hardly worth speaking of.

It would be an unpardonable sin not to give a particular description of the Hungarian uniform; for, after the language, it is one of the most cherished of the Magyar's nationalisms; and is considered so essential to his rank, that I believe the more ignorant scarcely believed us when we told them, that, as English gentlemen, we had no uniform. It has undergone its changes, however, as well as other things; and its history is almost a type of the people's. In early days it smacked strongly of Turkish taste in the gaiety of its colours, and the quantity of jewels with which it was loaded; during the reign of Joseph it received a most unnatural and Frenchified cut, and the coat and its wearers were very near losing their nationality together: it has now again assumed its antique proportions and original form; and, while all its peculiar beauties are preserved, its uncouth inelegancies have been softened down by the simple and refined taste of the present century. It now consists of the *Attilla*, a frock-coat, reaching nearly to the knee, with a military collar, and covered in front with gold lace; over this is generally worn, hanging loosely on one shoulder, the *Mente*, a somewhat larger coat, lined with fur, and with a fur cape. It is generally suspended by some massive jewelled chain. The tight pantaloons and ankle-boots, with the never-failing spurs, form the lower part. The *Kalpak*, or fur cap, is of innumerable forms, and ornamented by a feather fastened by a rich brooch. The white heron's plume, or aigrette, the rare product of the southern Danube, is the most esteemed. The neck is open, except for a black ribbon loosely passed round it, the ends of which are finished with gold fringe. The sabre is in the shape of the Turkish scimitar: indeed richly ornamented Damascus blades, the spoils of some unsuccessful Moslem invasion, are very often worn, and are highly prized.

The sword-belt is frequently a heavy gold chain, such as our ancient knights wore over their armour. The colours, and in many respects the form, of the Hungarian uniform depend entirely on the taste of the individual, and vary from the simple blue dress of the hussar, with white cotton lace, to the rich stuffs covered with pearls and diamonds, of the Prince Esterházy.

On the whole, I know of no dress so handsome, so manly, and at the same time so convenient. It is only on gala days that gay and embroidered dresses are used; on ordinary occasions, as sittings of the Diet, county meetings, and others in which it is customary to wear uniform, dark colours with black silk lace,—like that formerly worn by our officers in undress,—and trowsers, or Hessian-boots, are commonly used. Many of the old school wear this dress constantly, while others follow the rest of the world in imitating England; nay, so much is Anglomania now the mode, that a fashionable tailor of Pest never dreams of pleasing his customers without assuring them he makes their coats according to the last pattern received from London.

CHAPTER XV.

THE NORTHERN CARPATHIANS.

The Carpathians.—The Krivan.—The Lomnitzer Head.—Schmöcks, a Bathing-place.—Excursion to the Valleys of the Kahlbach, and Five Lakes.—A Country Gentleman of the Old School.—Hungarian Freedom compared with English.—A Chamois Hunt.—A Scene in the Mountains.—The Jägers, and their Story of the Bear and the Wood-ranger.—Kesmark and the Tökölys—The Zipser Protestants.—Caraffa's Persecutions.—Mysterious Adventure at Leutschau.

From Presburg, where the Danube enters Hungary, to Orsova, where it leaves it, one unbroken chain of mountains bounds the western, northern, and eastern limits of the kingdom. In this course, two great mountain offsets are formed: one between the north and west portion, extending on the east nearly to the Theiss; the other comprising the whole of Transylvania. In the valley of the Waag we were constantly enclosed between branches of the western chain; at Schemnitz we were in the midst of the western offset; and we are now about to visit the highest part of the northern range, the Tatra.

On resuming the course of our travels after this digression, I shall at once transport the reader, without pausing to describe the route, from Kremnitz to the foot of the Krivan, a short distance only from Hradek. This Krivan is one of the noblest mountains I ever saw. It is not the absolute elevation of a mountain which impresses the beholder, so much as its position, form, and height, relative to surrounding objects. Though not more than seven thousand eight hundred feet above the level of the sea the Krivan rises so immediately from the plain, with its conical form and fine rocky summit, and towers so gloriously above all its neighbours, that it gave me a finer idea of a vast mountain than any other I had before seen. We spent the night at Vichodna, a small village at its base, in hopes either of making some arrangements for an ascent the next day, or, what would have been still better, for joining a great chamois hunt, which we had heard was to take place on the mountain in the course

of a week. In both respects we were disappointed; the hunt was deferred *sine die;* and the clouds, which we had so much admired the day before, as they hung lightly round the hoary monarch's head, or occasionally rolled down his sides, or leaving the fine peak clear, now so completely obscured the whole mountain, that we could not even get an outline of its form.

Though the middle of August was scarcely past, we began to feel the cold mountain blasts most painfully; nor could all our coverings keep us warm as we pushed on towards Lomnitz.

The highest of the Tatra range, the Lomnitzer Spitze, (head,) as the Germans call it, was now directly before us; and we determined to penetrate some of its recesses, and to see something of its hidden, almost unknown beauties.

The lord of these bleak territories entertained us most hospitably, and put us in the way of accomplishing our wishes. About ten miles from Lomnitz, and just at the foot of the mountain, there is a little bathing-place, called Schmöcks; and here it was determined that we should take up our abode, and visit the neighbouring wonders at our leisure. Considerable doubts were expressed as to the possibility of our carriage arriving at its destination; but, as they said others had preceded it, I ventured to try. Surely, never was a more uncouth road formed; it was impossible to sit over it, and nothing less than Stephan's skill in hanging to the wheels could have kept the carriage up.

Just at the rise of the mountain, and in a thick forest of pines, of which it may be said to form a part,—for it is built of pine trees, and roofed with shingles of the same material,—we found Schmöcks, a pretty little settlement, which would not be out of place among the squatters of North America.

The pretensions of Schmöcks to be called a bathing-place rest on the possession of two or three cold springs, said to contain carbonic acid gas, magnesia, and a little carbonate of iron; and which, among other excellent qualities, have the reputation of giving a glorious appetite. The wooden *châlets*, though rude in appearance, form no bad lodging-rooms: a good restaurateur is always ready to satisfy the appetite which the waters create; and the whole place, laid out with some little taste, and affording a splendid view over the valley below, is pleasant enough for a short visit. I believe it is more frequented by the healthy than the sick; for, as a starting point to visit the Lomnitz Head and the valleys of the Carpathians, it is decidedly the best that can be selected. We found a large and sociable party collected in

this mountain nook, to some of whom we were immediately introduced. Among others was the Countess C——, who, on hearing that our route would lead us by her house, with that hospitality of which we had such frequent proofs, insisted on our making it our resting-place as long as was agreeable to us. As we joined the common table at supper, some hungry travellers came in, who had just returned from a two days' excursion, during which they had mounted the Spitze, and descended on the other side. They did not give a very favourable account of the expedition; for after the difficulty and danger of the ascent, which they represented as considerable, had been overcome, they were unable to remain more than a few minutes on the summit, on account of the intense cold. The people here say, that, of those who attempt the ascent, very few persevere to the end. There is nothing, however, but a good-will and a stout pair of legs needed: of actual danger there is little, except in case of mists, which are rather common. We had promised to go up if Professor S—— joined us; so that we left the undertaking to the last, half in hopes he would not keep his appointment.

Before supper was over, a second party came in from chamois hunting. One fine two-year old buck was all their bag contained; but even that is considered good sport with such shy game.

Next morning, provided with a guide, and accompanied by a young artist who was murdering the beauties of nature here, we started for an excursion to the lesser Kahlbacher valley and the Fünf Seen (Five Lakes,) two points which all agreed in recommending as the best worth seeing. For the first half-hour, we proceeded by a gentle ascent which brought us to the top of a hill overlooking the great Kahlbacher valley, into which we descended rapidly by a broken foot-track to a small bridge which crosses the Kahlbach, where it forms a pretty waterfall; and then following the valley lying between the Lomnitzer Spitze on one side, and the Königs Nase (King's Nose) on the other, we arrived at the opening of the lesser valley. A strange wild scene that valley presented! The blasted pine, the huge masses of shapeless rock, and the angry fretful stream seemed the sole denizens of its solitude. A little further on, the elevation we had reached became evident from the gradual diminution of vegetable growth; nature seemed subdued by the cold blasts from the neighbouring snow mountains, and the plants had shrunk before the winds they were too feeble to resist. A little further

and no vegetation rises more than three or four feet above the surface; while the only tree which grows is a pine, much like the Scotch fir in leaf, but which, instead of raising itself in the air, spreads its branches in a bush-like form along the ground. This the peasants call the *Krumm Holz* (deformed wood.) Many beautiful plants may still be found; among others, a tussilago, some rare edums, a gentian, one or two grasses, and an abundance of mosses.

In this valley is the place where the night is usually passed previous to ascending the *Spitze;* for which purpose accident has provided an excellent chamber, as a huge sheet of granite has fallen in such a manner as to afford a covering for half a dozen persons. Directly above this point towers the Lomnitzer Head, so clear to-day that it did not seem an hour's walk from us, though it requires at least six or seven to accomplish it.*

The road pointed out by our guide is nearly perpendicular, and lies in a watercourse filled with loose stones. The worst part of our walk ere we reached the Five Lakes was yet to come. Just before us lay a steep ascent covered with fragments of granite of every size from that of a house to a mere pebble, all loose, and rolling from their places with the slightest touch. Though of no great height, it occupied us a good hour, and cost us torn hands and broken shins to master it; but it was worth the cost, for, the top once attained, and we found ourselves in the wildest spot that nature ever formed, or imagination ever pictured. Before us was a high range of peaks called the *Polnishir Kamm* (Polish comb,) the boundary line between Gallicia and Hungary; above these, on the right, the Lomnitzer Spitze reared his head; while on the left was a gigantic wall of granite, apparently separated by some great convulsion of nature from the neighbouring mountain, and standing erect among the broken masses which are every day falling around it. This huge cliff was to me striking in a degree beyond my power to describe; and much as I had before seen of mountain scenery, this was the first really great cliff I had ever looked upon, and it more than equalled all my imagination had pictured. On one side two rocks had been thrown together, in such a position as to form a natural bridge, and its slender outline gave additional effect to the dizzy precipice. The foreground was worthy of the rest of the picture; huge granite

* I give the elevation of some of the points I mention, as I find them laid down in Schmidl: Schmöcks, 2065 feet; Valley of the Five Lakes, 6309; Lomnitzer Spitze, 8133.

blocks, in some parts covered with snow, in others by a dwarf grass and moss, with the cold green waters of the five lakes which give their name to the valley, were all that sparing nature has bestowed on this desert spot.

As we turned our back on this desolate scene, the contrast was most striking: below us lay the Kahlbacher valley, through which we had just passed, and whose stunted vegetation seemed luxuriant by the contrast with what was before us; and still further on was the rich plain scattered over with towns* and villages, yellow with fresh-cut corn, and varying its shades at every moment as the fleecy clouds passed across the bright blue sky. The wind blew so excessively cold from the snow, that, although well cloaked, we could not support it for any length of time. As H——, who had wandered away with his sketch-book, did not return, I became anxious for his safety; and it was not till we had searched some time that we found him seated in a patch of snow, his body wrapped in his cloak, and his mind in his sketch, his face bluer than the mountains he was drawing, and his pipe, whose curling wreaths still lent perfume to the air, the only sign of existence about him. We left the valley of the Five Lakes just in time to escape a drenching; for the heavy black clouds suddenly collected on the Lomnitzer Spitze, and, rolling down the mountain, completely filled the upper valley with darkness, and then overflowing its sides, seemed to follow our footsteps down the steep declivity. Once in the Kahlbacher valley,

* The history of some of these towns is curious, and illustrative enough of the former state of Hungary. Sigmund, whose reign was marked by the loss of so many provinces previously attached to Hungary,—Bessarabia, Moldavia, Dalmatia, and Bosnia, and Halitsch and Wladimir in Gallicia,—when pressed for money to carry on a war against the Venitians, pledged thirteen towns and three estates, commonly called the *Sechszhn* Zipser Städten,—and among which were some of those we were looking on,—to Wladislaus Jagjel, King of Poland, for the loan of 7,400 florins.

Grating as this was to the national pride, and notwithstanding the frequent remonstrances of the Diet, no King of Hungary had found sufficient leisure, or had ever had a sufficient sum at his disposal, to redeem this royal pledge. In the reign of Leopold I., indeed, an Archbishop, Széchenyi, had offered to do it at his own expense, on condition of enjoying the revenues for life, but his proposal was refused; nor was it till 1772, when Russia and Prussia had determined on the dismemberment of Poland, that Maria Theresa laid claim, not only to the Zipser towns, but to Halitsch and Wladimir, lost for more than three centuries, as well as to Oswieczin and Tator, to which no claim but that of spoliation could possibly be laid. Of course they were readily granted; Hungary recovered her towns, and Austria became the partner in a crime which she is as yet only beginning to repent.

however, and we were safe; the warm sides of the mountain threw a reflected heat into the valley, which dissipated the mists, and shed on us a delightful warmth after the cold we had lately been exposed to.

In the whole of our walk we had observed no rock but granite; indeed, we were told that the whole of the Tatra range is composed of granite. In the Kahlbacher valley some efforts at mining had been made; and it is said that a good vein of copper ore was found, which yielded abundantly, but it was abandoned from want of capital.

At supper we had but a small party: most of the guests of the previous day had left, and their places were scantily filled by an elderly gentleman and his son and daughter-in-law; the latter a pale and interesting person, who had come to make a short trial of the effects of the mountain air, and invigorating waters of Schmöcks on her declining health. The conversation soon became general; and the old gentleman, who was of the true Magyar cast, and did not like new-fangled ideas and foreign fashions, but stuck to the good old dress and manners of his forefathers, soon began to intimate the superiority of Hungary to England, and every other country on the face of the earth. "Am I not free? Can't I do what I like? Who dare enter my court?" he burst out, as I began to question his right to boast so loudly. "Have not we every thing men can desire? Have not we," counting on his fingers,—"have not we plains and mountains,—and woods and meadows,—gold, silver, copper, and iron, —wood, linen, and silk,—beef, game, and fish,—wine, corn, and tobacco?—there is nothing but coffee and sugar wanting, and those we could have if we chose to grow them! Where is there another country like this? as we say in Latin,

'Felix ergo Hungaria,
Cui dona data sunt varia!'

Nur," he added in a more modest tone, "*Nur, kein Geld haben wir nicht*," only we have got no money.

I like these old-fashioned fellows! They may have a little more prejudice and pride than is absolutely necessary, but there is always something manly and honest about them; they remind me of our own leather-breeched squires,—a fine hard-headed race, whose places are often but poorly filled by their more polished sons. When our old friend, however, would persist in praising the freedom of the Hungarian, in disparagement of what

he called the thraldom endured by the Englishman, my nationality fairly got the better of my good manners, and I could not resist the temptation to mystify him a little. Accordingly, I feigned to yield to his arguments; and we lamented together that people should be so foolish as to think themselves free in a country where the gentry paid taxes,—"though to be sure," I added, "they have a voice in the disposing of them;" where the noble could not pass along the public roads without being stopped for toll,—"though it could not be denied that the roads were pretty good;" where a police was suffered to parade openly through the whole country,—"though it was certain it interfered only with rogues;" where an impertinent press could meddle with every body and every thing,—"though it might possibly be useful in checking an abuse of power; where, in short, no man could get into debt without being made to pay, or could flog his own peasant without being put in prison!" At such a climax the old gentleman groaned in spirit, and, I believe, really felt sorry for us; but it was amusing to see how the eyes of the fair invalid brightened up as my enumeration of the Englishman's miseries increased, and how mischievously she smiled at the profound mystification of her male friends.

Our landlord at Schmöcks, who was a good-tempered merry fellow, and withal a keen sportsman, had told me such glorious tales of chamois and roe hunts, and had hinted so strongly the possibility of rousing a bear in the neighbouring woods, that I took fire, and begged he would, if possible, arrange a *Jagd* (hunt) for us the next day. Nothing could have suited his inclination better: and, though it was late at night, orders were forthwith issued in the kitchen for sundry fowls to be slaughtered, hams to be boiled, and wine and brandy to be safely stowed in strong bottles; while messengers were sent off to all the villages within ten miles' distance, to collect the most renowned huntsmen—alias vagabonds—in the country to aid in the hunt. Accordingly, almost as soon as it was daylight, and long before we had slept off the fatigues of our mountain-walk, the sound of men and horses, with the snapping off of rifles under the windows, roused us from our slumbers.

The party consisted of ourselves and the landlord, and some eight or ten *Jägers*. After due consultation, it was determined to beat the mountain bounding the Völker valley, a spot about two hours to the west of Schmöcks; and thither accordingly we repaired, some on rough mountain ponies, the rest on foot. In

due time we issued from the pine forest, through which our route at first led us; and struck into a wild valley differing little from that of yesterday, though it was perhaps more barren and less picturesque. As in the other, the bottom was covered with rocks and dwarf pine, while the sides were closely hemmed in by precipitous cliffs. A small lake, fed by a waterfall of no great size at the upper end of the valley, was the throw-off; and there we all collected to receive instructions from our chief huntsman, no longer the landlord, but a gray-bearded peasant, who probably knew better than the chamois themselves where they were to be found, and where they would go to when roused.

