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Steier, Lajos
There is no Czech culture
in Upper Hungary

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**THERE IS NO
CZECH CULTURE
IN
UPPERHUNGARY**

WRITTEN BY
LOUIS STEIER.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY
JOSEPH DE MAKOLDY.



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THERE IS NO

CZECH CULTURE
IN
UPPER HUNGARY

*There is no such thing
as a Slav.*

BY
LOUIS STEIER



ILLUSTRATIONS BY
JOSEPH DE MAKOLDY

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1920

THERE IS NO

COACH CULTURE
IN
THEIR LIVES

DB
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UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



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UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
110 EAST ABBOTT STREET
TORONTO

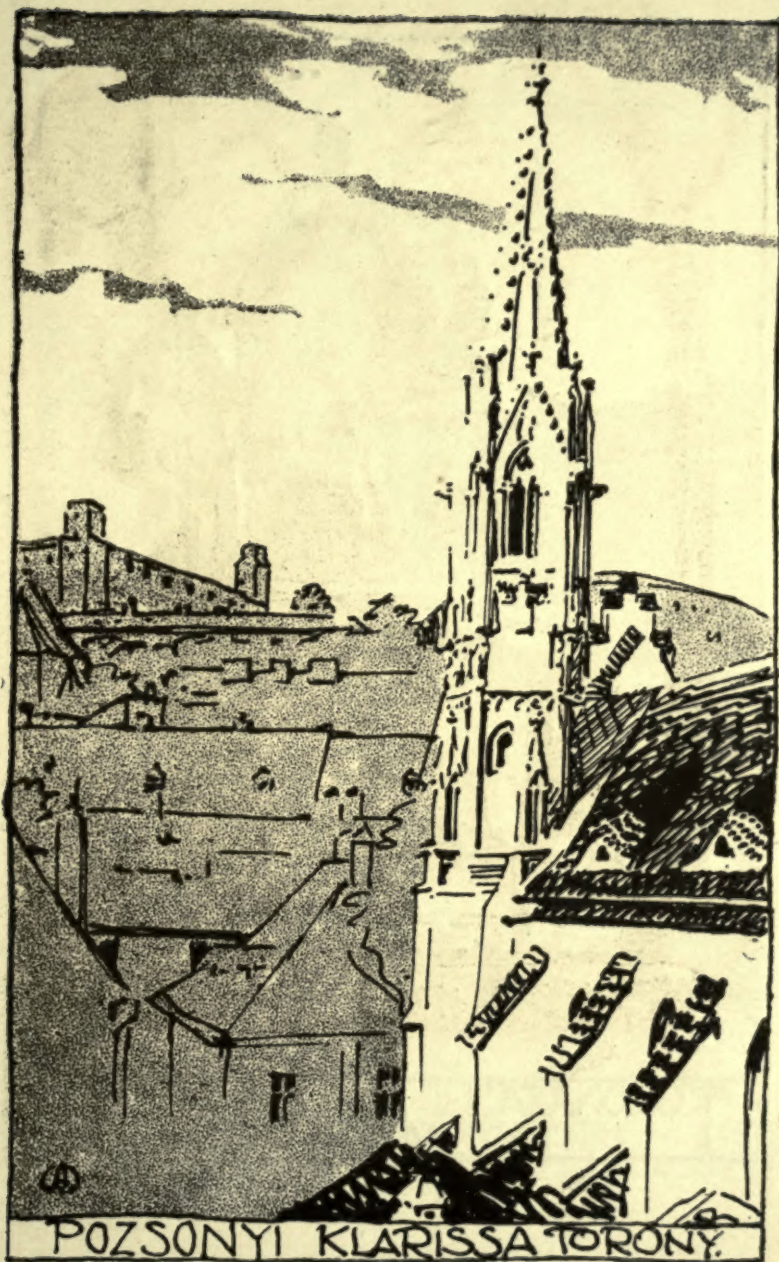


Bajmóc
Castle (Kő)
Vár



Highland
Costumes

(Highland costumes)
Fehidiki ruhól



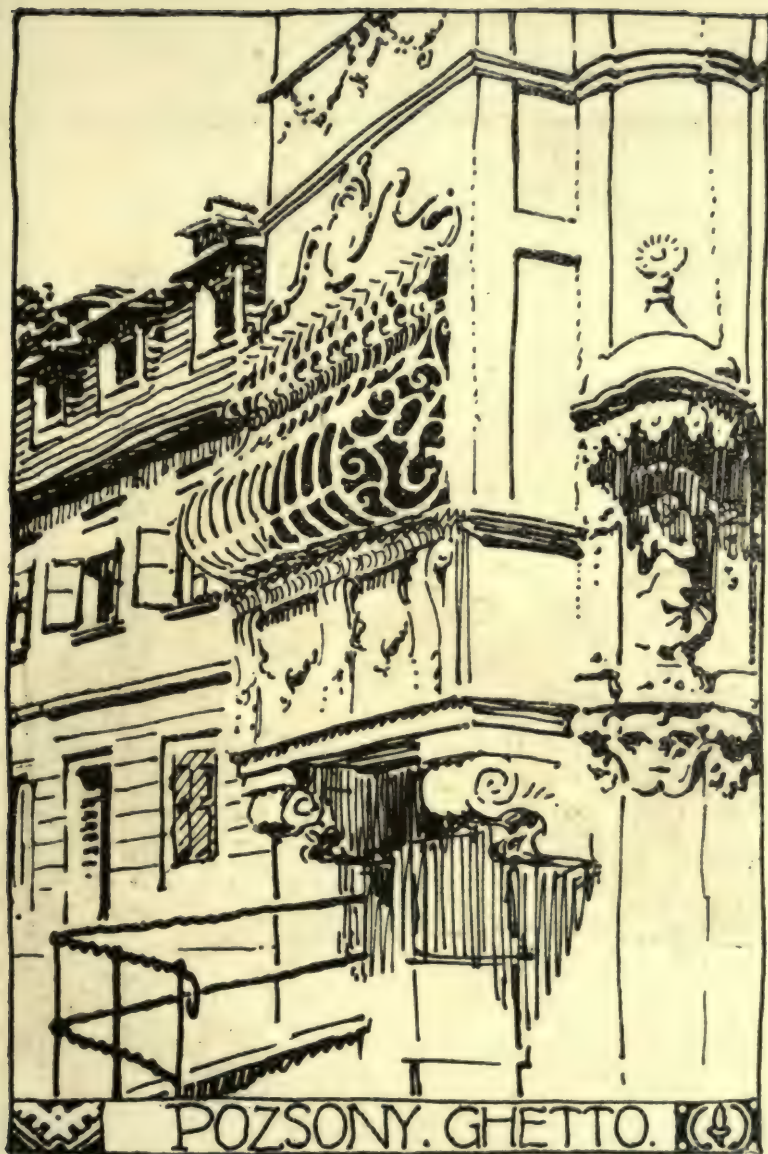
POZSONYI KLARISSA TORONY.