The plan of action was laid down thus:—The landlord and ourselves were to ascend a distant part of the mountain, at a point where it was particularly steep and dangerous, and to which the chamois would consequently go for safety. There, perched on some point where we could not be seen, and near which the only pathway accessible even to the chamois passed, we were to sit till the game came near. The jägers and treibers (drivers) in the mean time were to make a cast round the other side of the mountain, and, by means of shouting and firing powder, to drive the game in our direction; which would then pass within shot of us, as the rocks are so perpendicular that it is only in a few places there is footing for it. The prospect of sitting some hours on a peak of the Carpathians, perhaps up to the knees in snow, and certainly exposed to a cold and cutting wind, without daring to speak or move, not to mention the two hours' climbing required to reach this enviable position, or the great probability of disappointment where such shy game was concerned, was scarcely tempting; but highland hunters think all other sport poor in comparison. These men have a dreamy and poetical endurance in their method of hunting, which we, impatient lowland sportsmen, have no idea of. I respect the feeling, and acknowledge in it a genuine love of sport; but I never could acquire it, my blood grows cold with such long expectings.

We were not, however, to be tried, at least to-day, for, as we were waiting till the last of the jägers came up, and the final orders were given, some flakes of snow fell from a dark cloud which was hanging on the top of the Polnischer Grath, and were soon followed by a heavy shower, which at once put a stop to our proceedings,—for the danger of climbing the rocks when slippery from the recent snow, was more than even the hardy jägers dared to undertake. It was the more provoking, as a

Polish peasant who had crossed over the mountain from Gallicia, for the sake of gathering the gentian root, which grows in great abundance here, told us he had seen four head of chamois cross the valley in the direction of our intended beat only half an hour before we entered it.

Our landlord was not one of the despairing kind, however, and, as the mountains refused us a chamois, he determined to beat the woods for a roe; and accordingly one of the jägers was speedily despatched for some hounds to help the sport. In the mean time the snow storm continued, and our first care was to seek shelter. Luckily, a favourite resort of the goatherds was near at hand,—a huge block of granite forming a natural cave, under which we all crept without difficulty, and lay much at our ease. The jägers in the mean time employed themselves in lighting a fire, and preparing for their lunch. A bit of *schwamm*, or German tinder, kindled by the flint and steel with which every peasant is provided for lighting his pipe, and placed in a handful of dry moss, was soon fanned into a flame by being moved quickly through the air; and this having been placed under a living tree, a dwarf pine, inflammable from its turpentine, and the dry spots on which it grows, soon blew up into a goodly blaze. The hatchet-headed walking-sticks were then put in requisition—I do not know whether I have mentioned before, that all the peasants of the north of Hungary carry sticks armed at the top with a small hatchet-head, which I had previously considered only as an ornament, or to be used in defence, but which were now more usefully employed—and a dozen similar trees were soon felled and added to the fire, raising a glorious blaze, which set wind and snow at complete defiance. The scene was most picturesque; the rude figures of the jägers, relieved against the fire as they lay enjoying its warmth, or toasting their bits of bacon on its embers,—the masses of rocks reflecting the bright glare—and, beyond, the blasted pine, and the sharp outlines of the mountain masses now covered with snow, formed a composition worthy of a Salvator's study.

The bottle of Sliwowitz was not forgotten, and, as it passed from mouth to mouth, it seemed to loosen the tongues of those who pressed it, and our companions soon became talkative. They were Germans from an adjoining village,—Lomnitz, Schmöcks, and many villages in this neighbourhood, are peopled by German colonists,—and united two professions which to us would appear rather incompatible,—they are fiddlers and hunts-

men! They had been engaged at a wedding feast in the service of Apollo all the previous night; but when Diana's much-loved summons called them to the woods, fiddles, clarionets, and all, were hastily cast aside, the rusty rifle was thrown gaily over the shoulder, and without sleep or rest they hastened to obey the welcome invitation. Every one had now his tale to tell and his joke to pass. This one had shot a chamois at an unheard-of distance,—the other had tracked a wounded roe I know not how far or how long: but the tale which the jägers took most delight in narrating, was of a wood-ranger and a bear, the incidents of which had occurred only a few weeks previously, and the scene of which we had passed in the morning. As the ranger was quietly pursuing his usual rounds, with his gun unloaded and slung carelessly across his back, he came upon one of those little green glades in the forest—so still, so beautiful, they must be the chosen temples of the sylvan deities!—where a fine young bear stood just before him, busy at an ants' nest, whose treasures he was mercilessly rifling. As Bruin turned round to see who was the intruder on his feast, the trembling ranger unslung his piece, and, hastily loading it, discharged it close to the bear's nose. What was his surprise when, instead of beholding the beast stretched at his feet as he expected, he saw him quietly trot away unharmed!—what was his shame when it struck him, that in his fright he had forgotten to load his piece with any thing but powder!—Long and loud did the jolly jägers laugh at the wood-ranger's cowardice.

As the conversation became free, they asked us many questions about England, and were very anxious to know something of our peasants—how many days' *robot* they worked—how they lived—and what taxes they paid? I assured them that our peasants lived better than they did—for they had told me that potatoes and bread was their ordinary fare, and a bit of bacon a luxury; but that they worked much harder to gain it.

"But English peasants don't labour so many days for their lord as we do."

"Nor have they each a portion of land, as you have."

"What! no land? How can they live, then?"

It was no easy matter to make them understand the system of landlord and tenant, workman and employer, as existing with us; so closely was the idea of *Bauer* and *Bauerngrund* (peasant and peasants' land) associated in their minds. When I told them of the wealth of our farmers, and of their respectable station in

society, and at the same time explained to them that they had no right in the land they occupied, and might be dismissed at will, I believe they thought I was romancing. Nor were they less surprised to hear that the women commonly stay at home when the men go out to work; for they confessed that their own wives did much more than themselves, and that they belaboured them heartily if they did not obey their orders. For the credit of England, I did not mention how terribly the husbands are henpecked with us, for fear they should think too lowly of them; of which, I believe, there was some danger, when they heard of hard work and no land.

But the hounds had arrived, and the old huntsman blew his huge cow-horn, and summoned us to the field. The pack was composed of two couple and a half of coarse harriers, which were intended to aid in beating the wood, in giving notice of the direction the game took, and in bringing it back to the place from which it had first broke cover. As for the hounds killing the game, that was never dreamed of; the guns were intended to perform that office. The old huntsman with his hounds started off to the extremity of the wood, while we were directed to take up our places at certain points where the game would be most likely to pass. I was directed to the highest point:—"There, just where the dwarf wood commences, behind that rock you can conceal yourself; the roe will probably cross the mountain, pass this open brake as he descends, and come first within the range of your gun." At distances of about a quarter of a mile from each other, the rest took up their stations, and all were still with expectation. Full two hours, resting on my gun behind that said rock, had I amused myself with listening to every falling leaf, and fancying it the starting of a deer,—the diversion being every now and then varied by the pelting of a smart hailstorm,—when at length I thought I caught the sound of a distant horn. I was right enough, it was the huge cow-horn of our old huntsman I recognised; his clear shrill voice, too, as he cheered on the hounds, soon became audible, and then grew more and more distinct; but, with the best will, not a cry could I distinguish from the hounds, they were mute as death; and, in despair, I saw them one after another come quietly over the brow of the mountain, beating the thickets on either side,—but, alas! in vain. The hunt was *out*, as the jägers said; the roe must have left the wood: and as it was now evening, and we were wet through, we were

glad enough to mount, and gallop as fast as our horses could carry us in the direction of Schmöcks.

A warm bath, a good dinner, a fair quantity of Tokay, and a wood fire in our snug little wood cottage, soon consoled us for the disappointments of the day, and sent us very comfortably to bed, though with the full persuasion that a *Gems-jagd* was but very slow sport.

The next morning was so wet and cloudy, and the prognostications of the mountaineers so unfavourable, from the yesterday's fall of snow, as to the probability of more fine weather this year among the Carpathians, that we determined to leave them and seek a more genial clime. I strongly recommend them, however, to the lover of the grand and beautiful. I will not mention what others say of their wonders,—for I have learned in travelling to place little trust in others' eyes; but I have myself seen enough, even in this short visit, to say that there are few mountain chains possessing more wild beauty and more savage grandeur than the Tatra of Hungary.

Our route now lay through the county of Zips, passing the towns Kesmark, Leutschau, and Eperies. In Kesmark there is nothing remarkable, except the ruins of an old castle which formerly belonged to the family Tököly, by whose restless ambition and warlike talents Hungary was involved in a series of civil wars, which, but for Sobiesky's timely aid, would probably have ended in delivering the whole country into the power of the Turks. A curious illustration of the misery inflicted on the peaceable inhabitants of towns, as well by friends as foes, during this disturbed period, is preserved in a journal kept by the judge of the little town of Felka, in this neighbourhood. "1684, March 5th. A council concerning Tatar, (one of Tököly's leaders,) who has seized six thousand men; so must we, thirteen towns, pay five thousand thalers, and convey it to the Lord Tököly in three days, with thirteen wagons.—13th March. Ponevcz is come, and has quartered four hundred cavalry on us, where they remained two nights: next day, sixty men, with one hundred horses.—12th. The same.—14th. The Germans come again, and have cleared the houses out.—16th. Two thousand Germans come back from Liebitz and stayed all night: in my house were eighteen horses and seventeen persons. I was obliged to feed them gratis; and, instead of thanks, they took away my best horse." Further on we read of "five thousand

thalers more to Prince Tököly, on account of those natural enemies, the Tartars and Turks. Four thousand men, two hundred horse, and much goods carried off." And again, "All our horses taken away; from me, six."*

Perhaps no part of Hungary has suffered more from persecutions of every kind than the county of Zips. Peopled in a great part by Germans whose settlement dates from a very early period, and who in every part of Hungary seemed to have adopted with zeal the doctrines of the Reformation, and whose numbers were increased in the fifteenth century by the followers of Huss when proscribed in Bohemia, and in the sixteenth by those of Luther from Saxony, this county suffered from the persecutions and wars to which these doctrines gave rise, perhaps more severely than any other part of Hungary. To those acquainted with Hungarian history it is enough to refer to the *Blutsgericht* (Court of blood) of Caraffa in Eperies. To the foreigner I shall merely say, that Caraffa, with the head of a Jesuit and the heart of an Italian, undertook to repress the Protestants by dint of terror; and he set about the work with such zealous industry, that, by means of outrage and injustice the most flagrant, and rendered more intolerable by the frightful tortures to which he subjected his prisoners, he, if he did not succeed in what he wished, at least obtained a name which is never mentioned in Hungary to this day without horror and disgust.

Leutschau, which we reached a little before sunset, is an old-fashioned German-looking town, with high walls, strong gates, and a fine market-place. After changing horses, and just as we passed out under the Gothic arched gateway, a pretty servant-girl of about eighteen, dressed in her Zipser costume, called to our coachman to stop; and coming up to the carriage, asked in German if we were not going to the Countess C——'s. We answered in the affirmative; when she handed up a large basket of choice flowers, under which were two bottles of Tokay and a letter. Supposing they were intended for the Countess, I deposited them carefully in the carriage, and ordered the peasant to drive on; nor should I have thought more of the matter, had not the address of the letter accidentally caught my eye; it ran thus:—"To the travelling gentlemen, on the road to Countess C——'s castle, at M——." But if a little astonished at the address, what was my surprise on opening the letter, to find a long

* Klein, Geschichte von Ungarn.

epistle in German, written in a female hand, and signed "Unknown;" in which, in the name of "the ladies of Hungary," we, "as the representatives of a free nation," "the compatriots of Shakspeare, Byron, Scott, and Bulwer," were presented with bouquets of flowers and bottles of Tokay, in order to show us the beauty and richness of the land we were visiting, and to strengthen us against the difficulties of our rude journey! With what eyes we looked at each other as we finished this letter I leave the reader to fancy, when he reflects that it came from a person unknown, who had never seen us, and that we received it in a place where we had remained only a few minutes, where we had no acquaintance, and where apparently our very names were unknown.

After the first exclamations of surprise were over, we both dropped into a musing silence, in which I would not swear that soft dreams of conquest, fond visions of youth and beauty, may not perchance have floated across our minds; for, though our fair correspondent had expressly said "she never had seen and probably never should see us," it is hard to check the course of a day-dream when vanity leads the way. But, lack-a-day! dreams will end in waking sadness. Spenser was assuredly right:

> "He is not fit for love,
> Who is not fit to hold it;"

and we, alas! must e'en babble of our bliss when we arrived at M——, and that too before women. Ah, cruel fair!—they insisted on seeing the letter: ah, fatal weakness!—we yielded to their commands. Never shall I forget the wicked smile of the Countess, as the letter was handed back with a thousand felicitations on our good fortune; with repeated assurances that she knew the lady well, though of course "the name was inviolable, but," she added, "I may venture to tell you that she is a person of considerable talent, highly respectable, a great admirer of English literature, and one whose good opinion from her *advanced age* is entitled to great respect!" Poor wounded vanity was at once banished from the scene, and noble patriotism—how oft the last resource of disappointed vanity!—was forced to take its place. We forthwith felt enchanted that our country's fame should have extended to these distant lands, and should have been reflected, however unworthily, on the humblest of her sons!

CHAPTER XVI.

The Church of Kirchdrauf.—Cholera Troubles in Zips.—The Stadt-Hauptmann of Eperies.—Koschau.—Austrian Officers.—Stephan's Dismissal.—Mines of Schmölnitz.—Cementwasser.—German Settlers.—Rosenau.—Mustaches.—Castle of Murány.—Wesselényi's Wooing of Szécsi Maria.—Requisites for Travelling in Hungary.—Cavern of Aggtelek.—A Bivouac.—Miskolcz.—Tokay.—The Theiss.—The Wine of Tokay.

We spent a couple of days very agreeably at M——in visiting the wonders of the neighbourhood. The old castle of Zips, the stronghold at times of some of the most formidable enemies of Austria,—Zápolya, Bethlen, Rákótzy, and Tököly,—is now a possession of the Csákys, but is fast falling to ruin. Some parts of it exhibit marks of considerable beauty; and, what is rarely the case in Hungary, a pretty chapel is contained within its walls. At Kirchdrauf, not far from the castle of Zips, we visited a beautiful Gothic church, containing some interesting monuments, and belonging to the chapter of that place. In the sacristy were some gold sacramental cups, worked in a style that would not have discredited the chisel of Benvenuto Cellini, and ornamented most richly with precious stones. The old beadle sighed as he showed them, for he said they were nothing to what had formerly been there; "but the Emperor robbed"—yes, the irreverent old beadle, in his zeal for the honour of his church, called the Emperor's borrowing a robbery!—"all the best of them to bribe the Frenchmen to leave Vienna."

We visited one of the jovial *Dom Herrn*, who insisted on our tasting some of the church's Tokay, for these happy prebends have a vineyard on those blessed Hegyalla hills; and excellent, as I can attest, is the fruit thereof, and very fit to comfort a *Dom Herr's* stomach in his old age.

We noticed in many parts of this country, but particularly in this neighbourhood, a great number of gibbets, from each of which several bodies were dangling. It appears that in 1831, when the cholera first broke out in Hungary, the Sclavack peasants of the north were fully persuaded they were poisoned by the nobles, to get rid of them; and they in consequence rose in re-

volt, and committed the most dreadful excesses. The gentleman who related these circumstances to us, had been himself a sufferer. He was seized by the peasants of the village, among whom he had been, up to that moment, exceedingly popular; dragged from his house to the public street; and there beaten for several successive hours, to make him confess where he had concealed the poison. At last, wearied with the trouble of inflicting blows, they carried him to the smithy, and applied hot ploughshares to his feet three different times. As the poor man, exhausted with this dreadful torture, and finding all his entreaties and explanations vain, fell back from weakness, and was apparently about to expire, those beautiful words of our dying Saviour escaped from his lips, "Lord, forgive them, for they know not what they do!"—as by a miracle, the savage rage of the peasantry was calmed. Struck at once with the innocence of the victim, and the enormity of their crime, they fled on every side, and concealed themselves from view. It was now four years since this had happened, and his wounds had healed only within the last month or two. In other parts of the county scenes yet more dreadful occurred. It is pleasant, amid such horrors, to record an act of noble courage on the part of a poor peasant. The Lord Lieutenant, in attempting, without arms, to quiet the assembled crowd in a village not far from where we were staying, was struck from his horse by a stone, when the whole crowd fell upon him to accomplish his death. Fortunately, a poor shoemaker who saw his danger, rushed forward; and throwing himself upon him, declared he would have the pleasure of murdering him himself; but at the same time whispered to the Count that he was in the hands of a friend. Protecting him in this way from the crowd, he imprisoned him in his own cottage till night secured his retreat. I need scarcely add, that Count Csáky rewarded the honest cobbler by a handsome pension for life.

In consequence of these riots, *Stand Recht*,—summary law, by which a man may be tried and executed on the spot where he is apprehended, without even having been put in prison, or allowed to make any preparation for his defence,—was proclaimed, and no less than fifty Sclavack peasants were hung and gibbeted in different parts of the county in consequence. Of course, the barbarism of the people, and the necessity of impressing a wholesome terror on their minds, is the plea urged in extenuation of this horrible exhibition. I leave the reader to decide whether the barbarism of the judges, and the necessity of satisfying their

feelings of revenge, would not be nearer the truth. How far the desired effect has been produced may be guessed from the circumstance that, every New-year's day, each body receives a new dress from the relatives and friends of the deceased in the neighbouring villages.

I have frequently heard it repeated, and with the strongest assurance of its truth, that this rising was excited by Russian agents, in consequence of the sympathy and aid which the northern counties of Hungary afforded to Poland, and which even the highest Austrian authorities were supposed to have favoured. What credence should be attached to such a report, I know not. In countries where secrecy is the system of government, where the police is responsible only to the minister, and where the press is stifled, rumour assumes an authority and importance quite unknown with us. Here, nothing is more easy than to spread a report, which, true or false, passes from mouth to mouth with the rapidity of lightning; the secrecy in which it is enveloped adding to its terrors, and rendering its refutation impossible.