(A. d. v. r. r.)
 Tower of
 Clarissae,
 Pozsony



Státyn

Statue of
Maria
Theresa,
Pozsony



Ghetto in
Pozsony



Árvá
Castle

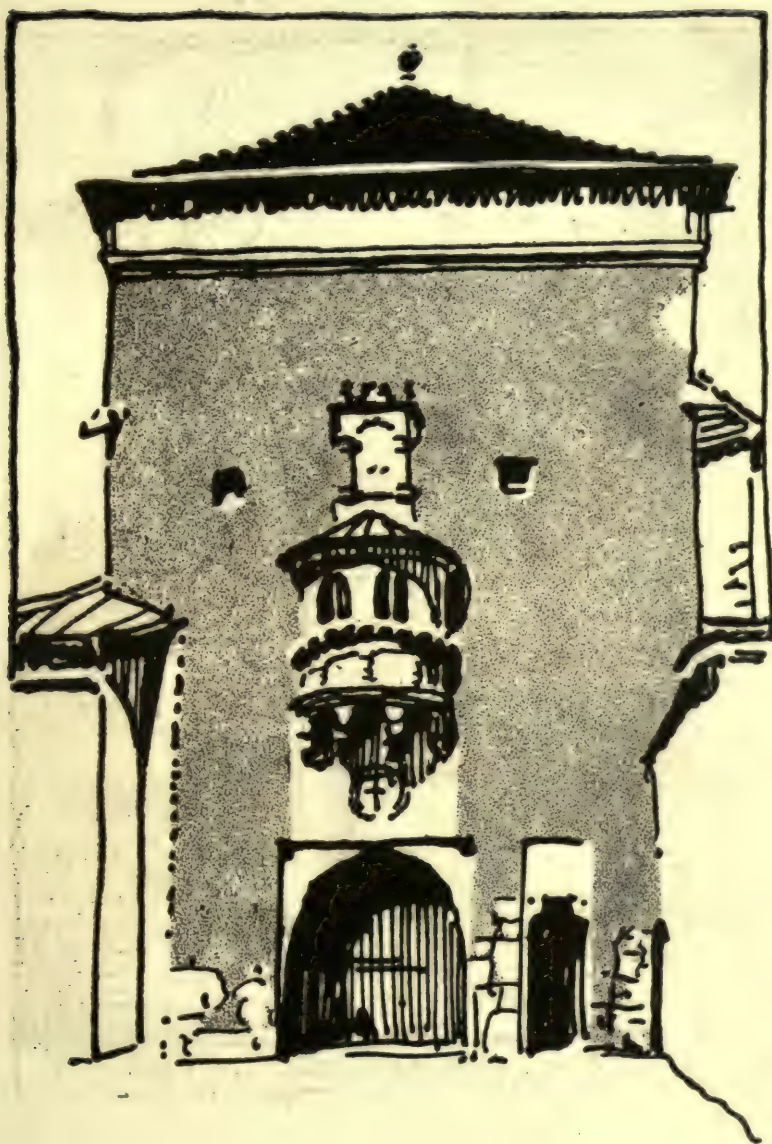


SZTRÉCSNÓ

Sztrécsnó
Castle



Principal
 Square
 Beszterce-
 bánya



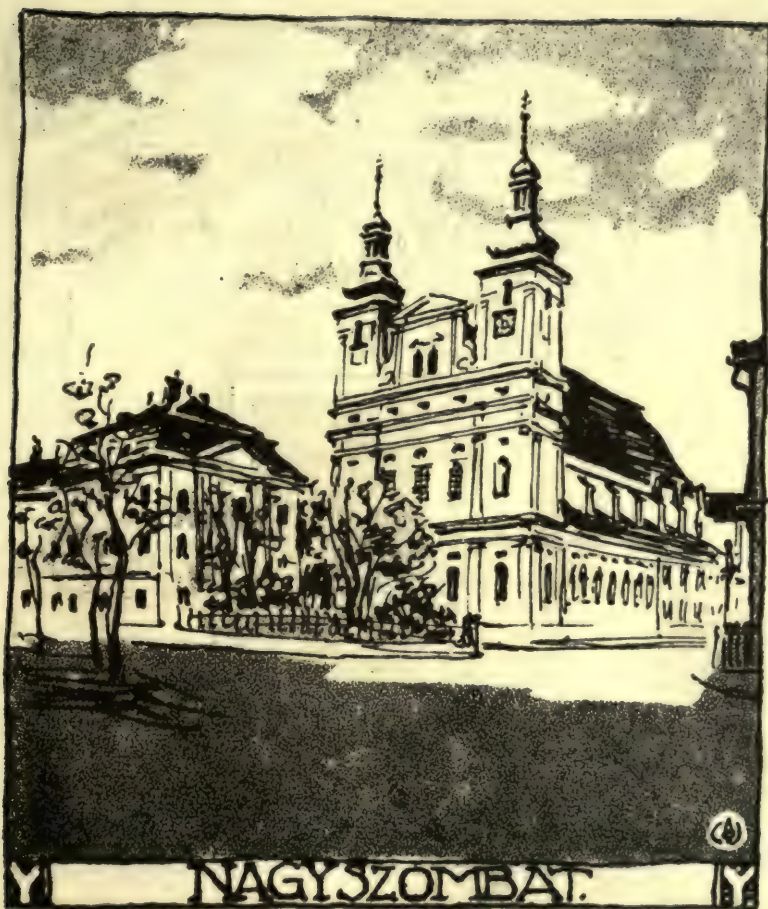
Gate at
Körmöcz-
bánya

(A) / Gát -
kapu



ZSOLNA, ÁRPÁDKORI TEMPLOM.

Templom
 (a "kő" át)
 Church at
 Zsolna
 1000 years
 old



Nagy-
szombat



Porch
Nagy-
szombat
Church



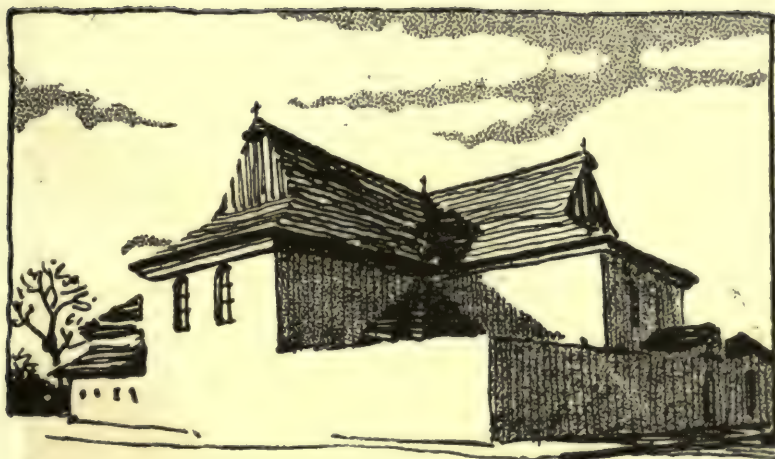
Városháza
Társa - Károly

Town-hall,
Lőcse



Zólyom
Castle,
beside
the
Garam

hist(ai)d' mellet



KÉSMÁRK EVANG. FATEMPLOMA.

Wood (mal) - fa
Wooden / fából kész.

(9)

(Friedrich)
Evangelical
wooden
Church,
Késmárk



Francis
Rákóczy's
Birthplace,
Borsi

(bors(olka, ylesz)



Belfry-lower
 Belfry-lower
 Késmárk



Louis
Kossuth's
Birthplace,
Monok

KOSSUTH LAJOS SZÜLŐHÁZA MONOKON.