At Eperies we met with almost the only instance of serious annoyance and incivility which occurred during the whole of our journey through Hungary; and this is the more remarkable, as a somewhat similar adventure, attended with much more disagreeable consequences, happened to our countryman Townson, nearly half a century before, somewhere in the same neighbourhood. While in a public room of the inn, we observed a number of persons passing and repassing before the window, and occasionally coming into the room, evidently with no other object than that of satisfying an ill-mannered curiosity. Our carriage was subjected to a similar inspection; and old Stephan grew very angry at the impertinent questions with which he was pestered. In short, all *Krähwinkel* was in arms to know who and what we were: and I have no doubt a number of the Eperies wise-heads had set us down for spies, although for what object any one should give himself the trouble of spying at Eperies it would be difficult to conceive.

Just as we sat down to table, in marched an orderly and demanded our passports; but as I had been assured such demands were never made in Hungary, and as, in the present instance, I knew it to be merely an act of impertinence, I declined to comply. Nothing more occurred till we were ready to start, the horses harnessed, and we about to get into the carriage; when a sulky-looking fellow, said to be the *Stadt-Hauptmann*, ordered

out a guard of hussars, commanded them to take out the horses, and, if resisted, to effect it by force. There were now collected a considerable number of the gentlemen of the place, the greater part of whom seemed heartily ashamed of the conduct of their magistrate, and excused him by saying that he had orders to arrest some Polish refugees, and he did not know that we might not be the suspected persons. All this was pure nonsense; but, as we had no desire to remain at Eperies till some of our friends could testify to our identity, we were obliged to unpack our boxes and to search for the luckless passport, for it had not been seen till that moment since we first entered the country. As I presented the passport,—of which, by the by, the Stadt-Hauptmann could not read one word,—I could not resist the pleasure of disburdening myself of some of those disagreeable feelings wihch this act of official* insolence had engendered; and having properly abused the great man, to the no small delight of his fellow-townsmen, we shook off the dust from our feet as a testimony against Eperies, and so departed.

The country through which we passed before arriving at Kaschau, is, like most of the north of Hungary, poor and cold, when compared with the south. Hemp and flax are cultivated in large quantities, and the clothing of the people is made almost entirely from these materials.

Kaschau itself, a town of thirteen thousand inhabitants, is decidedly one of the very prettiest places I know any where. In winter its gaiety is said to rival that of Pest; for, owing to the distance of the northern counties from the metropolis, Kaschau assumes the importance of a second capital, and is much resorted to by the nobles as a winter residence. All the usual consequences of the diffusion of wealth are visible here; handsome houses, well-stocked shops, a good casino, a theatre, and pleasant promenades, are among the outward signs. The greatest ornament of Kaschau, however, is its cathedral. It was begun as early as 1324 by St. Elizabeth, Queen of Hungary, and was brought to its present state by Mathias Corvinus. It is in a chaste Gothic style; in some parts, particularly the west front, exhibiting rich fret-work of great elegance and purity.

In the evening we strolled into the theatre, where a company of Germans were giving *Fra Diavolo* very tolerably; though

* It must be recollected that the magistrates of towns are not freely elected, like those of counties: indeed, in many instances, they deserve to be considered in no higher light than as policemen of Vienna.

the noise kept up by a party of officers, prevented a great part of it from being heard. This offensive manifestation of imagined superiority forcibly recalled the character given of these gentry in a wicked little book, "*Die Ungarn wie sie sind.*" "They look down on the citizens, who not only feed them, but in the hour of danger, when matters can no longer be arranged by a well-stuffed white uniform, devote their properties and lives for their father-land as well as themselves; they talk great of pretty girls, horses, and the service, in coffee-houses and inns; boast of true, or, in case of need, of fancied *bonnes fortunes;* kick up rows (*machen specktakel*) in the theatre; play well at billiards; reason about things they do not understand; criticise their superior officers, and swear they could arrange every thing better from winning a battle to ruling a kingdom."

Witty, however, as this description is, and applicable as in my choler I thought it to the garrison of Kaschau, I am not so unjust as to apply it to the whole body of Austrian officers. Like most other officers, they are apt, I believe, to mistake the swagger of the barrack for the easy manner of good society; but I have generally found them polite, and much less afflicted with the affectations of puppyism than most others of their class. That there is no great sympathy between them and the Hungarians, is beyond a doubt; they are for the most part foreigners—Italians and Germans—who are hated by the Hungarians, and who return that hatred with unconcealed contempt. Among themselves, however, I know no army where there is more kind-heartedness, more good-temper, united to devotion for the service, than in the Austrian army. The pay is miserably small, the uniform simple, the discipline strict, and advancement very slow; yet the Austrian officer is proud of the service, and considers it decidedly superior to every other profession.

From Kaschau to Schmölnitz nothing of much interest occurred, save an outbreak of poor Stephan's failing, which obliged me to part with him on the spot. At Metzenseif, where we stayed for dinner, it was unluckily fast-day, and nothing could be got to eat save a few hard-boiled eggs; and whether from the consequent want of a good foundation for his usual quantum, or whether he had been tempted to an excess, I know not, but we had not travelled far before the old soldier manifested strong symptoms of intoxication, and got into a violent quarrel with the coachman. In vain did I endeavour to check him; he seemed to have lost all command of himself, and became so insolent and

unruly that I was obliged to discharge him next day, though very much to my sorrow. He had excellent qualities, and was besides an original, but the chance of a scene like this in any private house where we might have been staying, was too much to encounter.

At Schmölnitz we were again in a mining district, and I was glad to avail myself of an opportunity I had missed at Neusohl, of seeing the process of extracting copper from the *cementwasser* —water containing a solution of sulphate of copper. The director of the mines, *Berg-rath*, appointed an intelligent young practicant to show me all I desired.

The copper is extracted from the cementwasser by making it pass slowly over inclined wooden troughs, in the whole two hundred and twelve yards in length. These are thickly strewed over with pieces of iron; by which means the sulphuric acid is attracted from the copper, and combines with the iron, forming a soluble sulphate of iron; while the copper, nearly pure, is deposited in a soft state. It is then scraped off the plates of iron, and sent to be roasted. I did not visit the mines, for it was Saturday evening, and almost all the men had left off work for the week.

The district of Schmölnitz, which includes several mines in its neighbourhood, produces annually twelve thousand centners of copper, of which one thousand are said to be obtained from the cementwasser. I find in my note-book thirty thousand marks of silver set down as the produce of Schmölnitz, but I feel convinced it is enormously above the real amount, though I have no means at hand of correcting it. Three thousand is much more probably the true quantity. The amalgamation process is employed here, and is managed in the following manner:— The ore, after being exposed to a slow roasting, is ground down to an impalpable powder, when it is mixed with quicksilver in large wooden barrels, furnished with copper balls, which are kept turning round for twenty-four hours. During this time the silver unites with the mercury, and forms an amalgam, which is then separated from the earthy matter, and afterwards exposed to heat in closed vessels, by which the mercury is driven off. Two per cent. of quicksilver is lost.

There are said to be several mines of quicksilver worked in this district, but, as I did not hear of them till I had left the place, I cannot state the quantity produced, or the manner of working them; I fancy, however, they are unimportant, and

chiefly in the hands of private individuals. The iron mines of this neighbourhood, particularly those of Count Andrásy, are among the best in Hungary. Antimony and lead are also obtained in the Schmölnitz district.

Schmölnitz itself is the prettiest of the mining towns we had yet seen, and the neat and respectable appearance of the people bore evidence of their German origin. On the Sunday morning, as we were preparing to leave, the streets were crowded with well-dressed miners coming from church; the women still retaining their German costume, though the men were all in hussar jackets, and booted and spurred as well as the best Magyar in the country. One pretty girl H—— requested to stand to him a few minutes while he made a sketch: to which she assented with a modesty and grace which would have done credit to a drawing-room. The only part of her dress which was Hungarian were the yellow knee-boots, almost entirely concealed by the length of her gown. It is curious with what pertinacity the peasant women in every part of Hungary retain the costume of their ancestors. A sentiment of shame is attached to a change, especially to any imitation of the higher classes. "It may be very well for a lady to put on such foreign fashions if she likes, but an honest Hungarian peasant girl should wear the same clothes as her grandmother wore before her."

It had become a matter of urgent necessity to supply the place of old Stephan; for we were just on the borders of that part of the country where the Sclavacks and Magyars meet, and where the German language is almost unknown. Fortunately a young miner, who spoke all three languages, was persuaded to accompany us as far as Pest, on condition that his fellow-workmen, with whom he had some contract, would let him off. After waiting some time to allow these arrangements to be effected, our miner appeared, dressed in a very neat dark-blue hussar uniform, his boots well cleaned, his mustache freshly stiffened, and with his broad-brimmed hat in hand ready to do good service. The wages that had tempted him from his home were two shillings a-day.

Our road led us through a finely wooded district, till we arrived on the summit of a hill, below which a beautiful country was spread out before us. It took us two hours to descend this hill, over a road left bad on purpose, I presume, to ease the horses in holding back; for, without this aid, it would be scarcely possible to sustain the weight of a carriage for so long a time.

We passed an old castle belonging to Count Andrásy, still habitable, but spoilt by modern repairs; and, soon after, a village of the same gentleman's, with which no fault could be found. Nowhere had I seen more neat, nay, handsome cottages, provided as they were with large windows and pretty gardens; and the whole looking so neat, and their inhabitants so prosperous, that I could not help envying the man who could say, "This happiness is my work!"

It appeared as if we were now doomed to misfortune; for no sooner had they begun to unpack the carriage at Rosenau, than we perceived that H——'s colour-box, and portfolio, which held all his sketches, and which were contained in a leathern pocket attached to the back of the carriage, were missing, the pocket having apparently worn itself off in consequence of the jolting over a bad road. The first thing to be done was to send back our miner on foot, to endeavour to find it; and, if he should not succeed, to request the magistrates to aid him in his search, and to offer a reward at Schmölnitz for its recovery. Though late in the day, this plan was quickly arranged and at once put in execution; and, as a day or two would be required before he could return, we determined to employ the time in visiting the castle of Murány, a short day's journey from Rosenau.

The Sclavack peasant whom the people of the inn had engaged to take us in his *Leiter-wagen*, which we preferred, on account of the state of the roads, to our own carriage, instead of appearing at five o'clock, the appointed time, was not forthcoming at seven, though he had received a part of the money beforehand. In this dilemma I bethought me of the terror with which the peasants regarded a Haiduk, and accordingly sent to request that one of them might be despatched after the truant. I had hit on the right expedient; for, in a quarter of an hour up came the wagon at full gallop, with the Haiduk in it; nor, when he presented himself to us with his smart uniform, rattling spurs, strong stick, and military swagger, set off by the most exaggerated pair of mustaches I had ever seen, was I much astonished at his success. He might have frightened a greater man than our peasant driver. I do not think I exaggerate when I say his mustaches were more than a foot long from tip to tip, as the ornithologists express it; standing out on each side of his face as stiff, straight, and black as wax could make them. I have heard of several Hungarians who could twist their mustaches round their ears, but I believe this man might have tied his be-

hind his head. This length of mustache is a matter of considerable pride to its possessor; the officers of a regiment of hussars have been known to allow extra pay to a soldier who was very remarkable in this way, to enable him to maintain his mustaches in wax. In no country of Europe is the mustache held in such respect as in Hungary; all, except the clergy,—masters and servants, professors and students, from the highest magnate to the lowest peasant,—cherish with vast affection this hirsute covering of the upper lip. We were even obliged to fall into the custom; for so strongly is the idea of manhood and mustaches associated, that I remember a child exclaiming when she heard that they were not worn in England, "Why, you must all look like great girls then!"

Our road led us through several pretty valleys, watered by clear brooks, and enlivened by the sound of iron-works, and the activity which industry always creates. As we approached Murány, we saw at a considerable distance a huge rock rise precipitously from the valley, which the peasant pointed out as the object of our visit, though we could scarcely perceive the remains of the castle, so small did they appear compared with the stupendous proportions of the rock itself. Just at the foot of the mountain lies the pretty little village of the same name, where a large inn with this inscription over the gateway, "Morantes gaudent Baccho," seemed to promise us good accommodation. We were surprised, therefore, on inquiring for rooms, not only to find that there was none for us, but to receive also very uncivil answers to our questions. We had forgotten that we were travelling in a peasant's wagon, and without a servant; two things so very much below the dignity of an Hungarian gentleman, who always takes his servant with him, if it is only to fill his pipe, and strike a light for him, that the only wonder is they gave us an answer at all. Having at last obtained an unwilling promise that we should at least have some supper, and having found a guide to show us the way, we bent our steps towards the castle.

It required a good hour and a half's climb to gain the summit of that rock. Little now remains of the vast castle itself; except some of the outer walls, the casements, and a few broken towers, it is a complete ruin. We passed up the wide steps cut in the solid rock, and entered by a gateway well defended by double towers, the foundations of which are in the stone itself. The great area, which must contain many acres, was

covered with grass, which had just been mown; and in the centre stood a little summer-house, built for the accommodation of picnic parties. Far over distant mountains did the view extend; nothing but rock and wood on every side, save where the impatient rivulet had cut its stony bed, and fertilized its little valley: and well could we believe our guide, as pointing out on every side favourite resorts of the wolf and bear, he exclaimed, "An excellent hunting country this; in winter we are never without wolves, and rarely a summer comes but two or three she-bears drop their cubs in these woods."

So strong a fortress, in the centre of a country so often the scene of civil war, could hardly have escaped sharing in the great events of those times; and we accordingly find the name of Murány frequently occurring in Hungarian history. At one time the Diet complains of it as a harbour for traitors and robbers; at another, a solemn decree of the nation indicates it as the safe-guard of the kingdom, and appoints it as the place where the sacred crown of St. Stephen should be deposited. During the religious wars, when Transylvania under the first George Rákotzy, aided by the Protestants of Germany and the Mohammedans of Turkey, waged almost constant war against the Catholic Emperor and King, the possession of Murány became a point of great importance. Fortune, who loves to play strange tricks, had at this eventful moment placed the fortress in the hands of a woman; but, as if to make amends, it had endowed her with all the qualities of greatness to which our sex commonly lays claim. Szécsi Maria, the Lady of Murány, a young and beautiful widow, educated a strict Protestant, had little difficulty in choosing the party she should adopt; and readily admitted a detachment of Rákotzy's troops to strengthen the garrison of her castle, but only on condition that she herself should retain the command. The king's forces, under the direction of Eszterházy, easily drove the ill-disciplined forces of the Transylvanian leader from their conquests in the open country,—for they had extended their excursions nearly as far as Presburg; but, as long as Murány protected their retreat, their entire subjection was almost hopeless. While therefore he continued his campaign in the plains, he was obliged to detach a strong body of troops under Wesselényi Ferencz to besiege the castle.

As Wesselényi drew up his troops before the fortress, and surveyed all its natural and artificial defences, he almost despaired of effecting its reduction; and, when he heard that Maria

herself commanded the garrison, his despair was imbittered almost to desperation by the thought, his hard-earned laurels would now be tarnished by defeat at the hands of a woman. All the arts of war were expended in vain against the huge mountain fortress; every attempt cost the blood of some of the king's best troops, and served only as amusement to the garrison. A protracted siege rarely improves the discipline of an army, and the news of victories on the side of the enemy were not wanting to discourage the besiegers. Time, too, now pressed; and, as force was still evidently powerless against Murány, Wesselényi at last determined to try what persuasion might effect on its commandress. Disguising himself in the dress of an inferior officer, the general appeared before the gates as bearer of a flag of truce to demand a parley with the mistress of the castle; and cunningly did he talk of favourable conditions and royal rewards, but his opponent only laughed at his offers, as she had done at his threats.

A good general, however, always finds out some weak points in his enemy's defences; and perhaps the eyes of Maria had expressed no displeasure at the handsome face and manly figure of the envoy, nor probably were the beauty and courage of the commandress without their influence on Wesselényi's determination. Certain it is, that next day another trumpet summoned the garrison to a parley, and that this time the herald bore a letter offering the heart and hand of Wesselényi to his beautiful enemy, to whom he confessed the *ruse* he had practised, but vowed that love had taken ample revenge for his temerity.

Caught with the romance, but determined to test its sincerity, Maria answered that if the writer's courage equalled his boldness, and he was willing to pursue the fortune he tempted, he might find at midnight a ladder against the northern tower, in which a light would be burning, and where, if he came alone, he might hear further of his suit.

Wesselényi was too good a knight to refuse the bidding of a "ladye fayre," albeit somewhat of the most hazardous. At midnight, and alone, he left his camp; and, gaining the summit of the rock, found the promised light in the northern tower. The ladder hung from an open window, and silently and cautiously did the lover gain the height: but no sooner had he sprung into the tower than he found himself suddenly seized from behind and dragged to the ground, while a body of armed men entered the chamber and bound him in chains. Blindfolded he was

led forward he knew not whither, till a harsh voice commanding a halt, thus addressed the prisoner, "Sir Knight, strategy is fair in love as well as war; you have delivered yourself into the power of your enemies, and it is for them to dispose of you as they choose; but the commandress of the castle is inclined to mercy, and on condition of your deserting the cause of the king, she is willing not only to give you freedom, but to bestow herself and her vast possessions on you by marriage. In an hour I come to receive your answer,—acceptance or death!" Rude as was the trial where love and life pleaded against loyalty and duty, the soldier withstood it manfully; and, at the hour's conclusion, returned only a sullen answer, "Better die than betray!" Scarce had the words passed his lips when the bandage fell from his eyes; Szécsi Maria stood before him in all her beauty, a smile played around her mouth, and, extending her hand to the astonished Wesselényi, she exclaimed, "Take it, noble Knight, and with it all I have, for thy constancy hath won my heart: keep but thy faith to me as well as thou hast done to thy king, and Maria will gladly acknowledge thee her conqueror."