Frics
Castle
(County of
Sáros)

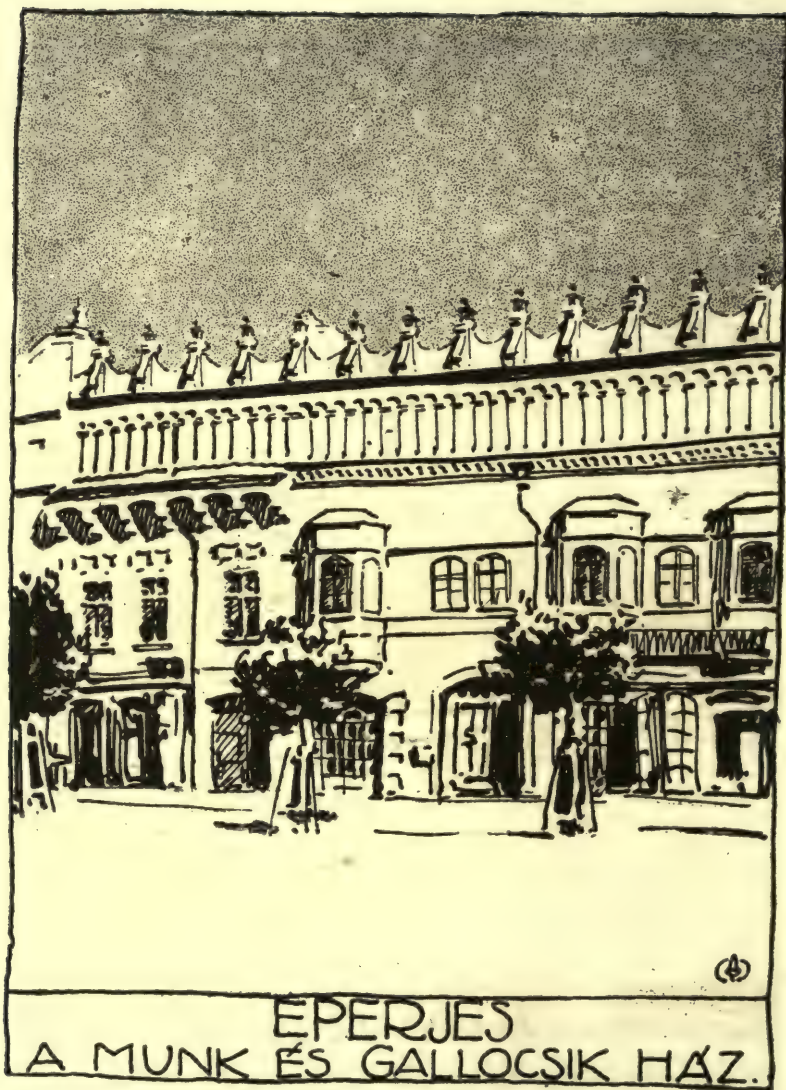
*K'áitui -
quiboy.*



Houses at
Igló



Nitra
Castle



Houses in
Eperjes I.



Houses in
Eperjes II.



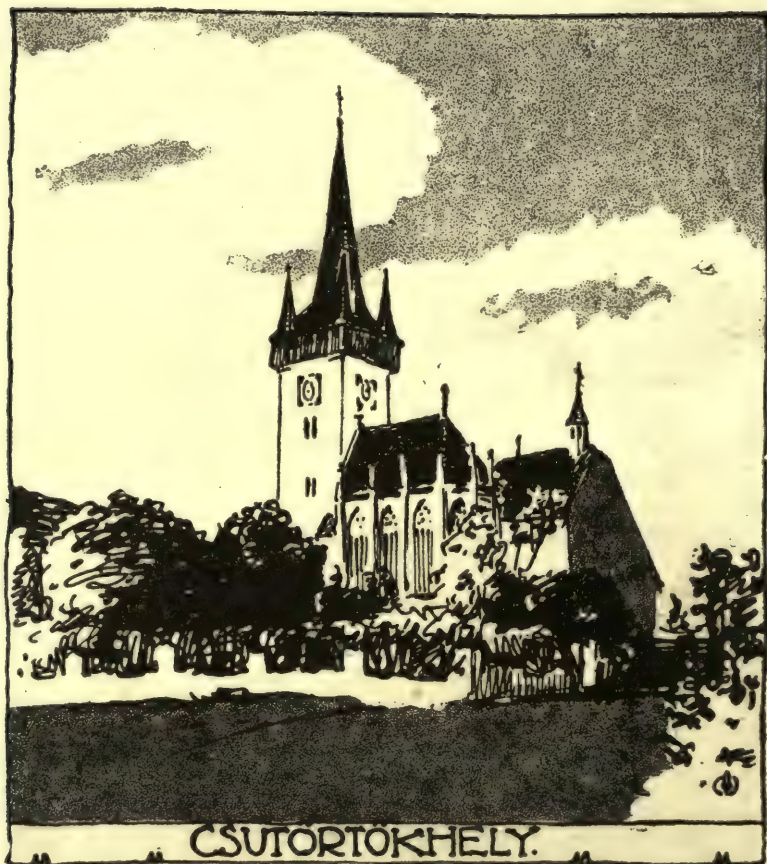
Principal
Square,
Bárfa

BÁRFA FÖTERE



SZEPESHELYI PÜSPÖKI SZÉKESEGYHÁZ

Episcopal
Cathedral,
Szepeshely



Chapel at
Csütörtök-
hely



Szakolcza
Church



Rimabánya



„Honvéd“
Monument,
Kassa



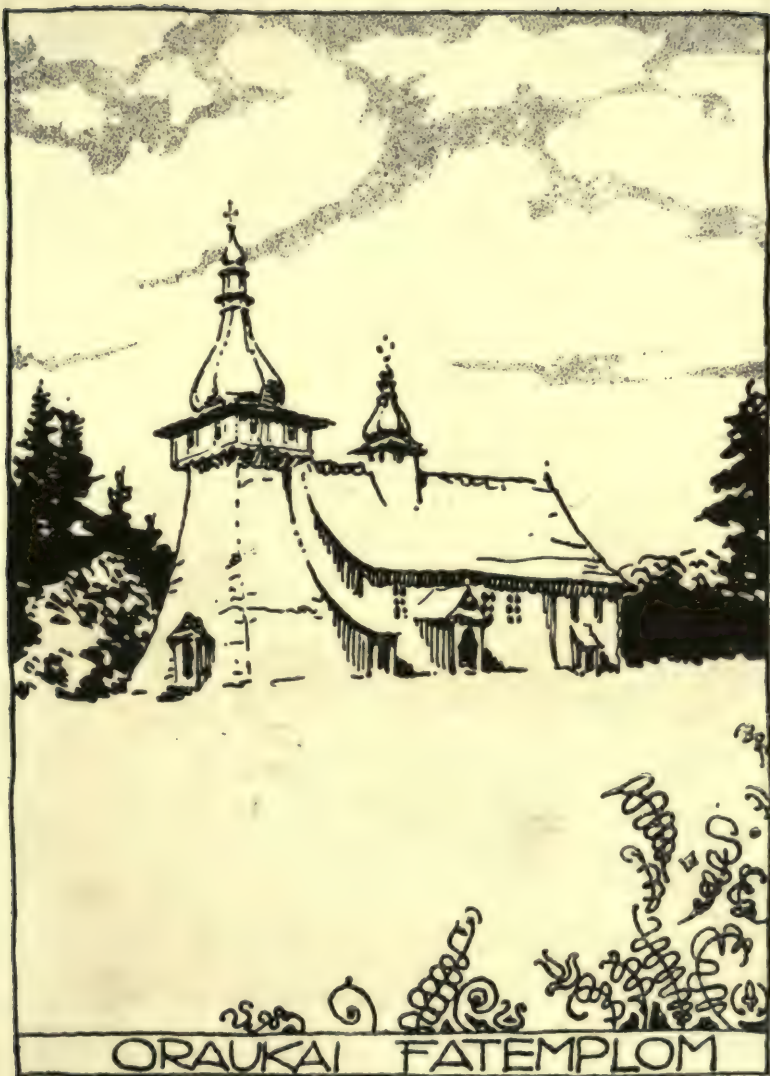
Francis
Rákóczy,
II.'s crypt,
Kassa



Kassa
Cathedral



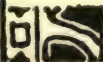
Belfry in
Zemplén



Wooden
Church,
Orauka



Wooden
Tower,
Turisk





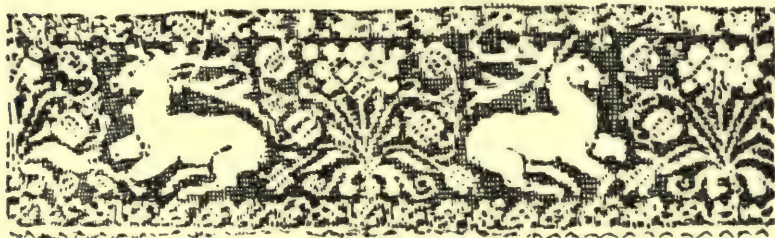
Wooden
Tower,
Óhalyás



The Szilassy
Chalice



Wire-
enamelled
Chalice



Needlework
from Upper
Hungary
(drawn by G.
Csemiczky)



A country torn to pieces, the nations and territorial parts of which have lived interwoven and in perfect unity for a thousand years, craves the understanding attention of all those who have been misled by false information and the perversion of the data of history. Such a counterfeit picture of Upper Hungary and of one of its peoples, the Slovak people, has been put before the nations of the world by those who have on their side, not justice, but fate, the favourable auspices of the present international constellation; and the hard tragedy of the present situation lies in the fact that the Hungarian nation has been unable to break through the isolation of its sister-nation, of the Slovaks, and to make the Great Powers of the civilised West understand that the real wishes of that sister-nation, its tendency of development, which, the result of a thousand years of harmonious co-operation with the Magyars in good and evil days alike, has become its second nature, has been hidden away from the eyes of the world by those who have posed in the presence of the Powers in the guise of liberators of the Slovak nation. The Czechs have proclaimed everywhere that they must liberate their Slovak kin, that they cannot leave their Slovak brethren in slavery; but they have not allowed the Slovak nation to manifest its wishes in the question. The Slovak national

question has been completely suppressed by a non-existent and fictitious question, the so-called «Czecho-Slovak» one. This is the question which has been put before the world; it is this question which has been discussed and settled: while the Slovak national idea, the Slovak national question, has been ignored, though it is this latter which is a living reality, the ideas permeating the same loudly proclaiming already the untenability of the Czecho-Slovak combination and pointing out categorically the only solution of the Slovak question, viz. a continuance of the peaceful and harmonious union with the Magyars. The profound tragedy of the dismemberment of Hungary cannot be regarded as definitive by those who have the common sense to see that a non-existent, supposititious idea cannot be the basis of a state-supporting policy. The resultant of the national forces, of the Slovak national forces, must break down this weak framework; and it will once more unite with that system of forces consisting of several nations of which it has hitherto been an indispensable member. According to the false theory of the Czechs, the Slovak nation is in reality Czech, the tongue of the Slovak nation is a dialect of the Czech language, and the Slovak nation and the Czechs together form a cultural as well as a geographical and historical unit. Anyone familiar with geography and history, must at once see the unreliability of this statement. These data put forward by the Czechs we have on many occasions repudiated scientifically, with the help of innumerable arguments and facts. The object of this short essay is to point out, briefly and in a summarised manner, the false character of the statement made by Czech politicians to the effect that the Slovak nation has lived in cultural unity with the Czechs and that there has been Czech culture in Upper Hungary. Czechs have never lived in Upper Hungary; nor has there ever been any Czech culture in Upper Hungary. The nations inhabiting this territory, the Slovak, German and Magyar nations, have grown strong in the strength of their own cultures. The culture of the Slovak nation has been Slovak, that of the Germans, German; both have been nourished by Magyar culture, traces of which may be found everywhere in this territory where

human hands have shaped anything of beauty and a lasting character. And, we would ask, where in this territory are there to be found any creations of Czech culture, or at least traces of such ? where in the various parts of this territory are those works, creations or masterpieces which should serve to glorify Czech culture and proclaim that there is an effective connection between Czech and Slovak culture ? We answer, — nowhere ; and even the most strenuous exertions fail to provide research with any striking evidence in favour of the Czech theory, — at the most a few poor little wooden structures said to be of Hussite origin, which were erected, not for the advancement of culture, but for the purposes of the Hussite wars.

Upper Hungary has not felt the injurious devastations of wars so severely as the districts of the South. Here the Tartar inroads and the Turkish wars did not make such havoc as in the territories inhabited by Magyars. For that reason this territory (Upper Hungary) has been better able to preserve the monuments of its cultural history intact. It is in this territory that the art-history of Hungary records the finest art-treasures of the country ; and, had this territory been in cultural union with the Czechs, the Czech historians of art would have been able to pride themselves, not only on the creations, but on the creators too. It was not Bohemia that produced the cultural workers, the artists, of this territory, but Hungarian soil ; and, whenever we needed foreign masters, it was not from the North, from Bohemia, but from the South, or from the West, that they came to us : and Hungary has for centuries been a station on the route of art-tendencies far nearer to us than Bohemia. Not even the grave national upheavals deprived Upper Hungary of its art-creations, which will at all times proclaim aloud that the nations of this territory have co-operated without distinction in the work of advancing the culture of Hungary ; and a historian of art*) was quite justified when he said : »Though the territory of Upper Hungary has for a thousand years been inhabited by a heterogeneous element, the

* *Mihalik, Joseph*: »Magyarország vidéki műkincsei« (The Provincial Art-Treasures of Hungary), in »Magyar Műkincsek« (Hungarian Art-Treasures) III. 22.

prosperity of the Hungarian fatherland has at all times found an echo in the pulsation of the heart of this people. Germans, Slovaks and Ruthenians have outvied Magyars in labouring here ever in the field of culture and art; and the results of their honest endeavours are recorded for late posterity by monuments which, though dumb, in their dumbness tell an eloquent tale.»

Before entering into an analysis of those data which demonstrate the trifling insignificance of the influence exercised on this territory by Czech culture, I consider it necessary to explain in brief the motives which induced the Czech politicians to employ the false catchword of «cultural union», and at the same time to point out the difference between the Czech and Slovak nations. — a difference which has naturally left its impress on culture too.

The Czechs protrude like a wedge into the German territory; and this wedge-like situation of theirs is one cause of their gradual crumbling to pieces. The Czechs themselves have naturally been gravely sensible of this fact; and their popular movement has involuntarily taken a southern direction. Consequently the Czechs have not moved towards the territories of German Bohemia, but rather towards the Austrian provinces. This tendency impelled the Czechish aspirations in the direction of the Slovak territories, at first not at all consciously, but later with a conviction deduced from their situation. While the Czech nation thus wedged in sought a way out by turning in a southerly direction, on the other hand it hoped to find in the Slovak people of Upper Hungary a pure Slav force for the recruiting of its Slav character which, as a result of the German pressure and influation, had become mixed. Upper Hungary was to be both a bridge eastwards and a new source of strength from which the Czechs could draw, not only economic advantages, but fresh Slav force too. The contents of the Czecho-Slovak unit consist merely in the one-sided national egoism of the Czechs. Within this unit what is in store for the Slovak nation is denationalisation and complete subordination. Side by side with the Magyars, the Slovaks have maintained their tongue and their character intact; and the Slovak language is the only Slav tongue which in its Slav character approaches most nearly to the

Old-Slav idiom, — one proof of the fact that the Slovak language is better able to maintain its character if the Magyar is its neighbour. On the other hand, with the Czech as its neighbour, the Slovak language and culture is faced by a bitter struggle; for, with this solution, the same is menaced by the danger of absorption and immersion. The two tongues are indeed two divergent Slav idioms; but there is a strong resemblance between all Slav languages; therefore there is less capacity of mutual resistance. The Slovak language has never been attacked by the Magyar either in point of character or in respect of vocabulary, for the two tongues are not akin. This will in the future, on the basis of the present solution, be no whit true of the Slovak and Czech languages; and in the struggle that must ensue the two millions of Slovaks may lose their national character and their tongue. Nothing is more natural than that this struggle between languages and cultures should produce waves that may cause a shock to Europe at large.