Many are the versions of this history,—for it has been sung by Hungarian poets,* spun out by German romancers, and told by every peasant to his child, from that day to this,—but all agree that Wesselényi gained the castle and the lady at the same time; and our guide pointed out to us the northern tower by which, as he assured us, the Knight entered the castle. It was where the rock is highest and steepest; and it was no faint heart that took such a path to gain his lady love. In the summer-house is still preserved a tablet erected by Wesselényi to commemorate his victory,

After the sudden, and perhaps violent death of Wesselényi, at the moment when he was about to head the insurgent nobles against the false Leopold, Murány was seized by the Crown, contrary to all law and all right. It was afterwards dismantled, and conferred, with the great estates attached to it on the Judex Curiæ Kohári; by marriage with the last of whose descendants it has come into the possession of a member of that luckiest of marrying families, the Coburgs.

As we returned from our ramble, we were not sorry to find that the landlord had formed more favourable notions of our im-

* The most celebrated of these is the "Murányi Venus" of Gynögyösi, for which the poet was rewarded by Maria with the princely gift of a whole manor.

portance; for he not only offered us a good supper, but found us comfortable beds without further difficulty. His conduct towards us may serve as a lesson to future travellers not to attempt a journey in Hungary without all the due appliances of gentility. A good carriage, and a servant who speaks the language, are absolutely necessary: as for the Swiss fashion of travelling with a blouse and knapsack, I doubt much if the luckless bearer of such plebeian articles would not be beat out of the first village he came to. In fact, none but German Handwerksburschen or Jew peddlers are even seen in such guise; and every honest Hungarian peasant thinks it an act of patriotism to beat and rob them whenever he has an opportunity.

In most countries a respectable appearance has its advantages; but in none does it make more impression than in Hungary. I have heard it often said, that no one who travels in a certain style is ever likely to be robbed: nay, I remember Count B——, whose notions of aristocratic privilege, it must be confessed, are not of the most modest order, declaring "that the robbery of a noble was a thing unheard of in Hungary; that he did not believe a man of pure blood could be robbed." I suppose we must conclude with Falstaff, that it is all instinct:—"Beware instinct: the lion will not touch the true prince. Instinct is a great matter!" Nor, after all, is there any thing so wonderful in it: honour among rogues is a proverb all over the world, and the appropriating to themselves what belongs to mankind, is the great privilege which the aristocracy in all ages have considered the peculiar glory of their order.

Great was our delight, on returning to Rosenau, to find the sketches all safe, and once more in our possession. They had been found by a peasant on his road to market, and were readily returned, without having even been opened.

But we were doomed to new troubles. Our miner had come back, but not alone: a pretty little blue-eyed girl accompanied him, as he said, looking very sheepishly, "to help him to carry the book!" And just as we were starting, he felt suddenly so ill, that he was sure he could not hold out for a long journey. His sweetheart was evidently afraid of losing him if she let him stray so far away: and what a woman wills we knew it was no use opposing; so we even consented to give him his discharge at once. While yet hesitating as to what was to be done in this emergency, the waiter presented a little Polish boy, who spoke German, and who was on his way to Pest. The poor child was

not more than fourteen years old, and had been sent out by his father, a school-master in Gallicia, with nothing but a smattering of Latin and German, and a long Latin letter, recommending him to God and the charitable, to aid him in seeking his fortune in the world. The poor fellow was so anxious to go, that, more for the sake of pleasing him, than with any hopes of his being useful,—though, had we not been leaving the country of the Sclavacks, his Polish would have helped us considerably, as the two languages have a great similarity,—I told him to mount the box, and off we went.

Our horses' heads were now turned towards Aggtelek, a small village about twenty miles off, and remarkable for possessing one of the largest caverns in the world. Torches we had already provided, and guides were soon found to accompany us; for, unlike Demenfalva, Aggtelek is well known, and is often visited by foreigners as well as by Hungarians. It is not necessary to give a minute account of what has already been often described. The cavern is formed in a limestone rock, like all others we know of, and extends to a great distance under ground. It is said to communicate with two small caverns* which open at ten miles' distance from Aggtelek. In the vastness of its halls, the huge proportions of its columns, and the mysterious windings of its long passages, Aggtelek is superior to any thing of the kind I have seen. In some places, too, it is of exquisite beauty. While H—— was making a sketch of the *Tanz Saal* (Ball-room,) where in summer the peasants sometimes hold their fêtes, the guides conducted me to an offset from the great cavern, called the Garden of Paradise. For a full quarter of an hour we crept on our hands and knees; sometimes wading through the small brook which makes its way out by this passage, sometimes sliding back over the slimy rocks, and sometimes squeezing through narrow crevices where there was scarcely room for the human body to pass. At last we once more stood upright; we had reached the Garden, and well does it deserve the name of Paradise; for any thing more beautiful than the thousand fantastic forms—trees, fruits, waterfalls, serpents,—into which the stalactitic pillars have formed themselves, it is impossible to conceive.

As far as I can guess, we followed the great cavern for not less than two or three miles, and during the whole of our route we were presented with a constant succession of beauties, to all of

* In these caverns there is said to be ice, as at Demenfalva, though nothing of the kind is seen at Aggtelek.

which the imaginations of the peasants have appropriated names and likenesses. The guides could speak only a very few words of German, but among them were "*Deutsche Hosen;*" and they did not fail to apply them with a look of most sovereign contempt to a curious formation of the stone which imitated with sufficient accuracy a pair of knee-breeches,—in the opinion of every true Magyar, the most ridiculous and despicable covering for humanity ever invented.

When we returned, the sun had already set; but the accommodations were so very indifferent at Aggtelek, that we determined to push on a stage further that night. The Haiduk was ready with four horses; but it was easy to see they had been at work all day, and that they were little inclined for further exercise. When we got about two miles from the village, and were just on the borders of a great forest where the roads were sadly cut up, this indisposition manifested itself in a still more positive manner, for they stood quite still; nor could all the flogging, shouting, or even crying of the boy who drove us—for the poor lad cried with passion at the disgrace,—incite them to any other movement than kicking at the carriage. It was certainly a disagreeable dilemma; it was just getting dark; we knew nothing of the country, but we had heard at Vienna, that it was one of the worst parts of Hungary for robbers, and that it was not safe travelling without a guard of soldiers. Something, however, must be done; and, requesting H—— not to let the boy take away the horses, I set off to get some assistance from Aggtelek. Having at last found the only man who knew any thing of German, and having looked into every stable and ox-shed in the village, and having in consequence been attacked by some score furious dogs, from which nothing but a huge stick and a pistol saved me from suffering, I at last got four oxen, and returned again to the carriage. But here a new misfortune awaited me; the boy and the horses had somehow disappeared in the dark, and it was found impossible to apply the oxen harness to the carriage; so that, after another hour lost in disputes among the peasants,—for our happy ignorance of the language saved us from the possibility of taking part in them,—we saw them all return quietly to Aggtelek, leaving us to stick fast in the mud till next morning.

My philosophy is fortunately of that practical kind which always seeks consolation where a particle of it is to be found;

so, sending off the boy with the peasants to see if any thing eatable could be found in Aggtelek, we struck a light by the aid of flint and schwamm, as the jägers had taught us at Lomnitz, lighted our carriage-lamps, reloaded our fire-arms, placed them conveniently for use, routed out a couple of bottles of wine from some hidden part of our baggage, refilled our pipes, and indulged in the hopes of a substantial supper and a pleasant bivouac. In time the little Pole reappeared, accompanied by a stout peasant bearing two huge earthen pots filled with savoury viands, which, if not the most delicate, were just as eagerly devoured as if they had been so. The peasant made a large fire of dried wood which the neighbouring forest furnished in abundance; and, laying himself down by it, made us understand that he would spend the night there to guard us. Probably the gourd of wine which had been brought from the village, and which we had given up to him, was not without its influence on his decision. I am really sorry for the lovers of the marvellous, that I have nothing more romantic to tell them than that we ate our supper, drank our wine, smoked our pipes, laughed over the adventures of the day, and slept so soundly, that six fresh horses were already harnessed to the carriage, and a dozen fine good-tempered peasants lifting at the wheels, before we opened our eyes the next morning, and wondered what it was all about. We reached Miskolcz the same night, and were glad to luxuriate in a good bed and a clean room,—comforts we had scarcely enjoyed since we left Kaschau.

The continual clanking of the prisoners' chains which never ceased to ring in our ears so long as we tarried in Miskolcz, has left but a disagreeable impression of the place on our memories. It must require long habit before one can feel accustomed to the sight of chained prisoners performing the work at which in happier lands we have seen only free labourers employed. I have witnessed it in Germany and Italy, as well as in Hungary; but I never could pass those melancholy strings of wretched beings without a feeling of shame that man should expose these moral diseases of his species to the gaze of the whole world, instead of covering them with the veil of secrecy and carefully administering to their cure.

We obtained a servant here who could speak Hungarian, and dismissed our little Pole with money to enable him to reach Pest, and directions where to find us if he had need of assistance when

he arrived there. As we could hear nothing of him afterwards, I am inclined to hope he found some service on the way.

A dreary route over a rich but flat and boggy country, intersected by innumerable small rivers, brought us to the foot of a low range of hills, which, stretching far away to the north, terminates towards the south near the little town of Tokay on the Theiss. Every body has heard of imperial Tokay; and here we were in the very midst of the vineyards where the King of Wines has established his throne.

Tokay is a small town, insignificant in itself, except as it is connected with the trade in wine. It is inhabited by a strangely mixed population,—Jews, Armenians, and Greeks, besides various members of the indigenous population of Hungary,—and contains churches of no less than six different religions. The Bodrog and the Theiss, which unite just above the town, form as fine a river for navigation as the merchant could desire; and it is covered with large, heavy, decked boats, much like those seen on the Danube. As yet, no steam-boat has been established on the Theiss; but from the extreme richness of the productions of the surrounding country, the size and importance of many of the places on its banks, and, above all, from the exceedingly bad roads in its neighbourhood, there can be little doubt that the establishment of steam navigation will be undertaken before long. The depth, width, and the force of stream of the Theiss are as favourable as could be desired; but it is objected that the windings of the river require to be cut off by canals. In some cases thirty or forty miles would be saved by a cut of three or four. Should the canal be formed between the Danube at Pest and the Theiss at Szolnok, as is contemplated, this river will assume an importance far greater than is at present imagined. The slow muddy waters of the Theiss seem to suit the fish better than those of any other river in Hungary. It is said that, after an overflow, they have been left in such quantities as to be used for feeding the pigs and manuring the ground. The sturgeon of the Theiss, though smaller than that of the Danube, is remarkable for its fatness and delicate flavour.

We were too early to enjoy any of the festivities of the vintage at Tokay, which call all the nobility of the neighbourhood together, and are generally kept up with balls and fêtes for at least a fortnight. What the reader will perhaps think less pardonable is, that I can say nothing of the process of making the wine from personal observation; but I have heard it so often described by

persons themselves possessing vineyards,* that I can probably give more accurate information about it than if I had myself witnessed it.

The whole of the Hegyalla mountains, extending along the banks of the Bodrog twenty miles north of Tokay, produce the Tokay wine. The finest sorts, however, are grown only in Tokay, Tartzal, Zombor, Tállya, Mád, Keresztur, and some few other villages; the very finest only on a small hill, the Mézes-Mále, in the parish of Tartzal. About Tokay, and I believe along the whole chain, the hills are composed of basalt and trachytic conglomerate, covered with a deep sandy soil. The grapes are of many different kinds, of which the Formint and Champagne are considered the best. The lateness of the vintage, which is not begun here till the 26th of October, when it is finished in other parts of the country, has considerable effect on the quality of the wine.

Three kinds of wine are made at Tokay,—the *Essentz*, the *Ausbruch*, and the *Máslás*, so called from the different modes of preparing them. From the length of time the grapes hang, a great number of them lose part of their juice, begin to wither, and become exceedingly sweet. These grapes, when gathered, are placed on wooden trays, and sorted one by one with the greatest care, only the finest being selected; those which are too much withered, and those which are unripe, being alike rejected. When it is wished to obtain the Essentz, these grapes are placed in a barrel with holes at the bottom, through which all the juice that flows, without any other pressure being applied than their own weight, is allowed to pass off;—and this it is which constitutes the *Essentz*. After the Essentz is extracted, or,—as happens most frequently—when none has been taken, the grapes are at once placed in a vat and gently pressed with the hand, a small quantity of good must, or new wine, obtained in the ordinary manner, being poured over them to increase the quantity and facilitate its flow;—and the result of this process is the *Ausbruch*. To produce the *Máslás*, a large quantity of less choice must is poured over the same berries, which are now pressed as in making common wine. The Essentz can only be obtained in

* I cannot guess how the notion so common in England, that all the Tokay vineyards belong to the Emperor, has arisen. It is so far from being the case, that by far the greater part is in the hands of private individuals, and the Emperor himself is often obliged to purchase his Tokay from others.

the very best years; and, indeed it is only in favourable years that Ausbruch of a good quality is produced. The wine ought to have a fine, bright, topaz colour. The Essentz is sweet and luscious to the highest degree, and is esteemed rather as a curiosity than as pleasing to the palate; but it is the Ausbruch on which the reputation of Tokay depends. It is a sweet, rich, but not cloying wine; strong, full-bodied, but mild, bright and clear; and has a peculiar flavour of most exquisite delicacy. I have never tasted it in perfection but at private tables, and that only twice; I could then have willingly confessed it the finest wine in the world. The Máslás is a much thinner wine, rather sweet, with a preponderating flavour of the dried grape. The product of the whole Hegyalla vintage, in an ordinarily favourable season, may amount to about two hundred and fifty thousand *eimers;** of which not more than one quarter, and probably much less, is Ausbruch.

Tokay should not be drunk till it is some years old; and it is none the worse for twenty years' keeping in a good cellar. Even in Hungary I have known a ducat (ten shillings) given for a pint bottle of good old Tokay. For a fair wine, however, of three or four years old, four shillings the common bottle is a good price, and it may generally be obtained at that rate without difficulty. The expense of transport and duties comes, I think, to about two shillings the bottle more. Great care, however, should be taken in choosing a person to whom it may be safely confided. Two cases, which we intrusted to a merchant of Pest, arrived in England in a state of fermentation, with more than half the bottles broken, and the rest quite spoiled. We have every reason to believe that this arose from a portion of our wine being taken out and the bottles filled up with new wine; and, though the evidence is not sufficiently strong to justify me in publishing the name of this person, it is more than enough to make me caution any future traveller to be quite sure of his man before he ventures on giving such a commission. A society for "making known Hungarian wines" has lately been formed at Pest, and in its cellars genuine wines, supplied by the growers themselves, may be obtained; and Mr. Liedermann, a merchant and banker of Pest, who is connected with the society, will undertake to forward them.

* The *Eimer* contains about as much as sixteen ordinary wine bottles.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE PUSZTA.

The Puszta—its Extent and Formation.—Fertility.—Animals.—A Sunset on the Plains.—The Mirage.—Puszta Village.—Horse-mills.—The Puszta Shepherd—his Morality.—The Bunda.—The Shepherd's Dog.—Debreczen.—The Magyars—their Pride.—Contempt of other Nations—Idleness.—Excitability.—Dancing.—Music and Popular Poetry.—Self-respect.—Love of Country.—Hospitality.—The Hungarian Hussars.—Manufactures of Debreczen.—Reformed College.—Protestantism in Hungary.—Protestant Colleges.—College of Debreczen.—Review.—English Officers in the Austrian Service.—Water Melons.—Beggars.—The Szolga Biro of Szolnok.

As far as Tokay, our route had been ever among smiling valleys and by lovely brooks; we had passed under the shade of magnificent woods, or been cheered by the prospect of cloud-capped mountains: but the Theiss once crossed, and a scene so different opened upon us, that we could scarcely believe ourselves in the same hemisphere. Our faces were now turned towards Debreczen, and we were fairly launched on the *Puszta*—or *Steppes*, as they are called in some other counties—of Hungary.

All that surface of country, from Pest to the borders of Transylvania, and from Belgrade to the vine-bearing hills of Hegyalla, is one vast plain, occupying a space of nearly twenty-two thousand English square miles. If the geologist will cast his eyes over the map, and observe this plain, surrounded on every side by mountains, and covered with sand and alluvium—if he will then consider the Danube, and see how it spreads over the country, every day changing its course, cutting for itself new channels, and sanding up its former ones, so as sometimes to sweep away towns, and at others to leave such as were built on its banks some miles from them,*—I think he will agree with

* The Danube now rolls over the spot formerly occupied by the village of Apatin on the Lower Danube; while, on the Upper, the castle of Steyereck, which formerly overhung the river, is now a mile and a half distant from it.

me, that the whole plain has been at different periods the bed of that river and its tributaries, the Theiss and Maros.*

The soil of the Puszta, as might be anticipated from its extent, and, I might add, from the nature of the rocks from whose débris it has been formed, is various in its nature and in its powers of production. A considerable portion is a deep sand, easily worked, and yielding fair crops in wet seasons; a second, found principally in the neighbourhood of the Danube, Theiss, and Temes, is boggy, and much deteriorated in value from the frequent inundations to which it is subject, but capable of the greatest improvement at little cost; and a third is a rich black loam, the fertility of which is almost incredible. When the reader reflects that this fruitful plain is bounded on two sides by the largest river in Europe, that it is traversed from north to south by the Theiss, and that it communicates with Transylvania by the Maros, it is almost impossible to calculate what a source of wealth it might prove to the country. In any other part of the civilized world we should see it teeming with habitations, and alive with agricultural industry,—the envy of surrounding princes, the granary of Europe. Here, it is the most thinly populated, the worst cultivated, and the least accessible portion of the country. Various causes have contributed to produce this effect. Most of the inhabitants of the plains are Magyars, whose warlike propensities induced them to take the most active part in the constant wars in which the country was formerly engaged; for since Arpàd first set foot in Hungary, one thousand years ago, I do not think it has ever enjoyed ten years' peace till towards the middle of the last century. This in itself must have checked the increase of population. Among the Magyars, too, the number of children is generally small:—why the Irish should be so prolific on starvation, and the Magyars so much the contrary on abundance, is, I must confess, a mystery to me; but such is the fact. The ease with which land is obtained, its cheapness, the richness of the soil, and the few wants of the people, have also operated to check the progress of improvement in agri-

* Some are of opinion that the whole plain formed one large inland sea at an earlier period of the earth's history; and it is highly probable. The limestone, similar to that of the Paris basin, which overlays the granite at Margaretha, and in many parts of the little Carpathians, appears to support this opinion. In different parts of the plain, particularly in the neighbourhood of the Theiss, fossil remains of the mammoth, elephant, and fossil deer have been discovered.

culture. The formation of roads, too, is rendered exceedingly difficult by the distance from which the necessary materials would often require to be conveyed; but still more by the unjust character of the law, which throws the whole burden of making them on the peasant, thus rendering it impossible to expend so large a capital as would be required for their first formation in such situations.

The Puszta, however, is neither entirely without inhabitants nor without cultivation. It has cities, towns, and villages; few and far between, it is true, but generally large and populous where they do occur. On the great road, or rather track, between Tokay and Debreczen, a village occurs almost every three or four hours; but in some parts, for a whole day, no such welcome sight gladdens the eye of the weary traveller. The scene, however, is not without its interest; indeed to me it presented so much that was strange, and new, and wonderful, that I felt a real delight in traversing it, and never for a moment experienced the weariness of monotony. On starting from the village where we first changed horses after quitting Tokay, fifty different tracks seemed to direct to as many different points; though, as far as the eye could detect, the end of all must be the flat horizon before us. The track which our coachman followed soon grew fainter and fainter; and, before a quarter of an hour had elapsed, we could observe no sign by which he could steer his course. The only inanimate objects which broke the uniformity of the scene were an occasional shepherd's hut, the tall beam of a well, or a small tumulus;* such as may be observed in different directions throughout the whole of the Puszta.

Of animated nature, however, there is no lack; the constant hum of insects, the screams of birds of prey, and the lowing of cattle, constantly reminded us during the day that the Puszta is no desert. Sometimes vast herds of cattle, containing many hundred head, may be observed in the distance, looking like so

* Mr. Spencer, in his "Circassia," speaks of these tumuli in Hungary, and considers them as sepulchral; I am rather inclined to believe they are boundary marks between different villages, though some of them are of a larger size than might be thought necessary for such a purpose. They are common all over Hungary, and are called *Határ*. It is possible that they may sometimes have been intended as landmarks for travellers. These must not be confounded with the *Römer Schanzen*, or Walls of the Agathyrsi,—long banks of earth traversing extensive districts, the uses of which are not well ascertained. In some parts of the plain large embankments of a recent date may be observed, intended to protect the cultivated land from the overflows of some river in the neighbourhood.

many regiments of soldiers; for, whether by accident or intention I know not, but they are commonly formed into a long loose line of three or four deep; and in this order they feed, marching slowly forwards. When the sun is pouring his hottest beams upon the plain, so that the sands seem to dance with the glowing heat, it is interesting to watch the poor sheep, and to observe the manner in which Nature teaches them to supply the place of the shady wood. The whole flock ceases from feeding, and collects into a close circle, where each places his head in the shade formed by the body of his neighbour, and thus they protect themselves from a danger which might otherwise be fatal. Herds of horses, of one or two hundred each, are no uncommon feature in the landscape.

The quantity of large falcons which scour the Puszta may account for the small number of other birds we observed. I have sometimes seen a dozen of them at a time, wheeling round and round over our heads, and screaming out their harsh cries, till every living thing tremblingly sought shelter in its most hidden retreat. Sometimes, too, a solitary heron might be detected wading about in the salt marshes with which the Puszta abounds.* Sometimes a flock of noisy plover flew up before us; but of game or small birds we saw very few.

In sandy districts the earless marmot† is a constant source of amusement. This pretty little animal, which is about the size and colour of a squirrel, is exceedingly frequent here. Never more than a few yards from its hole, it is almost impossible to get a shot at it; for the moment it is alarmed, it runs to the mouth of its burrow, where, if it observes the slightest movement on the part of the intruder, it drops down till he is out of shot, when it may again be seen running about as gay as ever. They are said to be good eating, and are often caught by the shepherds, by pouring water into their burrows.

The feeling of solitude which a vast plain impresses on the imagination, is to me more solemn than that produced by the boundless ocean, or the trackless forest: nor is this sentiment ever so strongly felt as during the short moments of twilight

* In many parts of the Puszta there are soda lakes, which dry up in summer, and leave the earth incrusted with soda, which is collected, and re-forms, every three or four days from May to October. It is reckoned that 50,000 cwts. might be collected annually if care were taken.

† I think this is the earth squirrel of some writers,—the *spermophile* of F. Cuvier.

which follow the setting of the sun. It is just as the bright orb has disappeared below the level of the horizon; while yet some red tints, like glow-worm traces, mark the pathway he has followed; just when the busy hum of insects is hushed as by a charm, and stillness fills the air; when the cold chills of night creep over the earth; when comparative darkness has suddenly followed the bright glare of day;—it is then the stranger feels how alone he is, and how awful such loneliness is where the eye sees no boundary, and the ear detects no sign of living thing.

I would not for the world have destroyed the illusion of the first sunset I witnessed on the Puszta of Hungary. The close of day found us far from any human habitation, alone in this desert of luxuriance; without a mark that man had established his dominion there, save the wheel-marks which guided us on our way, and the shepherds' wells which are sparingly scattered over the whole plain. I have seen the sun set behind the mountains of the Rhine as I lay on the tributary Neckar's banks, and the dark bold towers of Heidelberg stood gloriously out against the deep red sky;—as the ripple of the lagoons kissed the prow of the light gondola, I have seen his last rays throw their golden tints over the magnificence of fallen Venice;—I have watched the god of day as he sank to rest behind the gorgeous splendour of St. Peter's;—yet never with so strong a feeling of his majesty and power, as when alone on the Puszta of Hungary!

It was on the second morning of our journey, and as we opened our eyes after a troubled doze, that another of the most extraordinary phenomena of these plains was presented to us. We perceived what appeared to us a new country, and certainly a very different one from that which we had closed our eyes upon the previous night. A few miles before us lay an extensive lake half enveloped in a gray mist. I immediately called to the coachman to ask what lake it was I saw, as none was to be found on the map, when his loud laugh reminded me that we were in the land of the *mirage*. And sure enough it proved to be the mirage; for, as we approached, the water vanished, and the same dry plain we had known before was still present to us. On another occasion, when travelling over the plains of Wallachia, I witnesed the mirage in a still more striking manner. It was also in the morning, just as a burning sun was struggling to dissipate the thick mist so common in these climates. I could distinguish, as plainly as ever I did any thing in my life, a serpentine piece

of water with the most beautiful woods and park-like meadows, and at one end the commencement of a village. As we approached, the scene slightly changed; new points of view gradually came out, and the objects first observed vanished away. The village, which I had believed real even after I knew the landscape was mirage, was the first to disappear; the water extended itself, and the back-ground rose higher. Before long, objects began to grow less distinct, and at last the mist rose from the earth, leaving the view clear along the burning plain, while trees and water were still discernible in the air. The effect was very peculiar: I know nothing it resembled so much as some of the old Italian pictures, in which the lower part is occupied by the earth and its denizens, while the upper is gay with a brilliant throng of heavenly choristers seated on gray clouds, which are as much like the mirage as possible. I believe this phenomenon is explained as a matter of simple reflection; but, if it is so, the mirage is a mystic mirror, which shapes its images according to its own fancy, for I do not believe that in the whole of Wallachia, there could be found a real scene half so lovely as the mirage presented us with.

Such are some of the more striking pictures presented by the plains; but there are others of a more cheerful and social character. I have already said the Puszta villages are large; they sometimes contain several thousand inhabitants. Nothing can be more simple or uniform than the plan on which they are built. One long, straight, and most preposterously wide street generally forms the whole village; or it may be that this street is traversed at right angles by another equally long, straight, and wide. Smaller streets are rare; but, when they do occur, it is pretty certain they are all parallel or at right angles with each other. All the cottages are built on the same plan; a gable-end with two small windows, shaded by acacias or walnuts, faces the street. The houses are beautifully thatched with reeds, and the fences of the court-yard are often formed of the same material. The long one-storied house, roofed with wooden tiles, the best in the village,—unless the Seigneur's château happens to be there,—and behind which towers the odd half-eastern steeple, is the dwelling of the priest; and, should the traveller find himself benighted in the neighbourhood, its rich and hospitable occupant would welcome the chance which bestowed on him a guest. A little further, perhaps, stands another house, whose pretensions, if below the priest's, are above those of its neighbours. On the shutters is pasted up some official notice, and before the door

stands the stocks. It is the dwelling of the *Biro* or judge of the village. The *Hejség ház* (town-house,) the modest school-room, and the little inn, are the only other exceptions to the peasants' cottages. Besides the avenue of trees on each side, and, in wet weather, sundry pools of water, or rather small lakes, the street is often interrupted by the tall pole of a well, or the shed of a horse-mill. These horse-mills are clumsy contrivances; first, a shed is built to cover the heavy horizontal wheel in which the horse works; and then beside it is a small house containing the mill-works. Why they do not use wind-mills instead, it is difficult to say; except that the others are better understood, and require less care. Running water is so scarce on the Puszta, that water-mills are out of the question.

In the neighbourhood of the villages a certain portion of the land is cultivated,—perhaps one-tenth of the whole; and produces rich crops of *Kukurutz*, or Indian corn, wheat, hemp, flax, tobacco, and wine. The gathering in of these products occupies the scanty population without intermission from the beginning of summer to the end of autumn. Our route did not lead us through the richest part of the plains; but I do not remember ever to have seen the kukurutz looking better than here. It was just the middle of September, and every hand was occupied in the harvest. Wagon-loads of the bright yellow cones, drawn by the large white oxen, were passed at every step. And what a trial of patience it was to pass those wagons! There the peasant sits quite composedly in the front of his load, probably fast asleep, and often half drunk: until you are close to him, he will not hear you, shout as you may; and when at last he does condescend to be aware of your presence, and commences vociferating to his four oxen and plying his whip at the same time to induce them to cede the only part of the road on which your carriage can pass, the time taken by the beasts to comprehend the full force of their master's argument, and the sort of consultation they seem to hold as to whether they shall obey it or not, is sufficient to exhaust the most patient of men.

The part of the plains left for pasture is occupied during the summer months, as we have seen, by immense herds of cattle and flocks of sheep. In winter these are either brought up into the villages, or stabled in those solitary farms which form another striking peculiarity of the Puszta. Far from any beaten track or village the traveller observes a collection of buildings enclosed by a thick wall of mud or straw, with an arched gateway, and

containing a large court, surrounded by stables, barns, sheep-houses, and a shepherd's cottage or two. Here the sheep and cattle are wintered, for the sake of saving the draught of fodder; and here their guardians often remain the whole winter without exchanging a word with any other human beings than those composing their own little domestic community, for the trackless snow renders communication extremely difficult. In summer the shepherd's life is even more monotonous. He often remains out for months together, till winter comes on, and obliges him to seek shelter.

Almost all the inhabitants of the plains, except some few German colonists, are true Magyars; and nothing is so well adapted to their disposition as the half-slothful, half-adventurous life of a *Juhász*, or Puszta shepherd. His dress is the loose linen drawers, and short shirt descending scarcely below the breast, and is sometimes surmounted by the gaily embroidered waistcoat or jacket. His feet are protected by long boots or sandals; and his head by a hat of more than quaker proportions, below which hang two broad plaits of hair. The turned-up brim of the hat serves him for a drinking-cup; while the bag, which hangs from a belt round his neck, contains the bread and bacon which form his scanty meal. Over the whole is generally cast the *Bunda* or hairy cloak. I must not forget, however, that his shirt and drawers are black. Before he takes the field for the season, he carefully boils these two articles of dress in hog's lard; and, anointing his body and head with the same precious unguent, his toilette is finished for the next six months. I feel assured that the penetration of my English readers will never dive into the motive for all this careful preparation, and, that they will be little inclined to believe me if I tell them it is cleanliness! Yet so it is; for the lard effectually protects him against a host of little enemies by which he would otherwise be covered. To complete his accoutrements, he must have a short pipe stuck in his boot-top: and in his belt a tobacco-bag, with a collection of instruments,—not less incomprehensible to the uninitiated than the attendants of a Scotch mull,—intended for striking fire, clearing the pipe, stopping the tobacco, pricking the ashes, and I know not what fumatory refinements beside.

But the Bunda deserves a more special notice; for in the whole annals of tailoring no garment ever existed better adapted to its purpose, and therefore more worthy of all eulogy, than the Hungarian Bunda. It is made in the form of a close cloak without

collar, and is composed of the skins of the long-wooled Hungarian sheep, which undergo some slight process of cleaning, but by no means sufficient to prevent them retaining an odour not of the most aromatic kind. The wool is left perfectly in its natural state. The leather side is often very prettily ornamented: the seams are sewed with various-coloured leather cords, bouquets of flowers are worked in silk on the sides and borders, and a black lamb's-skin from Transylvania adorns the upper part of the back in the form of a cape. To the Puszta shepherd the Bunda is his house, his bed, his all. Rarely in the hottest day of summer, or the coldest of winter, does he forsake his woolly friend. He needs no change of dress; a turn of his Bunda renders him insensible to either extreme. Should the sun annoy him as he is lazily watching his dogs hunting the field-mice, or the earless marmots, to supply their hungry stomachs,—for, like their masters, they trust chiefly to their own talents for their support,—he turns the wool outside, and either from philosophy or experience, knows how safely it protects him from the heat. Should early snow on the Carpathians send him chilling blasts before the pastures are eaten bare, and before he can return to his village, he a second time turns the Bunda, but now with the wool inside, and again trusts to the non-conducting power of its shaggy coat. The *Guba*, woven of coarse wool, presenting much the same appearance, is a cheap but poor imitation of the Bunda.

But the heart of that man is even more curious than his outward coverture. He has a system of morality peculiar to himself. I know not why, but nomadic habits seem to confuse ideas of property most strangely in the heads of those accustomed to them: nomadic nations are always thieves; and the *Magyar Juhász*, more than half nomadic, is certainly more than half a rogue. Not that he would break into a house, or that you or I, gentle reader, need have the least fear in his society: but there are certain persons and things which he considers fair game, whenever he can meet with them.

I remember a friend regretting that he could not show us his head-shepherd, who, he said, was a remarkably fine fellow, and well worthy of being sketched as a model of his class.

"When will poor János return?" inquired the Count of his steward; "I should like the Englishmen to see him."

"In about six months," was the reply.

I asked the cause of this long absence.

"Why I believe he robbed and beat a Jew, and they have adjudged him twelve months' imprisonment for it."

"Of course you will not receive such a man into your service again?"

"——— *teremtette!* Why not?" rejoined the Count. "He was the best shepherd I had, and esteemed quite a Solomon among his fellows for the wisdom and justice with which he settled their disputes. He was the shepherds' arbitrator for miles round. As for Jews and German Handwerksburschen, János always regarded them as *feræ naturæ*, to be robbed and beaten by every honest Magyar whenever he could meet with them. He protested that had he killed the Jew, the punishment had been too severe; for there was not a pretty girl in the whole country round but had borne him a child, any one of whom was worth a dozen Jews!"

In fact, robbery is a part of the shepherd's duty; and according to his dexterity in preventing others from robbing him, or in robbing others in return when robbed, is he valued by his master and respected by his companions. He leaves the farm-house with a certain number of sheep; these he must bring back, or be punished; if any are stolen, retaliation is the only remedy; and should it not happen to fall on the right head,—Justice is blind,—more is the pity. If he robs for his master, it is but natural he should sometimes do so for himself. To supply his larder with somewhat better fare than his maize and a scanty portion of bacon affords, a straggler from a neighbour's flock is no unwelcome addition.

It would be unjust to quit the subject of the Puszta shepherd without making due and honourable mention of his constant companion and friend, the *Juhàsz-kutya*,—the Hungarian shepherd-dog. The shepherd-dog is commonly white, sometimes inclining to a reddish-brown, and about the size of our Newfoundland dogs. His sharp nose, short erect ears, shaggy coat, and bushy tail, give him much the appearance of a wolf; indeed, so great is the resemblance, that I have known an Hungarian gentleman mistake a wolf for one of his own dogs. Except to their masters, they are so savage that it is unsafe for a stranger to enter the court-yard of an Hungarian cottage without arms. I speak from experience; for as I was walking through the yard of a post-house, where some of these dogs were lying about apparently asleep, one of them crept after me, and inflicted a severe wound in my leg, of which I still bear the marks. Before I could turn round, the dog was already far off; for, like the wolf, they bite by snapping, but never hang to the object, like the bull-dog or

mastiff. Their sagacity in driving and guarding sheep and cattle, and their courage in protecting them from wolves or robbers, are highly praised; and the shepherd is so well aware of the value of a good one, that it is difficult to induce him to part with it.