«Czecho-Slovak unite», — a phrase similar to the former national state idea of Austria! The idea of a Czecho-Slovak national State the theory of which is now being fabricated, does not exist in reality, for this idea is in direct contradiction to the Slovak national idea, which it would fain utterly absorb. There is no Czecho-Slovak nation; but there is a Czech nation, a Moravian nation, a Slovak nation etc. Formerly the North Slavs were divided into Russians, Poles, Czechs and Slovaks. There were however divisions which recognised three groups only, in that they employed instead of «Czechs» the expression «Czecho-Slav group», i. e. Czecho-Slavs. Herefrom, in accordance with their political aims, the Czechs invented the adjective «Czecho-Slovak», which is substantially unacceptable, seeing that the adjective to be used must be either Czech or Slovak. There are contrasts between the two in respect both of language and of popular character, — in prosody, in customs, in the intercourse of centuries, — so that it is impossible that a meaningless word should unite them. Had there been any power of attraction drawing them to one another, the Slovaks would have taken their place by the side of the Czechs long ago; for in the course of a thousand years there have

been numerous events which would have offered an opportunity for them to do so. This power of attraction has been entirely wanting in the past, and is still wanting. But if, as the Czechs allege, these two peoples had lived as a historical and cultural unit, this alleged common historical consciousness, this unity of culture should have created that power of attraction; however, where there has been no cause, there cannot be any effect.

As regards Czech culture, the Czechs themselves have admitted times without number that it developed entirely under German influence, and that the Slav character of Czech culture has been warped, just as the popular character of the Czech people itself too has lost its Slav peculiarity. The Czechs had to carry on a bitter struggle for existence in order to save their Czecho-Slav character from the stifling effects of German influence, even during the period of their national kingship. It was this national resistance that gave rise to the movement of Hus; and, during the days of the Habsburgs, right down to the opening of last century, Czech culture and Czech literature merely vegetated. Everywhere and in everything German influence dominated; and the Czech language too became divested of its Slav character, so that many decades of language-reform were required for the purification of the tongue.

Slovak culture, the youngest offspring of which, Slovak literature, can boast of a past going a century back, has not felt foreign influence to so great an extent. The Slovak language has preserved its original Slav character, the Slovak people has remained Slav, despite the great influence of Magyar culture. The latter has not shown any tendency to divest Slovak culture of its national character, but has left intact the language, the fundamental condition and the eternal vital element of national culture.

Culture in Upper Hungary has not developed by Czech initiative either in the past or in the present, for Czech culture has been incapable of acting as initiator, if only because it has been occupied with the problem of its own existence and later on, in a state of what was to all intents and purposes trance, was not suitable for any kind of intensive work. Everything in Upper Hun-

gary that may be taken into account from the cultural point of view is of Hungarian origin, to the credit of the hardworking labourers of the culture of Hungary, in whose ranks the Slovaks have been just as diligently active as the Magyars. During the course of the centuries such strong ties of blood have been created between Slovak and Magyar culture that, apart from the difference in tongue, it would be difficult to determine what part of Slovak culture is a purely Slovak creation. Magyars and Slovaks alike have acquired customs, knowledge, skill and art from one another; the Slovaks have worked on the building of Magyar culture, while Magyars have co-operated to a significant degree in building up the culture of the Slovaks. However we may and must, decidedly and with a clear conscience, deny that any Czech hands ever helped in this work of building in Upper Hungary. On the contrary, those hands have been an obstacle and have marred the work by continually crossing the national aims of the Slovaks, — by pursuing the unreal mirage of a Czecho—Slovak union, — by impracticable schemes of Czecho-Slovak reciprocity, according to which a mixed Czecho-Slovak language should be created to enable the two peoples to understand one another, whereby the Czech tongue would become more Slav and the Slovak language would be Czechised. This is, however, a mere phantasmagoria; for the attachment of the people of Upper Hungary to the Slovak language cannot be eradicated, just as it is undeniable that the culture of Upper Hungary is of Magyar origin, and sprang from Magyar knowledge and Magyar power. It was the Magyars who brought culture and art to this territory; it was the Magyars who introduced the German settlers who have contributed so considerably with their German culture to the civilisation of Upper Hungary.

Among the few monuments that have remained from the age previous to the Conquest of the country by the Magyars there are hardly any of a Slav character. The plain lying to the south of the Carpathians was from beginning to end one of the stages in the great migration of peoples. It was the resting place of every people which traversed this great thoroughfare on its way westwards. »The role of the Slavs«, writes the archaeologist Francis



Pulszky, »was a passive one during the whole period of migrations. We cannot find any records of the Slavs, either in Pannonia or at the foot of the Carpathians, where the power was at all times in the hands of mightier peoples. We are more likely to come across records of the Slavs dating from the period of migrations in Croatia and Serbia, where they were the ruling race ; but so far there have not been dis-

covered, either there or in Moravia or in Bohemia, or in Poland or Russia, any more important records of that period showing a special and peculiar Slav character : here too the Slavs apparently imitated the style of the neighbouring peoples which, commerce made them familiar with, — just as even today we find them excelling in imitation rather than in original invention.« This territory was swept by the waves of Visigoths, Ostrogoths, Gepidae, Longobards, Dacians, Marcomanni, Quades, Huns, Avars, Slavs and Magyars alike. After the Hun-Avar inroads, towards the close of the period of migration, peaceful Slav tribes had settled here unperceived, in the N. and N. E. territories, where the finest bronze remains that have been discovered bear witness to the fact that these articles were made at a time of peaceful activity. These bronze remains show, on the other hand, that the inhabitants of these regions had learned much from the Roman culture of Pannonia too and were in contact with Roman civilisation.

At the time of the Conquest (of Hungary by the Magyars) the western part of the territory of Upper Hungary was inhabited by Slavs, who dwelt in the valleys of the several rivers. Immediately before the Conquest the Slavs had accepted the overlordship of the Franks, and came under the influence of Frank culture, the moment they had adopted Christianity from the Franks. The first Slav Christian church was built by the Franks at Nyitra, which later became the episcopal seat of St. Method, who continued the work of conversion begun by the Franks. After the days of Method, German missionaries came among the Slavs, everywhere

erecting churches, most of which were built of wood. The episcopal residence — later cathedral — built at Nyitra is still remembered in popular tradition. The threads of the ecclesiastical organisation begun by St. Stephen hardly reached as far as Upper Hungary; but his successors continued the work there on broader lines. Nor did the ten bishoprics founded by St. Stephen affect the North to any particular extent, though the valleys of the Vág, Nyitra, Garam and Ipoly had been visited by his missionaries, who exercised a direct influence on these regions. At the seat of the first bishopric of Nyitra another bishopric was also founded at a later date.