It was not till towards the close of the second day that we arrived at Debreczen; for some rain had fallen, and we could only advance at a foot pace. Debreczen, the capital of the plains, contains a population of fifty thousand inhabitants. It well deserves the name of "the largest village in Europe," given it by some traveller; for its wide, unpaved streets, its one-storied houses, and the absence of all roads in its neighbourhood, render it very unlike what a European associates with the name of town. In rainy weather the whole street becomes one liquid mass of mud, so that officers quartered on one side the street are obliged to mount their horses and ride across to dinner on the other. Instead of a causeway, they have adopted the expedient of a single wooden plank; and it is a great amusement of the people, whenever they meet the soldiers (Polish lancers, whom they hate,) on this narrow path, to push them off into the sea of mire below.

It is in Debreczen and its neighbourhood that the true Magyar character may be most advantageously studied. The language is here spoken in its greatest purity, the costume is worn by rich as well as poor, and those national peculiarities which a people always lose by much admixture with others are still prominent at Debreczen.

The pride of the Magyar, which is one of his strongest traits, leads him to look down on every other nation by which he is surrounded with sovereign contempt. All foreigners are either *Schwab* (German,) or *Talyán* (Italian;) and it is difficult to imagine the supercilious air with which the Magyar peasant pronounces those two words. As for his more immediate neighbours, it is worse still: for the most miserable *Paraszt-ember* (poorman, peasant) of Debreczen would scorn alliance or intercourse with the richest Wallack in the country. I remember the Baroness W—— telling me that, as she was going to Debreczen some years ago with vorspann, she was accompanied by her footman, who happened to be a Wallack, and, in speaking to her, he was overheard by the Magyar coachman using that language. The peasant made no observation at the time, but, as they approached the town, he pulled up, and desired the footman to get down; assuring the lady at the same time that he meant no disrespect

I.

I should like in the plough,
Six oxen to drive,
If my dove would come,
To hold the plough.

II.

I should like in a sledge
Four horses to drive,
If my rose would come,
To hold up the sledge.

His mistress answers:

III.

Though on Saturday I soak it,
And on Sunday I wash it,
Yet to my dove
I'll give a clean shirt.

IV.

Of flour I begged the loan,
Butter for money I bought,
Yet for my dove
A cake did I bake.

V.

The lover.

I love you, my dove,
As well as new bread;
I sigh for you
A hundred thousand times a day.

VI.

The mistress.

I love you, I love you;
But tell it to none,
Till on the church stones
We are sworn to be one.

VII.

The lover.

Why should I love
If I hoped not to marry you,
If we could not meet there
Where I so much desire?

In the two next, the air of rakish carelessness after disappointment, is very characteristic of the Magyar. He is too proud to

show his feeling, and would fain laugh at care to hide his real sorrow.

One grain of wheat, two grains of rye,
I have poured them in, they are grinding now,
I have poured them in, they are grinding now.
If I should last till next year,
Taraj didum daj,
I will sow barley, I will sow oats,
Taraj didum daj;
And we two together will reap them, love,
Taraj didum daj.

II.

One grain of wheat, two grains of rye,
I have poured them in, they are grinding now,
I have poured them in, they are grinding now.
We will bake bread of it,
Taraj didum daj,
And eat till we're full, my rose,
Taraj didum daj.
Now very soon, very soon,
Taraj didum daj,
Very soon, I can kiss you now!
Taraj didum daj.

III.

One grain of wheat, two grains of rye,
I have poured them in, they are grinding now,
I have poured them in, they are grinding now.
If I should last till next year,
Taraj, taraj, daj,
Till next year if I should last,
Taraj, taraj daj,
My pretty sweetheart I will woo!
Taraj, taraj, daj.
If she refuse me, what care I?
Taraj, taraj, daj.
I'm no great loser even then,
Taraj, taraj, daj.

I.

Now that the red plum of Besztercze ripens,
In a fortnight more dear Baba will be mine.
The gooseberry ripens,
Sweeter is the fair;
Ripens the crab,
Livelier is the brown.

II.

As I went across a certain neighbour's yard,
I happened to look in at the window;
There I saw my sweetheart,—
I caught her in another's arms.
May G— scourge her!
Oh! how I do hate her!

III.

And yet she says that she my true love is,
Though all the while she is deceiving me;
But I believe not in her words.
Let her stay for ever single;
Bad in soul and body
Are both the fair and brown!

The next is a very popular song, and contains an allusion to the "Mill which grinds sorrow," as well as to several other popular proverbs and superstitions, some of which I think are common in England. It will be observed that in this, as in most other of these songs, there is rarely much connexion between the different verses.

I.

Little Komárom, great Komárom!
What pretty lasses are these three!
How I love one of them—
The prettiest of all the three!
Little Komárom, great Komárom!

II.

Little Komárom, great Komárom!
Near Görgöny there murmurs a mill,
Which, as I hear, doth sorrow grind:
I indeed have a sad sorrow,
There I'll take and grind it up,
Little Komárom, great Komárom!

III.

Little Komárom, great Komárom!
He who does not greet the Jew,
Is sure to trip across the threshold;
See, comrade, from not having greeted,
Over the threshold thou hast fallen,
Little Komárom, great Komárom!

IV.

Little Komárom, great Komárom!
No bird is prettier than the swallow,

None than the white-footed young wife,
It bites her white foot
The cold water, she cannot bear it,
Little Komárom, great Komárom!

V.

Little Komárom, great Komárom!
He who sorrow brought in fashion,
Surely that man God has cursed;
But as for this G—d d—mn'd sorrow,
It's a fashion I won't follow,
Little Komárom, great Komárom!

VI.

Little Komárom, great Komárom!
In rotten wood the worm doth grow;
For an old woman is sorrow fit:
But I of such things never think;
Like the grasshopper I hop and skip,
Little Komárom, great Komárom!

VII.

Little Komárom, great Komárom!
My little lass, how much thou 'rt grown!
What a pity thou art not married!
I would have married, but no one woo'd,
And so I was left forgotten at home,
Little Komárom, great Komárom!

I.

Oh, how dirty is your kerchief!
Perhaps you have no sweetheart?
Give it me, and I will wash it,
For nobody loves me.

II.

The wind whistles, and the tree cracks;
Under it sits a shepherd boy:
Down to the knee his Guba is fringed;
A sad song sounds his pipe.

III.

Off I went into the vineyard:
A hoe I took in my hand,
But I hung it on a tree:
I drank wine under the shade.

IV.

My glossy locks my shoulders beat,
They have soil'd my fine linen shirt;

Wash it, my rose, and make it clean,
For near thy garden flows the Theiss.

The words of the following are so characteristic of the pride and independence of the wealthy Magyar peasant, that I give them entire.

I.

Of six herdsmen I'm the master;
I'm accosted as "wealthy sir:"
Herds of cattle fill my pastures;
Six watch-dogs keep guard for me.

II.

When my food in the pot is ready,
My six servants sit round with me;
And we eat our fill of the heap of *kdsa*,
As well as the Count with his thirty dishes.

III.

A hundred-florin bay I ride for a hackney;
He prances so, that his feet strike fire;
Like me he is true Magyar bred;
On him I can catch the hare with my whip.

IV.

But they say that I've neither table nor chair:
Ferdinand has not so many as I!
I sit where I list on all Balaton's shores,
And I eat and I drink wherever I please.*

Few people have more legends in song than the Magyars; and I have heard that it is a common custom for the young girls of a village to collect in circles round the winter's fire, with their spindles in their hands, and in turns sing the legendary history of their native land, as they have learnt it from their mothers. Great is the honour paid on these occasions to the best story-teller of the party; and it is not uncommon for the young men, who are privileged to hover round that poetic circle, and even to obtain a kiss for every time they can pick up the purposely dropped spindle, to choose their wives according to their excellence in the bardic art.

The Magyar peasant has a strong feeling of self-respect, at

* A great number of "Hungarian popular songs," have been translated and published by Dr. Bowring in his "Poetry of the Magyars," 1830.

times bordering perhaps on foolish pride. It is very rarely he will consent to exhibit himself as an actor, and in consequence the country is filled with German players, Bohemian riders, and gipsy musicians; for, however much he may dislike amusing others, he has not the least objection that others should amuse him. To all this is united a sense of personal decency, and a fastidious delicacy in certain matters, scarcely to be found amongst any other people.

The Magyar has a passionate love of country, united to a conviction that no one is so happy and prosperous as himself. The Swiss does not feel a more devoted attachment to his mountains than the Magyar to his plains. Csaplovics tells us that a young girl of Debreczen, who was taken for the first time into the mountains of Liptau and Arva, regarded the villages with the utmost astonishment; and, on seeing what to her eyes appeared the barrenness and poverty of the scenery, burst out in exclamation, "What! do men live here too?"

The "truth in wine" has long been proverbial, and it is nowhere better exemplified than in the Magyar. No sooner does the fear of ridicule forsake him than he is seized with an irresistible desire to weep over the miseries of his father-land. With high and low, the reign of Corvinus, when Hungary was respected abroad and the peasant protected at home, is the imaginary golden age to which they all refer. Not a mother wails more bitterly over her lost child than the wine-softened Magyar over the fallen glories of the Hunia.

The language and the religion are two important points of nationality with the Magyar. He believes that he alone has the true faith—Calvinistic—which he knows only by the name of *Magyars vallás;* and that his is the only language understood in heaven, and therefore the only one to be used in prayer. A poor peasant nurse—they are said to be the best nurses in the world—sitting by the bedside of the Countess D——, heard her utter in the excess of pain the common German exclamation, "*Ach Gott! ach Gott!*"—"Ah, my lady," observed the poor Magyar, "God forgive me! but how can you expect God to listen to you, and give you ease, if you speak a language he does not understand?"

Hospitality is a virtue of the Magyar, as well as of every other inhabitant of Hungary; and, though it is the fashion to consider it rather a necessity of uncivilized life than a quality of polished society, it is nevertheless the parent of a thousand kindly

feelings both in the host and guest, which leave their impress in the general character, and which are but ill replaced by the cold egotistical formalities substituted for it in the intercourse of what is called, *par excellence*, the world.

In the upper classes the personal pride of the Hungarian character is apt to create jealousies against any one whose superior talent may have placed him above his fellows in public esteem; and there are few countries in which a great man makes more personal enemies, and has to combat more petty annoyances, than in Hungary.

It is scarcely necessary to say, that, with such dispositions, the Magyar is strongly inclined to conservatism; he hates new-fangled notions and foreign fashions; he always considers it a sufficient condemnation to say, "Not even my grandfather ever heard of such a thing!"

As soldiers, the Hungarians have the reputation of making the best light troops in Europe. The hussar is a smart active fellow, a little vain of his own appearance, and passionately fond of his horse, for whose accommodation he never hesitates to steal, if he thinks he can do it without detection:—he would not be a good hussar unless he did. He bears punishment gaily, and both he and his steed will manage to live where many other troops would starve.

Debreczen is celebrated in Hungary as well for its great fairs as for its manufactures, which, if rude, are adapted to the wants of the people. This is the great mart for the produce of the north and east of Hungary,—cattle, horses, bacon, tobacco, wine, wax, honey, flax, &c.; and a great part of the small traders of Transylvania supply themselves from hence with colonial produce, and the showy fineries of Vienna. No less than twenty-five thousand of the Bundas I have so much eulogized are prepared here every year, and expedited to every part of the country. The true Hungarian pipe too is another produce of Debreczen; and a curious affair it is, with its short stick and long thin bowl. There is also a large manufactory of soap here, in which the soda collected in the neighbouring dry lakes is chiefly used.

At one end of the over-wide chief street—full twice as wide as any street in London—and contrasting ill with the one-storied houses which stand on either side, towers the Reformed Church and College of Debreczen; for Debreczen is not only the capital of Magyarism, but the capital of Calvinism also in Hungary. The

Protestants of Hungary are divided into two classes: the Lutherans, who adhere to the Confession of Augsburg; and the Reformed, who follow the doctrines of Calvin. The former are principally found in the north and east of Hungary, and include many Germans and Sclavacks; the latter are almost entirely Magyars, and chiefly inhabit the towns and villages of the Puszta.

I have often had occasion to notice the civil wars which occupy so prominent a place in Hungarian history; and, as might be expected, no sooner did the Reformed doctrines gain a footing than—whether from sincere belief, or only from a political calculation of the chiefs I know not,—religious differences entered largely into the causes of dispute. At one time England and Holland supported the Protestant insurgents in Hungary: now they were at the very gates of Vienna itself, and religious liberty seemed on the point of being firmly established; and now, delivered over to the persecutions of their bitterest enemies, the whole party seemed on the point of utter annihilation. In the reign of Leopold the First, nothing that falsehood and treachery could effect for their destruction was left untried; and in spite of the treaties of Vienna, (1606,) and of Linz, (1647,) in which their liberties had been solemnly guarantied, it was not till Maria Theresa, in her hour of need, had experienced good proofs of their loyalty, that their existence was fairly acknowledged, and the right of private worship, though still under many degrading restrictions, accorded. In the reign of Joseph they obtained still farther concessions, and were placed nearly on an equality with the Catholics. They were now allowed to build churches, establish and endow schools, were absolved from Catholic oaths and attendance on Catholic places of worship; and the male children in mixed marriages, if the father was Protestant, were to be educated in that faith. These, and some other privileges, were confirmed by Leopold the Second, and are enjoyed by the Hungarians at the present day. They still, however, complain of grievances—particularly of the six weeks' *instruction* which converts from Catholicism to Protestantism are obliged to undergo, and which exposes them to great annoyances—indeed, they claim perfect equality as their right, and without it they will never be satisfied.

The Protestants of the Reformed faith have the best institutions for education of any of the established religions in Hungary. The chief of these is the College of Debreczen, which was founded in 1792, and contains a library of twenty thousand

volumes. I subjoin some remarks on these schools from Csaplovics,* in which the reader may perhaps perceive the origin of some curious scholastic customs, of which the traces remain in our universities at the present day. "Besides the elementary school, (*Trivialschulen,*) of which there is one in every parish, the Reformed have many well-managed grammar-schools, (*Gymnasien,*) and three great institutions called Colleges, viz. at Debreczen, Sáros Patak, and Pápa. The members of these colleges are divided into two classes, the greater and lesser students; and the greater again into *Togati*, and *non-Togati*.

"Those called Togati are such as intend to dedicate themselves to the church or to teaching. They have a peculiar black gown, *Toga;* and a black belt, something like that of the Catholic priests, which they put on to attend church and lectures. The Togati have their lodgings in the college free, about six shillings allowed for candles during the year, and from one to two *metzen*† of wheat for bread. Every one has his meals cooked where he likes, which are afterwards brought to his cell by the fags (*dienstbaren Schulknaben.*) Each pays for his own firing. The greatest privilege of the Togati is the right to receive a regular diploma from the college, called a *Patens*, and duly signed by the rector, empowering them to visit the Reformed parishes far and near on all the great feasts,—as Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide,—where they preach a sermon, and receive a present in money in return, generally from one pound to five. On these occasions a strong *Mendicans*—a student of an inferior class (our sizar)—carries after the *Deák Ur*, (Mr. Latin,) who marches as *Legatus* before, a mighty bag, which he rarely brings home empty. This is called *legátióba járni* (to go on an embassy.)"

As might be expected, the villages containing the mansions of rich Protestant nobles are the most frequented. One old lady used to receive twelve of these Togati every feast; and, after entertaining them hospitably, sent each away with a present of one hundred florins (4*l.*) in money, and a bag filled with hams, sausages, corn, and other provisions for the quarter.

Csaplovics continues: "The twelve first of the Togati are called *Primarii*, or *Jurati*. Their duty is to observe the conduct of the rest of the students, to see that they keep the college

* Gemälde von Ungarn, vol. i.

† The metzen is about one bushel and three quarters Winchester measure.

laws, and to point out any irregularities they may discover. In order to have a more strict watch over the students, they have the right to visit the rooms during the night; on which account no student's door can be locked. Into this college police only those are admitted who have been from six to nine years Togati, who have finished their studies with credit, and who have distinguished themselves by their good conduct. They are subjected, previously to admission among the Primarii, to the strictest examination, and then take an oath in public to fulfil their duties conscientiously."

The first Primarius is called *Senior*, and acts as steward of the college, for which he receives 40*l.* a year; the second is called *Contrascriba*, and is the attorney-general of the community; while the rest act as private tutors to the other students, with a salary of 3*l.* and three *metzen* of corn.

"To the class of the non-Togati belong all those who intend to devote themselves to politics—or any thing else or nothing else—and are called *Publikusok* (*Publici.*) The course of study for this class extends only to four years."

"The lesser students form nine classes, the lowest of which are supplied with teachers chosen from among the Togati.

"The fee for instruction—*Didactrum*—is according to the wealth of the student: the poorest pay 6*s.* yearly; those in more easy circumstances, 12*s.*; and the richest, 18*s.* The Togati, who act as private lecturers and tutors, receive from the students, according to their circumstances, from one ducat to many for their instructions; and it is from this source chiefly that the industrious Togati derive their incomes. The number of the Togati and other students, following the higher branches of science, amounted in 1818, in Debreczen, to five hundred and twenty;* in Sáros Patak, of Togati alone, to three hundred and sixty-three; and in Pápa to one hundred and ten: of greater and lesser students in Sáros Patak, the total number was fourteen hundred and twenty."