There are scarcely any monuments of the Romanesque style of architecture then in vogue to be found in the country, for those that existed have been destroyed in the course of the ages, in particular during the devastations of the Tartars; only a few monuments of Romanesque architecture dating from the XIII. century have been preserved. The remains of Romanesque architecture to be found in the territory of Upper Hungary may be divided into two groups; and in the case of both alike it can be proved that their style came to us, not from the North by way of Czech or Moravian territory, but either from France or from Germany. The monastery buildings are of French origin, while the smaller churches show German influence. »There is no more direct or decided Moravian-Slav influence to be traced in the N. W. counties inhabited by Slavs. In this respect perhaps the only exception is the tower-like building somewhat larger than a semi-circle annexed to the eastern wing of the cathedral of Nyitra. In Moravia, in the XII. century, the Romanesque churches were almost without exception round buildings to which apses of semi-circular shape or larger than a semi-circle, were annexed. These words form one of the conclusions of the researches of the famous archaeologist Pasteiner. Consequently, in the age following the Conquest, — i. e. when, according to the theory of the Czechs, the relations between Moravians and

Slovaks were particularly lively, — when, therefore, in their opinion, the language and culture of these two peoples must have been uniform, — we cannot discover any Moravian influence in the architectural monuments of the age, a fact which shows that at the time in question there was no Moravian or Czech cultural influence in this territory.

Of the monuments of Romanesque architecture in Upper Hungary considerable interest attaches to the cathedral of Szepes-váralja, which has, however, owing to additions, lost something of its Romanesque character. The cathedral was founded by the first German settlers and was in all probability to begin with a wooden structure. According to historians the settlers from Saxony and Flanders were the first to cultivate this territory; and it was they too who were the first to build in these regions. The cathedral contains parts that are pure Romanesque, transitional, Gothic, and Renaissance; and in its every detail it is anything but Czech or Moravian in character. It was the German settlers who built their towns round the churches, taking the latter as the centre or pivot; for neither the Slavs nor the Magyars were particularly inclined to found such or adapted to form the nucleus of a town population. According to the historian Valentine Hóman, »the institution of town was so foreign to the Slav people that in the Slav countries — in Bohemia, in Poland, and even in distant Russia, — the founders of the towns have been German immigrants, and the towns have been formed entirely after the German model, by way of »filiation«. At first the work of establishing towns was for the most part in the hands of Flemings, Walloons, Germans, and Italians, though there were Magyars too, and a sprinkling of Slavs. However, nowhere can we find any trace of Czechs or Moravians having taken any part in the establishment or towns of in the creation of town culture, in Upper Hungary. The model before the eyes of the first kings of the House of Árpád was that of the life of the West; and they conferred privileges to facilitate the townbuilding work of the »hospites«, who were joined later by Magyar and Slav elements. The foundation of the towns of Upper Hungary was carried out far more rapidly than in foreign countries, for it proceeded on lines already marked

out. As far back as these days the Magyar element began to assert itself more conspicuously in the populations of the towns, though the German «hospites» did all they could to protect themselves against the intrusion.

The various trades represented in the life of the towns included those of miller, weaver, butcher, baker, innkeeper, fisher, tanner, tailor, shoemaker, builder, carpenter, etc. The most famous of the trades of these regions was that of miner. The mining of Upper Hungary is of German origin, though there are traces of there having been mines in working even before the coming of the German settlers; however, the systematic and intensive cultivation of mining is certainly connected with the coming of the Germans.

These German settlers established the mining towns by building their dwellings in long rows in the vicinity of the mines, on the spots where the forests that had been destroyed had stood, on the plains and on the slopes of mountain ridges. This building usually began in the form of an acropolis. In the centre stood the town church, beside the latter the mortuary, then the public buildings. All their sense of beauty culminated in the church. The greater part of the town was German in character; this character is still to be detected in the case of most towns.

The Germans of the towns engaged in agriculture too; and in this respect they perfected the primitive knowledge of the Slav inhabitants of these regions. In commercial respects the towns of Upper Hungary had already begun to play a significant role and by their commerce to contribute at this period to the building of the main routes of trade. In later centuries the commerce of Upper Hungary became of increasing importance for the whole country. The trade of Transylvania and the Tisza regions passed via Tokaj, Kassa, Eperjes and Bártfa to Poland. In the western districts Pozsony, Trencsén, Zsolna formed the route to Silesia or via Pozsony to Austria. Our main trade was certainly with the territory of the Czechs, but not directly, Czech commerce thus not exercising any great influence on these districts. The staples of Czech commerce and industry were isolated from the territory of Upper Hungary.

Particularly during the Turkish occupation, the towns of

Upper Hungary were the hope and the consolatory refuges of the Hungarian nation. The towns of the territory inhabited by Magyars suffered continuously from the effects of the Turkish wars and from oppression. This territory became entirely depopulated. Extermination and slavery made the Magyar plain an uninhabited waste. There were ruins and havoc everywhere. The towns of Upper Hungary, saved this ordeal, for this very reason developed and thrived better, in respect alike of population, of economic situation and of art, and remained intact. In the districts subject to Turkish rule the dwellings of the inhabitants were wretched; and the historian writing of these days might well say that «the county of Szepes must have been one of the most advanced and prettiest parts of the country; its villages and towns have changed but little since then, and have borne witness to the more favourable conditions of the people.» A contemporary writer actually records the fact that in the district of Szepes the villages, townships and towns wore an appearance entirely different to that of such in the other parts of Hungary, and that in general they had been built in the German manner. Beyond Kassa, however, began the havoc wrought by the Turks; and this fact was reflected in the outward appearance of the communities. Notwithstanding the fact that the country was for so long a period torn in pieces during the Turkish occupation, the feeling of unity and affinity that lived in the people found expression then too in every respect.

It is only during the last two centuries that the Slovaks have begun to make any considerable headway against the Germans in town life; however, they have been unable to change the German, and later, Magyar, character of the towns of Upper Hungary: and this explains the fact that even today, during the Czech occupation, while the most violent terroristic means are being resorted to to Czechise and Slovakise, the towns have remained Magyar.

The architectural monuments of Upper Hungary excel most in the Gothic style. This style was brought to this territory by French and German masters. The oldest monument of this kind in Upper Hungary was built in the closing decades of the XIII.

century, after the models of German Gothic architecture. Taking the monuments of this style in order by counties, we may find everywhere the most beautiful and superb examples. The finest creations of Gothic architecture are to be found in the Szepes district, at Pozsony and Kassa, and in the county of Sáros, — though there are beautiful remains of this style everywhere in the territory of Upper Hungary. In the reign of Béla IV. French architects settled in the country; the only one of them whose name is known to us is Villard de Honnecourt. The purest example of the French Gothic style is the *Cathedral of Kassa*, the plan of which corresponds in its arrangement of detail to that of many Gothic churches in France. The building of the lovely Cathedral of Kassa was begun at the close of the XIV. century. A typical representative of the Gothic style among the monuments at *Pozsony* is the hexagonal tower of the Church of the Clarissae. The solution of the plan of the Church of *Nagyszombat* also points to it being the work of a French architect. The building of this church was begun during the reign of Louis the Great. A beautiful example of light and pure Gothic architecture is the *Chapel of Csütörtökhely*. The *Church of Szokolca* is a typical example of a mixed style, which however shows evident traces of the leading ideas of Gothic architecture. The *Town Gate of Körmöcz* is also typically characteristic of Gothic influence. More than three-fourths of the churches of Upper Hungary are in the Gothic style.