Though the students of Debreczen have the reputation of being rather rough in manner and unpolished in appearance, they are generally stanch Protestants, with a strong love of liberty and a stern adherence to the constitution of their fathers. From the prevalence of the Magyar language in this part of Hungary, they have a decided advantage in public speaking over those edu-

* The whole number at Debreczen is upwards of two thousand,

cated out of the country, or even in those places where German is the fashionable medium of conversation. I believe they have the reputation of being good Latinists; which, in Hungary, means rather good speakers and writers of Latin, than good readers and critics of the Latin authors.

It happened, while we were at Debreczen, that the regiment quartered in the neighbourhood was united at that place for the annual manœuvres and inspection; and, as we were walking about the town, we were not a little surprised to recognise under the lancer's jacket and cap an English face,—Captain B——, whom we had known elsewhere. So unexpected a meeting was pleasant enough for both parties; and we were happy to avail ourselves of an offer from the colonel, whom we met at supper, to join the review next morning. In all the world no better place for a review can be found than the Debreczeni Puszta, as this part of the plain is called. The regiment was composed entirely of Poles from Gallicia; a very rough-looking set, whom we were told it is almost impossible to keep clean and honest. The officers complain much of their drunkenness, dishonesty, and turbulence in quarters. In rank, however, they looked exceedingly well, and their horses still better. They were chiefly mounted from Wallachia, Moldavia, and Transylvania: one hundred guldens *c. m.* or 10*l.* being about the medium price of each horse for the remounts. It is said to be wonderful how much these horses will support with the poor nourishment they get. Their condition was excellent. The most interesting manœuvres to us were the false charge, the scattered retreat, and the re-forming of the regiment in order. The whole regiment, fourteen hundred strong, started at full gallop, and in that manner came forward to within a few yards of where we were standing with the colonel; when, on the word being given, the whole dispersed in the greatest seeming disorder, retreated to the point from which they had advanced, and re-formed themselves in line in an astonishingly short space of time. The Polish lancers are acknowledged to be excellent horsemen; there was not a man in this regiment who could not pick up his lance from the ground when his horse was at full gallop.

The number of English officers in the Austrian cavalry is not less, I believe, than two hundred—more, probably, than in all the other foreign armies of Europe. It is difficult to find sufficient motives for this preference, unless it be accounted for by the kind manner in which their brother officers receive them, and

by the cheapness of provisions in most parts of the Austrian empire. The Government, too, is said to regard Englishmen generally rather with an eye of favour. Yet the pay is miserably small, promotion very slow, duty severe, and the quarters often most wretched. I can scarcely conceive a situation offering fewer temptations than that of an officer quartered in some village of the plains of Hungary, where he is obliged to put up with half a room in a peasant's cottage, where he is without books or the possibility of getting them, without a soul who can speak a word of any language he understands to converse with, and with no chance of companionship, except by riding twenty or thirty miles to the next detachment. The only advantages I know are, that tobacco and wine are cheap and good, and the officer may hunt, fish, or shoot, wherever and whenever he pleases.

On leaving Debreczen, we turned towards Pest;—a long journey, occupying, at this season of the year, when the horses are generally engaged with the harvest, not less than two days and nights. We were frequently obliged to remain three, four, or five hours waiting for horses before the Biro could be awakened, and the Kis Biro sent to the pastures, horses be caught, brought up to the village, fed, and harnessed to the carriage. It is tedious work, though it is not altogether without its advantages. One morning as we were dozing over this wearisome interval, and just as the sun began to show his pleasant face at the far end of the village, we were roused by a clattering of hoofs, tinkling of bells, neighing of horses, and lowing of cattle, as though a four-footed army were about to take the village by storm. A troop of several hundred horses, and almost as strong a horned corps headed by the parish bull as drum-major, soon came galloping by, and then filed off each to his respective quarters, as regularly as so many soldiers to their billets. They had been grazing all the night in the rich Puszta pastures, and were now driven up for the work of the day. Scarcely were the stable-doors fairly opened for the horses and cattle, than the pigs and geese rushed out, and, grunting and cackling their satisfaction, they started off to the well-known rendezvous, where their leaders would be ready to show them the best stubble in the parish. We were so much amused with this busy scene, that we did not observe how much we had profited by it till reminded that four fresh horses were already harnessed to the carriage, and ready to start.

We were now in the country of water-melons, and just in the season. Although this delicious fruit keeps but a very short time, and can only be eaten fresh, it is an important article of cultivation here. In addition to the number consumed by the men, children, and pigs,—for the latter often come in for their share before all is over, a great number is sent by the Theiss and Danube to Pest, Presburg, and Vienna. At Pest, the September fair is called the *Melonen Markt*, from the quantity of this fruit brought up the river at that time. A fine water-melon, of the size of a man's head, costs about two pence English money on the plains. It is difficult to convey a notion of the luxury of this fruit in a hot climate, and especially in travelling over dusty roads. Some Hungarian writer considers it a special gift of Providence to the Puszta, to compensate for the bad water found there. The common melons are fine here, and even cheaper than the water-melons.

The wine of the plains is not, to my taste, to be compared to that of other parts of Hungary. It is strong, but it is deficient in that flavour which the mountain lends its grapes. The tobacco of the plains is also strong, but considered deficient in aroma.

Among the crops most common here, and most strange to the Englishman's eye, are those of sun-flowers and pumpkins; the first cultivated for the oil they yield, the second used for fattening the pigs.

As we arrived towards evening on the outskirts of the straggling town of Szolnok, we found the bridge which we had to cross incumbered with a crowd of aged and maimed before each of whom was a large heap of kukurutz. I have already said it was the time of harvest; and, as we slowly followed the train of heavily-laden wagons, we observed that every peasant, as he passed a beggar, threw a yellow cone of kukurutz to this heap, and received a poor man's blessing in return. With the characteristic cunning of their class, they knew that when the hand is most full the heart is most open; and, by thus exhibiting their own destitution in glaring contrast with the plenty of their neighbours, they managed, without the trouble of sowing or gathering, to reap a sufficient harvest to maintain them for the winter.

The mention of Szolnok reminds me of one of the many instances of politeness we received from persons to whom we were totally unknown. As we stopped at the town-house, and sent in our assignation for fresh horses, the Szolga-biro came out,

and, raising his little cap, assured us horses should be procured as soon as possible. He was a good-tempered-looking man, and was evidently so anxious for a chat with the strangers that we did not like to disappoint him. He knew from our assignation that we were Englishmen; and no sooner did he learn from our conversation that we had taken the trouble to examine the riches and beauties of his native land, and found much to admire and respect, both in the country and its institutions, than he scarce knew how to express his joy. Never was there a people more grateful for sympathy than the Hungarians. He would not allow us to leave the town till he had filled the carriage with the choicest peaches, melons, and plums, from his own garden: not to mention a large loaf of Szolnok bread, which he pronounced, and I believe he was right too, to be the very best in Hungary. It is true, all this might be nothing but the effect of good-nature: and yet, reader, had you seen the real kindness with which it was done, the interest the good man took in our journey, the sentiments he expressed in favour of our native land; had you received all this attention from an individual you never saw before, and whom in all human probability you would never see again; and had you felt that it was to your country rather than to yourself you owed it,—you must be differently constructed from me if you did not find yourself a happier man than when you entered Szolnok.

But it is high time to finish this chapter, for it was my intention to confine myself to the peculiarities of the Puszta, and I am wandering from it;—kindness to the stranger is common to every part of Hungary.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MUNICIPALITIES AND TAXATION.

County Meeting at Pest.—Origin of Hungarian Municipalities.—The Municipal Government of Counties.—Municipal Officers.—Fö Ispán.—Vice-Ispán.—Szolga-biro.—Payment and Election of Magistrates.—County Meetings—their Powers.—Restaurations.—Municipal Government of Towns.—Senatus and Község.—Abuse of Candidation.—Municipal Government of Villages.—Advantages of Decentralization.—The Biro.—Taxation.—Mode of Levying Taxes.—Amount of Revenue.—Errors of the System.

On our return to Pest, all the world was talking of a great county meeting which had just taken place; in which the member, Mr. Précsi, had been recalled by his constituents, and dismissed from his place for voting contrary to their instructions. The greatest efforts had been made by the Government party, at the head of which was the Fö Ispán, to defeat the Liberals; and, finding themselves in a minority, they proposed to adjourn the new election to another day: but, just at the critical moment, Count Károlyi György sprung upon the table, and calling out, "No time like the present!" was received with such a burst of acclamation as at once decided the question, and obliged the Tories to give up any further contest. The new Liberal deputy, Mr. Fáy, was required, before receiving his authority, to swear in no way, "by speech or silence," to act contrary to the instructions of those who elected him; and it was determined that henceforward every deputy from that county should take the same oath.

There is something so decidedly free, and even democratic, in these county meetings, and in the municipal* institutions of Hungary generally, that they excited my interest in no ordinary degree; and I think I cannot do better than dedicate a few pages to their consideration before we proceed further on our journey. The county meeting at Pest was, it is true, rather political than municipal in its character; but, though, in this instance, the two institutions were mixed together, they are generally sufficiently separated to entitle us to consider them apart.

*"By the term 'municipal,' I mean to designate the administration which the inhabitants of any village, burg, or section of the country, established for the management of their local affairs, as distinguished from and independent of the political government."—*Urquhart's Turkey*, p. 71.

I am inclined to think the Hungarians owe their municipal institutions to the Sclaves whom they conquered; not merely because the latter were a settled nation skilled in argiculture and other arts of civilized life, and therefore necessarily exercising a strong influence over a nomadic people like the Magyars, but because we find some traces of similar institutions among other Sclavish nations long before they were known to the European nations of Gothic origin. The popular character of the institutions of Poland are well known, and in the early history of Russia the same tendency to popular government may be traced. Segur, particularly, remarks on the firmness with which the Russian people maintained the management of their local affairs in their own hands; nor was it without the greatest difficulty that the descendants of Ruric destroyed the ancient customs, and finally subjected Russia to the yoke of feudality. Several of the titles too of the municipal officers in Hungary are derived from the Sclavish language, and it is therefore more than probable that the offices themselves had their origin from the Sclaves.

Be this as it may, when St. Stephen,—the Alfred of Hungary,—about the year 1000, undertook to settle the affairs of his new kingdom, he at once destroyed the octarchy, or rule of the descendants of the eight chieftains who conquered the land; and in part redividing, and in part adopting former divisions, he constituted the counties nearly in their present number and form, whilst for the government of these counties he appointed officers similar to those now existing.

In Hungary, each of the fifty-two counties (*Vármegye*) has a separate local administration, and constitutes a kind of state within itself; nor can the general Government interfere in its affairs, or even execute the laws within its boundaries, except through the county officers, all of whom (except one) are chosen by the people every three years. The exception is the *Fö Ispán* or Lord-lieutenant, the representative of Majesty, who is appointed directly by the Crown. Except at the triennial elections or on other great occasions, this officer generally resides in the capital; and the more important of his duties devolve on the elected *Vice Ispán* or *Al Ispán*, as he is more commmonly called at the present day. This magistrate answers in some respects to our sheriff; indeed, when Latin was used in our law transactions, both were called by the same title, *Vice-Comes*. In the absence of the Fö Ispán, the Vice-Ispán summons and takes the chair at all county meetings, corresponds with the central Government, and executes its decrees. It is through him also that the depu-

ties communicate with their constituents, and receive back their instructions. He holds the supreme direction of the provincial police, and presides as chief judge in the county courts, besides holding his own courts for the trial of minor offences, and small debt cases. A first and second Vice-Ispán are always chosen, in order that, in case of the illness or unavoidable absence of the one, the other may supply his place.

There can be few positions in society more honourable, or more to be coveted, than that of Vice-Ispán in Hungary. Chosen freely by the whole gentry of his county, possessed of immense power and influence, and exercising it among his own friends and neighbours, he enjoys all that to a healthy ambition can appear desirable. As a school for constitutional statesmen, I know of no office so good as this. It lays open a clear view of the wants and capabilities of the country, even to the minutest details; it places its occupant in the closest connexion with his constituents, keeps him in constant remembrance of his dependence upon them, accustoms him to public speaking, and initiates him into that *ars agendi*—that tact in the management of affairs —which nothing but a long continuance in office can give, and which is almost as necessary in the government of a country as commanding talent and just principles. It has accordingly been much sought after of late by young men of family, and I could name more than one hereditary magnate whose greatest pride is his election to the office of Vice-Ispán.

The municipal officers below the Vice-Ispán, and elected by the county, are the *Szolga-birok*, the Jurassores, the receivers of the state taxes, and receivers of the county taxes, collectors, fiscals, and others, besides a medical officer of health, surveyors, jailors, inferior officers of police, &c., who are elected for life. The most important of these is the *Szolga-biro*, or county magistrate. With the aid of the Jurati Assessores, or Jurassores, as Hungarian Latin makes them,—sworn men,—the Szolga-birok have the management of the separate districts (*Ke-rület*) into which each county is divided. Their duties extend to the administration of justice in trivial cases, the quartering of the soldiers, and the superintendence of the police within their districts.

All these officers receive a small annual payment during the period of their service, varying from 80*l*. the salary of the Vice-Ispán, to 10*l*. that of the Jurassor. It is not intended that this should be a remuneration for their services, but only a provision for the extraordinary expenses which their offices may bring upon them; it being especially stated that none but men "well-to-do,"

and capable of living on their own property, shall be appointed. No man, when chosen, can refuse to serve.

The advantages resulting from this system of elected county officers, and their consequent responsibility to public opinion, are so striking that I need not point them out; but some of its disadvantages may be less evident to those unacquainted with Hungary. In the first place, all these officers are elected by the people,—and be it recollected that in Hungarian that term excludes the peasantry,—and, from the short duration of their period of office, they are naturally anxious to please those on whom their re-election depends, and they are not therefore likely to be impartial in the administration of justice between electors and non-electors. But there is a still greater evil. From the payment, small as it is, by which these offices are accompanied, a number of needy men have been accustomed to seek them,—I allude particularly to the office of Szolga-biro,—and, from a mistaken kindness on the part of the electors, have not unfrequently succeeded. Now, although this may not prevail in all parts of Hungary,—and I have certainly seen Szolga-birok very wealthy and respectable men, yet in others, where the spirit of the institution has been departed from, and poor men have been appointed, the consequence has been that their poverty has laid them open to bribery in their quality of judges. To such an extent does this prevail in one part of the country, that I have heard the people speak of bribing the Szolga-biro as a matter of course. I remember in the district to which I allude, a Szolga-biro being pointed out to me as a most extraordinary man, because he administered justice fairly to the peasants, without ever accepting even a present from them. This, however, is not altogether a fault of the institution; nothing but a high-state of moral civilization in the country at large can ensure that strict honour in the judge, without which, the best of laws can never ensure justice: "*Nihil prosunt leges sine moribus.*" Something, perhaps, might be done by rendering the offices honorary, and so excluding the needy from them, or by raising the salary so high as to render its possessor beyond the power of slight temptations; but nothing would be so likely to produce the desired effect as a determination on the part of gentlemen of property and education to undertake the office of magistrate themselves, and so raise it, as with us, to be considered a mark of dignity and honour.

Four times at least in the course of every year, and oftener, if necessary, the Fö Ispán, or, in his absence, the Vice-Ispán, is obliged to call a public meeting (*Márkális szék—Congregatio*)

of all the nobles and clergy of the county. These meetings partake both of a political and municipal character. During the sitting of the Diet, it is here that the questions before the chambers are discussed; and, according to the vote of the majority, instructions are sent back to the deputies as to the manner in which they are to vote. Here, too, the wants and the "grievances" of the county are debated, and orders sent to the representatives to introduce bills to remedy them. They have the right of corresponding not only with other counties, but with foreign powers also; which right was exercised not long since in the case of the King of Bavaria. In short, the county meetings of Hungary are little less than provincial parliaments, and the deputies members of a confederation.

In their municipal or local character they have the management and direction of the means of communication, as the making of roads, cutting of canals, and the opening of rivers; they assess the taxes, and order the levies of soldiers voted by the Diet; they provide for the expenses of the county; assize the price of corn and meat;—in short, perform all the business which the government of the county can require. They have one privilege of a very extraordinary character, and which may be quoted as, perhaps, the greatest extent of power ever conferred on a popular assembly under any form of constitutional government. In the same manner as I have already stated, that the acts of the Diet are sent down to the counties to be published, so also are the ordinances of the monarch: but if, after due examination, these are found by the county meetings to be contrary to law, or in their tendency dangerous to liberty, they have "the right to lay them, with all due honour, on the shelf (*cum honore seponuntur*,) and take no further notice of them; a right which they have frequently exercised, and which is in itself a sufficient guarantee against any kind of administrative tyranny."*

Another of their privileges is of rather a curious nature; namely, the right of citing before them any noble who leads a scandalous life, and obliging him to reform, or expelling him from the county. I have heard of one instance of a married Count, who was known to be rather too intimate with a pretty widow of his neighbourhood, and who incurred this disagreeable censure.

But important as the county meetings are in their immediate effects, they are still more so in training the people to think of, and act in, the affairs of the country; and I am convinced it is to them we must attribute the fact, that, in spite of the censor-

* I quote from a very excellent article on Hungary, in the Athenæum of Nov. 1837.

ship of the press, in spite of their isolated position, and the many other disadvantages which they labour under, the Hungarians have sounder notions of politics, and a better acquaintance with their own real interests, than many of the so-called highly civilized nations of Europe.

There are few scenes better calculated to bring out the striking peculiarities of national character than a popular election; and the elections of Hungary are no exceptions to the rule. It so happened that I never was present at a *Restauration*, as an election is called; but, if I may credit those who have been, such a scene of feasting, fiddling, fuddling, and fighting was never equalled even in an Irish fair. A little country town, crowded during three or four days by three or four thousand noblemen, armed and accompanied by their followers, for the most part glorious with wine, their enthusiasm fired in the cause of a party or a name, and edged on by those little piquant animosities which near neighbours will indulge in, must present a scene of wild and stirring interest.