The tabernacles, altar-pieces and altars found in the Gothic churches are masterpieces of wood-carving. We should have mentioned sculpture and wood-carving in connection with Romanesque architecture, for this branch of art is of a different trend in the case of Gothic architecture and not so exaggerated. Whereas in Romanesque architecture the sculptural element does not always subordinate itself to the system of building, in Gothic architecture it accommodates itself entirely. We may examine the skill of the sculptors in the more famous tombstones of these districts. The sculptors were for the most part from Upper Hungary; e. g. there were celebrated sculptors at Kassa, Igló, Lőcse and Bártfa, who created works of lasting merit in the field of *woodcarving* too. The

beauty of the altars at Kassa, Lőcse and Bártfa is universally acknowledged. *Painting* too had its skilled masters. The churches were decorated with wallpaintings. We have preserved art relics in the illustrations of the Mss. too. There are miniatures of the kind in the towns of Pozsony, Selmeczbánya and Kassa. Everywereh is to be seen the direct influence of Western culture; but nowhere is there any Czech cultural work to be found, — neither that of artists who acted as the pioneers of art, nor that of patrons of art creating culture and art in Upper Hungary. The painters of Upper Hungary during later centuries — in the present too — have not been the pupils of the masters of Czech fine arts, — have not made pilgrimages to Prague to acquire knowledge and skill, — but have visited the cultural centres of the Magyars or other nations. The art of *John Kupecky* of Upper Hungary, who lived in foreign countries in the days of Rákóczi, is by no means rooted in the illusory Czecho-Slovak cultural unit. All the artists born in these districts became artists out of the development of Magyar culture, many of them, indeed, masters. Ferenczy, Huszár, Strobl, Balló, Stetka, Benczúr, Szinyei, Katona, Mednyánszky and many others of the pioneers and heroes of Magyar art have been the products of the soil of the Highlands and as such have grown to be masters imbued with Magyar feeling. There has been no trace of the attractive power of Czech art.

When the Renaissance reached Hungary, it found a fully developed building industry, which therefore, possessed of a ready sense of architecture, introduced its own conceptions into the Renaissance style. There have been many discussions among our authorities concerning the Renaissance monuments of Upper Hungary. In these discussions some have professed the view that this Upper Hungarian style was imported from Poland into the Northern counties; while others say that it is a Magyar product. In any case one fact is certain, — viz. that it does not contain either Czech or Moravian motifs, but is very far removed from the Renaissance style of architecture of those countries. In its progress northwards Italian Renaissance certainly absorbed Hungarian peculiarities. The Hungarians took over the Renaissance peculiarities

and transformed them to suit their own taste. This style is the best proof of the lack of Czech influence. On quite different cultural soil, — e. g. on Czech soil —, the Renaissance style absorbed quite different peculiarities. The new style of architecture gave a considerable impulse to secular building and afforded opportunities for roomy and light construction and for a more rational application of ornament. We find superb examples both of the earlier and of the later forms of Renaissance architecture in the districts of Sáros and Szepes and in Pozsony too.

We have data which prove quite clearly that the Renaissance tendency spreading in all directions from Italy did not come to us in its peculiarly Hungarian form from Poland, but *vice versa*. It was Matthias Corvinus who brought the masters and artists of the Italian Renaissance to Hungary. The troubled times that followed his death, and the Turkish wars, destroyed the Renaissance creations of the territories inhabited by Magyars; and it is only in Upper Hungary that memorials of the same have been preserved. According to Cornelius Divald, the historian of art, it was the frequency of fires and the fear of fire that spread the new style, the construction of the roofs offering a better protection against fire. The Renaissance gables were attic-like and lofty. The most typical examples are to be found at *Eperjes*; from the light character of the ornamentation on the same we may conclude that this style developed independently of Polish models, for the Polish Renaissance is heavier, more compact and less well-proportioned.

The decoration of the Renaissance style was mostly sgraffito and stucco work. The sgraffito work served for the decoration of the facade. The *Thököly Tower* of *Késmárk* is one of the beautiful Hungarian parapeted examples of a Renaissance Campanile, behind which rises the Renaissance tower of *Késmárk Church*. The towers of the *Cathedral of Szepeshely* are also creations of this style. The *Castle of Frics* and the *Town-hall of Lőcse* are other examples of the architecture of this age. The same is true of the *Townhall of Bártfa*.

We find many remains of the Baroque and Rococo styles that developed out of the Renaissance style, in Upper Hungary. In

Ghetto-utca, Pozsony, we find a pure Baroque model; others are at Eperjes, Igló, and Nagyszombat, — in the latter place the Jesuits' Church is built in Baroque style. This latter is the style usually adopted for the building of nobles' castles. It was the Vienna architecture that exercised an influence in this direction; here too there could be no question of Czech influence, Czech models or initiative, or of a cultural unit.

Some Czech historians have ventured to make an allegation — quite incapable of proof — to the effect that among the castles of Upper Hungary there are some which are not of Hungarian origin. *There is not a single castle* the builder of which was not a Hungarian. From *Dévény* right across to *Munkács* (though the latter does not indeed belong to the Slovak territory) every castle (fortress and country mansion alike) and every ruin is a relic belonging to Hungarian history. The slender walls of the Castle of *Árva* could tell of a thousand years' past, of the Balassas, the waywode *Stibor*, of *John Corvin*, of *John Zápolya*, of the *Thurzós*, of *Tököly*, and of *Rákóczi*.

The ruins of Sztrečno rise in picturesque beauty above the *Vág*. Below them runs the highroad; and popular tradition tells of the tempting whirlpool of the *Vág*, which eddies beside the road at the foot of the castle. The folk-song speaks thus of the fairies of the place:

„Tam okolo Strečna
cesta neberpečná,
pod zámkom sa skryly
v bielich plachtách Vilv.
Na ľukách vo Váhu,
často sa kúpajú,
po poli širokom
tancujú skokom.
Koho raz pochytiť,
tak ho dlho vrtia,
až pokiaľ v ich hrati
duši nevypusti.“ *

* »There around Sztrečno the road is dangerous, below the castle the „villies“ are hiding in white shrouds. They bathe often on the meadows beside the *Vág* and skip and dance on the broad field. Whomsoever they catch, they whirl him round until he give up the ghost.«

Beside the winding waters of the Vág everywhere picturesque ruins of castles, — Likava, Trencsén, Galgóc, Beckó, Temetvény, Lednicz, Vágbesztercze, Budatin, Lieteva, Óvár, etc. . .

The only medieval fortress that has been preserved intact is the *Castle of Zólyom*, which was built during the reign of Louis the Great. Of more recent date is the *Castle of Bajmóc*, which was erected on the site of the ruins of the older castle of Bajmóc. Neither in the past nor in modern times has any foreign hand built any stone fortress in Upper Hungary, — at no time during a thousand years. The rebuilt castle contains art treasures of priceless value. The restored building is in the Gothic style; and it was magnificently furnished by its last owner, Count John Pálffy.