The restaurations, whether of the deputies or municipal officers, are commonly presided over by the Fö Ispán himself. In the case of the municipal officers, the king, in the person of his representative, has the right of *candidation;* that is, of naming three persons for every office, from among whom one must be chosen. In general, however, he nominates such as desire the honour, or who have a respectable party to support them; so that this power is rarely used except to exclude an unworthy person. Elections are now commonly made by acclamation, though polling has been used; Government having resumed what it calls the more ancient, certainly the more barbarous, mode, because it was thought that in the confusion the Fö Ispán might more easily decide upon the candidate most pleasing to the powers that be.

Never was scheme less successful. In the heat and enthusiasm of such a moment the influence of Government is lost; and the Hungarians have taught their lords-lieutenant to act with impartiality, by tossing out of the windows some who had shown a disposition to be partial. Should the numbers appear doubtful, the losing party have, within this last year or two, adopted the plan of demanding a poll, which the lords-lieutenant have not dared to refuse.

There is a good deal of similarity between these restaurations and the elections of members of parliament in England in former times; and though we have been right in changing the form under the plea of convenience for one less democratic, because newspapers supply the place of popular discussions, and party spirit is too active to prevent any possibility of indifference, the case

is far otherwise in Hungary. The enthusiasm of a popular assembly is required not only to stimulate the slow, and encourage the timid, among the friends of liberty, but to baffle by its power the hardihood of the agents of corruption.

It must be confessed that the excesses sometimes committed are rather startling,—only the year before our visit eight men were killed at a restauration in the county of Bars;—but they are certainly less than might be expected from an assembly of so many rude and often uneducated men of warm temperament, excited by wine and party animosity, especially when it is considered that there is no police to restrain them, and that they are for the most part armed. I can easily believe that to the well-drilled, well-policed slave of an absolute Government, such a meeting must appear very alarming; but by an Englishman, who has gone through the scenes of a contested election, it will be readily understood. Such a man has felt the blessings of Liberty, and can therefore easily overlook some of these outbursts of her wilder humours in consideration of the thousand blessings she showers upon him. He knows too that the political excesses of one tyrant cause more misery in a single year, than those of all the freemen of Europe in a century.

At these meetings it is wonderful with how much ease the Magyar, naturally eloquent, gives utterance to his burning thoughts and feelings in the sonorous tones of his much-loved mother-tongue. Word after word, and sentence after sentence, are poured forth without the slightest hesitation or difficulty. The election once over, and the Magyar forgets his anger. Both parties commonly meet, when the business of the day is concluded, without rancour or ill-will, at the table which the lord-lieutenant is obliged to provide for all comers. There again are speeches made,—thanks to the hot wines, yet more fluent than before!—toasts are drunk, healths are pledged, the national airs burst forth in all their native wildness from the gipsy band, and the sad-looking Magyar grows gay with the enthusiasm of the hour.

Of the municipalities of the towns in Hungary it is not necessary to say much; they are German in their origin, dependent in their principle. The municipal body consists of a *Senatus* and a *Község*. The *Senatus* answers to our court of aldermen, and is composed of twelve members, from among whom are chosen the *Polgár Mester*, or Mayor; the *Város Biro*, or Judge of the town; and the *Város Capitány*, or Commander of the police. The *Község* forms the Common Council, and consists, in Pest,

of one hundred and twenty members, from whom the members of the Senatus are taken. Both these bodies are self-elected, and, except the three superior officers, who are chosen annually, they retain their situations for life. So far there is a great resemblance between the constitution of Hungarian boroughs, and those of England before municipal reform; but a striking exception occurs in the manner of the election. It is a principle, which runs through every branch of the Hungarian municipal system, both in towns and counties, that the Crown shall have a direct controlling influence; and this it enjoys in the right of candidation. It is in this way, not only that the superior officers and Senatus are chosen, but every member of the Kozség itself. But, although it is true that the same principle of candidation prevails in the counties, its effect is totally different in the two cases. In the towns, from the small number of persons interested, rendering corruption or intimidation more easy: the long duration of the power delegated, making it more worth while to obtain it for a partisan; and, from another cause, to be explained by and by; the commissioner candidates whom he pleases, and would not hesitate in the least to omit the name of any person, however desired by the town, if his popularity or principles displeased him; so that in fact the whole municipal body may be—though I do not say that they always are—mere creatures of the Government. In the counties, on the contrary, where the elections take place every three years, and where the number of the constituency is often some thousands instead of a few score, the Fö Ispán dares not disobey the wishes of the meeting—thanks to the power of public opinion, and perhaps a little to those constitutional throwings out of windows to which we have before alluded! In fact, triennial elections, and an extensive constituency, seem to furnish—at least in Hungary—a strong barrier against intimidation and corruption.

The other cause for the subserviency of the towns is this;—To enable the Senatus to dispose of any part of the funds, exceeding in amount six pounds, furnished by the taxes which they are authorized to impose on the town to defray local expenses, or from the corporate property* in their possession, it is necessary that permission should be granted by the Crown. Now the Austrian Government makes it a point never to refuse any request made to it, if it is possible to avoid it,—I believe, if the Hungarians asked for the

* Though a citizen is not noble, and cannot possess landed property, a whole town by a fiction of law is considered equal to a noble, and so possesses land which it can sell to its citizens. In like manner, although a citizen cannot bring an action against a noble, the town *in corpore* can proceed for him.

moon, the Austrians would only reply that their request should be attentively considered—but they have a method of delaying to give an answer, which they know will break the spirit of the strongest petitioner in the world; and if a town corporation has ventured to send too liberal instructions to its deputy at the Diet, or has ventured to demur about choosing the nominee of the Crown as a member of the Község, a street may go unpaved, a bridge unbuilt, or a nuisance unabated for half a century, before they can get permission to expend their own money in doing it. The deputy again, although the Crown has no right of nomination in his case, either in town or county, must be chosen from among the senators, all of whom the royal commission has twice candidated. And now, too, the reader will understand why the nobles have deprived the borough members of their right of vote at the Diet; but although he may, perhaps, think them justified in so doing, he will not, therefore, the less lament that the wiser course of reforming the municipalities, by rendering them independent, was not adopted instead. I have no doubt the nobles have not done so, because they were convinced that the Crown would oppose them; but let them only fairly propose a municipal reform at the Diet, and promise to restore to the borough deputies all their rights if it is agreed to, and he would be a bold minister that dare counsel the Crown to reject it.

There is still one part of the municipal system to be considered,—that which refers to the local government of a village. Every Hungarian village forms a *Communitas* in itself, and is governed by its own elected officers, assesses and collects its own taxes, and manages its own affairs, very much after its own fancy. The Lord of the Manor, has, to a certain extent, the same power in the village as the Monarch in the county.

The chief officer of the village is the *Biro* or Judge: for this office the Lord nominates three peasants, from whom the villagers choose one. Here, too, it is generally understood that the Lord should nominate the three persons most desired; but in case he does not do so, and the peasants cannot decide in three days, the Szolga-biro of the districts appoints one himself, independently of both parties. The Biro must be able to read and write, and he is generally a man respected by his fellows for his character and acquirements. His salary, though small, is enough to make it worth his while to take the office; and he is freed from all obligation to labour for the Lord or the county during his continuance in office. The Biro's duties extend to the collection of the taxes, the furnishing the appointed number of conscripts for the

army, the quartering the soldiers on march fairly among the peasantry, the supplying horses for vorspann, the apprehending of rogues and vagabonds, the settling of disputes, and even the summary punishment of trivial offences. The Biro is aided by the *Notarius*, who keeps the accounts; by two *Jurassores*, who help him in his judicial functions, and must be present at every legal punishment; by the *Kis Biro*, or Little Judge; and by several Haiduks, who perform the duties of flogging-masters-general to the village. Except the Haiduks, all these officers are paid as well as elected by the peasants.

I have entered thus at length into the subject of Hungarian municipalities, partly beause it is a subject likely to excite great interest in England before long, and because I think we may borrow some useful hints from them; but more particularly because I believe that in them may be found the true bulwarks of Hungarian liberty. It is an extraordinary fact, that Hungary, though exposed for so many centuries to constant war,—though her throne has been occupied by men of genius, men born for power, and of despotic dispositions,—though aliens in blood, in language, and in interests, have swayed her destinies,—though princes, whose rule was absolute in all the rest of their dominions, have worn the crown of St. Stephen,—though a Maria Theresa would have coaxed the Hungarians into slavery under the name of civilization,—though a Joseph would have robbed them of their constitution with the promise of "liberty and equality,"—yet has Hungary retained to the present time her ancient rights and institutions unimpaired. Where are we to search for the eminently conservative principle which has thus enabled her to resist so many dangers? I believe it is in the decentralization of the municipal system. The quarterly county meetings, and the discussions which take place in them, have diffused a knowledge of constitutional principles, and created a habit of exercising them, which nothing has been able to break through. After the violent interruption which Joseph caused in their proceedings had terminated, the whole machine re-adjusted itself, its various parts reassumed their natural functions, and in a day the municipal government was re-constituted and in the performance of its duties, as though nothing had happened.

The manner in which the principle of decentralization has been carried out in Hungary, and rendered at the same time consistent with strength in the centre, is much more striking than in any other country of the old world. The local government, both of the counties and villages, administrative as well as executive,

rests entirely in the hands of officers elected by those most interested. The political power, too, will be found to rest partly in a centre—the Crown; partly to be disseminated through the provinces,—they having merely delegated an expression of their will, and not deputed a portion of their power to the Chamber. The executive is mixed in the same way; partly depending on the Crown through its officers in the capital, partly on the people and their elected officers in the country. The link of centralization, too, by means of the Lord-lieutenant and his power of candidation, and of decentralization, again, through the limitation of the executive in the provinces to the municipal officers, is very curious. Well may the Hungarians protest that they desire no revolution! Their ancient constitution maintained and carried out in its ancient form and spirit, modified only where it injures and oppresses the weak, would secure to them all the freedom which man can reasonably desire.

I have remarked that the assessment and collection of taxes is confided to the municipal officers; and it may be as well, therefore, in this place, to give some further information on the subject of taxation in Hungary. The taxes in Hungary are divided into two classes, the general and local, the Cassa Militaris, and Cassa Domestica.

The Diet has the right of voting the amount of the taxes belonging to the Cassa Militaris, and the duty of fixing the proportion which shall be borne by each county. In order to render the proportion more equal, the whole county has been divided into six thousand two hundred and ten *portæ;* and so much is voted *per porta.**

When the municipal officers have settled the distribution of this, and the amount which comes to the share of each village, the assessment on the individual peasants falls to the Biro and his

* The word *porta* was originally used, in 1342, to signify a gate through which a laden wagon could pass, such as is seen before every peasant's house. At this time a new finance system was introduced, according to which every porta which did not belong to a noble, a clergyman, a very poor peasant, a citizen;—he contributed separately,—the servant of a noble; or a peasant who followed his master to the wars, was obliged to contribute a certain sum yearly. This was afterwards adopted as the groundwork of assessments, and is continued to the present day; but although in time, as villages grew up and districts became inhabited, the number of gates increased, they still remained the same in the exchequer books; for it was found more easy to increase the amount of assessment than to make a new census. The revenue made up in this manner, now falls very unequally on some districts, while others escape tax-free. A new census has, however, been made, and a more equitable division arranged, which only waits for its formal adoption to be brought into use.

Jurassores. The common manner of dividing it is so much per head for every grown-up man; and then so much on each article of property,—as oxen, sheep, horses,—which he may possess. It is one of the great advantages of an elected officer, that those who elect him are commonly content with his manner of performing his duty; or, if they are not, the remedy rests with themselves. I do not recollect in other parts of Europe to have often seen the tax-gatherer and police-officers objects of respect to their neighbours; while in Hungary I never heard of a Biro being ill-regarded because he had performed his duty. It is a well known fact, that, when the peasant is perfectly unmanageable in the hands of the lord or his steward, he is at once obedient to his own elected Biro.

The whole amount of taxes thus collected it is difficult to ascertain. The sum voted by the Diet of late years for the Cassa Militaris has been 5,300,000 *f. c. m.* or 530,000*l.* This, however, is far from constituting the whole amount of revenue derived from Hungary. According to the best statistical work (*Neuste statistisch-geographische Beschreibung des Königreichs Ungarn, &c.* 1832,) at present existing, it would appear that from—

		fl. c. m.
	1. The crown and fiscal lands, the annual revenue is	1,200,000
Regalia.	2. Fron the tax on salt	20,000,000
(Royalties.)	The duty on exports and imports	1,500,000
	Mines and mintage	1,096,000
	Post-office	500,000
	Fiscalities (probably sales of fiscal estates)	306,400
	Subsidium Ecclesiasticum (paid by the bishops abbots, and provosts, for the maintenance of fortifications)	121,600
	Jews' toleration tax	160,000
	Sixteen Zipser towns	16,581
	Royal free towns	16,434
	3. Contributions from the peasants and citizens	5,300,000
	4. Deperdita*	3,000,000
		33,217,015

or less than three millions and a half sterling.

* By *Deperdita* is meant the sum required to make up the losses sustained by individual peasants from supplying the soldiers with bread, corn, and hay, at a price much below the real value. It was, I think, in the reign of Maria Theresa that it was settled that Hungary should quarter sixty thousand soldiers; finding them in bread at the rate of one kreutzer the pound, hay at twenty kreutzers (eightpence) the cwt., and oats at twenty-four kreutzers the metzen, the ordinary price of such articles being very much higher. The difference between the real value and the fixed price of these articles, is partly made up to the peasant out of the county rates (which the peasantry at large pay,) and constitutes a very important part of the county expenditure under the head of "Deperdita."

It must be evident to any one who casts his eye over this list, and sees, in a country which enjoys the constitutional right of voting the supplies, that only one-sixth of the whole amount of revenue depends in any way on the will of the nation, while the other five-sixths are obtained without its consent, that some great departure from the original spirit of the constitution must have been made. Nearly two-thirds of the whole are derived from a tax on salt, not only levied without the consent of the nation, but in opposition to its remonstrances. Strongly, however, as the Diet has protested against this tax, and directly as it is opposed to the spirit of the constitution which every monarch at his coronation swears to observe, Government still obstinately maintains it, and probably will continue to do so till the nobles consent to bear their part in the burdens of the state.

To the foreigner it is of little importance whether Hungary pays more or less than her share of the general expenses of the Austrian empire; but, as it is a question which excites great interest amongst both Hungarians and Austrians, we must not pass it over in silence.

The surface of Hungary equals nearly the whole of the rest of Austria, and certainly includes by far the most fruitful if not the most productive part. The population of Hungary is about one-third that of the entire empire. Now, the whole revenue of Austria is said to amount to one hundred and twenty millions of florins, or twelve millions sterling; of which, as we have seen, Hungary contributes only three and one-third millions sterling—little more than one-fourth of the whole. Now, though I feel certain that Hungary does not contribute a fair proportion, and certainly much less than she might do, there is no doubt that the Hungarians are right in saying, that the fault lies with Austria, and not with them; for, under a more liberal commercial system, of which Hungary is deprived, on the plea of protecting Austrian manufactures, the duties on importation and exportation alone would amount to more than the whole sum collected at present. Besides, when such a comparison is made, it should be added that the expense of maintaining schools, the administration of justice, the payment of police, the maintenance of the clergy, &c., are all, in Hungary, provided for independently of the sum which enters the royal exchequer.

The Cassa Domestica, instead of being voted by the Diet, is voted by the county meetings, and is entirely devoted to the expenses of the individual county. The amount must of course vary in each county, according to the circumstances of the time, and the necessities of different localities. From this source are

derived the salaries of the municipal officers, the sums necessary for the maintenance and repair of bridges and roads, the erection of public buildings, and, till the present Diet, even the payment of the members of the Diet. The administration of the Cassa Domestica is entirely in the hands of the nobles, independent of the general government: it is entirely paid by the peasants. Here I know every English reader will be ready to join with me in execrating the selfishness—the flagrant and injurious selfishness—of the Hungarian nobles, which this fact discloses. That they should refuse to contribute to the support of a government which refuses them the right of regulating the expenditure of such contributions, every constitutionalist can understand; and that those who are themselves bound to defend their country should decline to pay others to do it, is also comprehensible,—of course supposing that they were capable of performing their duty;—but on what plea they refuse to take a part in paying the officers chosen by themselves from their own body, whose duties in many cases regard exclusively the nobility—by what right they can pretend to force others to build houses for them to meet in, bridges for them to pass over, or roads for them to travel on, is beyond the power of any honest man to imagine. Thank Heaven! the first step towards a great change has been already made. When Count Széchenyi obtained from the Diet an act for building a new bridge at Pest, and a power to make every one, noble or ignoble, pay as he passed over it, he gained as great a victory over prejudice and injustice as has been accomplished by any statesman of our day.

Some of the most enlightened Hungarians would gladly see this principle carried out to a much greater extent; and it is not improbable that Government would second them: but among many of the nobles, especially the lowest and highest, there is so great an ignorance and so strong a prejudice,—on the one hand against losing what they consider their rights, and on the other against raising the peasantry to think and feel like men,—that much must be done before this act of justice can be accomplished. The advantage which such a reform would confer on the peasants by relieving them from an unjust and irksome burden, on the country by the improvements which might then be undertaken in the means of communication, and on the nation at large by the encouragement of better feelings amongst all classes, and by the creation of a greater interest in preserving entire and free from foreign interference their municipal institutions, is incalculable, and worth any sacrifices to attain.

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