According to the calculations of Géza Nagy, there are — or have been — altogether 1649 castles in Hungary; and of this number some 500 fall to the share of the territory of Upper Hungary. The castles were closer to one another in the mountain districts and on the borders, for the nobility had engaged to defend the frontiers of the country. The demolition of the castles was the result partly of wars, partly of the provisions of treaties of peace. Leopold I. had numerous castles dismantled in this territory. Nor did the spirit of modern times encourage the existence of such buildings. Their owners left them. They neglected the castle buildings. The latter have been worn and reduced to ruins by the effect of the weather. — Though the names of the castles in some places are Slav in origin, the latter date from a very old period previous to the days of the Conquest and prove that these districts were at that time inhabited by Slavs. What Slavs these were, — history has not yet been able to discover. The direction of migration of the Czechs did not lead through our country, for a part of the Slav passed from the Slav centre to the N. of the Carpathians to the Czech territory, while another part passed through Upper Hungary in a southerly direction. At the time of the creation of the Moravian Empire the Moravian princes found places with wooden fortifications in the Slav territory of Upper Hungary. These places were transformed to resemble the castles of the neighbouring countries, mostly into old towers surrounded by ring-walls.



The builders of the castles, in the later period of the development of castles, were at first the pupils of the building schools of the monkish Orders, though later, from the XI. century onward, there were secular builders too and secular constructors of castles. In Upper Hungary the work of building castles was frequently in the hands of masters from Italy. At the time of the Hussite inroads, during the wars of Giskra, numerous castles fell into the hands of the Hussite leader, who however merely fortified still more the castles he had taken. His troops had their quarters mostly in the castles of the counties of Nógrád and Gömör, whence dates the Hussite song :

„Wzhũre čessil podme amele
Na hrděho neprijtele
Whzũre bratri do boge!“ *

These are days of a past long since gone, — and the Czechs were able to disturb the peace of Upper Hungary for only a few years, for the Hungarian kings drove their armies out of the country. They did not leave lasting traces of their presence anywhere.

Of the decorative arts practised in Upper Hungary a pre-eminent place is due to that of the silversmith, masterpieces of which may be found in the churches. This art is familiar to almost all peoples. The remains dating from the pre-Conquest period and from the days of the Conquest all witness to the fact that the art of silversmith was known both to the peoples that lived here before and to the Magyars. The Churches could not do without this art either; and we have data showing that silversmiths and goldsmiths were attached to the abbeys. By the XIII. century this decorative art was in a very high state of development; and the silversmiths' guilds were among the leading guilds of Upper Hungary. The works of the silversmiths of Kassa

* »Up, Czechs! Let us go courageously against the gallant foe! Up, brothers, to the battle!«

and the Szepes district were renowned. The headquarters of the guilds were at Kassa, Körmöcbánya, Galgóc, Lőcse, Rimaszombat, Besztercebánya, Eperjes, Bakabánya, Bártfa, Göncz, Igló, Késmárk, Nagyszombat, Rozsnyó, Szepesváralja, Trencsén, Zólyom, etc. In the XVI. century there were some 1500 master silversmiths at work in the whole country, nearly all of whom were from Hungary, most of them being natives



of Upper Hungary and Transylvania. The silversmiths' art of the country, by the cultivation of wire-enamel, assumed a quite peculiar tendency, By its throwing into relief the dividing niches it is that wire-enamel work differs from niche-enamelling. It is of Byzantine origin, but found imitators and developers in particular in Hungary. That is why it is called Hungarian enamel. The silversmiths of Upper Hungary too cultivated this kind of enamel work to a considerable extent, a proof of the fact that the silversmiths' art of this territory was in organic connection with this decorative art of the country. The goldsmiths' art naturally was intimately connected with the art of enamelling; and in many places the two industries were united in the person of the artist. The silversmiths were mostly Germans and Magyars. According to the records of the guilds there were many Magyar masters in Upper Hungary. A very fine example of the silversmiths' art is the wire-enamelled *chalice* at *Poprád*, as well as the *Szilassy Chalice* of later date. These two are mentioned merely as examples of the large artistic material left to posterity by the silversmiths of Upper Hungary.

The chalice of *Poprád* is therefore a piece of Magyar enamel work. Our Churches have everywhere preserved such silversmiths' works. At *Pozsony*, *Trencsén*, *Galgóc*, *Kassa* etc, are to be found chalices which are masterpieces of the silversmith's art. The most famous names in connection with the manufacture of chalices are those of *Lippai*, the master of *Kassa*, and *John Szilassy*, the master of *Lőcse*. The latter made enamelled pictures too. The two Magyar masters are themselves a proof of the fact that this art trained its masters at home. Certainly the silversmiths' art reached

a high standard alike in Bohemia and in Moravia ; but it was in no connection with the silversmiths' art of Hungary.

There were worthy pioneers and cultivators in Upper Hungary during last century, not only of the silversmiths' art, but of all other decorative arts. Bell-founding, clock-making, altar-carving, goldsmiths' art, locksmiths' art, book-binding, cabinet-making, cooper-casting, were all branches of industry that developed into arts, which had indeed German models, but were in the hands of German, Magyar and Slovak masters alike. If we investigate the rolls of the guilds of Hungary, we are just as unable to discover any considerable Czech influence as we are unable to find any Czech name in the lists of the older painters of Hungary compiled by Ivan Nagy. The Czechs cannot deny that the history of their art swarms with German names. Their art was initiated by Germans ; and Czech culture was reinforced by German culture, deriving therefrom those advantages by the aid of which it has been able to secure the future of its nation. Czech culture has thus indirectly become the propagator of German culture. Perhaps this is the reason why it has been unable to appeal to the heart and soul of the Slovaks of Upper Hungary. Owing to its mixed character, Czech culture is not able to exercise the same power of attraction as the more purely national cultures. Owing to its subordinate situation referred to above, Czech culture has proved incapable of expansion ; and it has been out of the question for it to make any headway in Slovak territory, since it has had first to establish the conditions for its own existence.

In connection with *Slovak peasant embroideries and needlework*, the Czech propagandists have not ceased to lay stress on the similarity of Czecho-Moravian-Slovak motifs and decorations ; whereas there is a far stronger resemblance to Magyar motifs and decorations. The contrast between Czech and Slovak peasant art displays itself, not only in the several elements, but in the colours too ; on the other hand, it is at times practically impossible to distinguish between Slovak and Magyar peasant embroideries : to this fact are due those differences of opinion attributing certain of the embroideries to Slovaks and others to Magyars, and vice

versa. The common life of the two nations involved a mutual absorption of tastes ; and it is for this reason that today we cannot say whether the tulip and the split leek is an ornament of Slovak or of Magyar origin. These decorations are today the products of this soil and have sprung from the common culture and sense of culture of the peoples living here today. However, there can be no doubt that these motives cannot be found in such a form in Czech peasant art. The mutual influence of Moravian and Slovak peasant embroideries is to be found to any extent only in the border districts. We find no trace at all of any influence of Czech culture in this field. The dividing line between Magyars and Slovaks in point of decorative motifs can hardly be fixed. Slovak peasant art is that which decorates its products almost in the same manner as the Magyars. The character of the embroideries is practically common to both ; and the primitive cultural force of the Slovak nation has also contributed to the complete formation of the culture of Hungary.

The peasant embroideries of Upper Hungary are remarkably varied in respect both of technique and of colours. It was the Renaissance age that aroused a general interest in embroidery in this territory too. The women of the aristocracy, landed proprietors and bourgeoisie embroidered diligently or had their linen embroidered for them. Altar-cloths and priests' robes worked by the artistic hands of the devout were offered to God. In the XVIII. century other elements too were added to the Renaissance decorations. Gradually the soul of the people supplemented the forms thus received with their own primitive invention, giving the same a peculiar, popular character. The peasant embroideries made in Upper Hungary very soon became famous. It would seem as if the sense of form and the skill in shaping forms had been inherited.

Numerous kinds of peasant embroideries in vogue in Upper Hungary are all to be found in Magyar peasant embroidery too ; for the people were originally taught this art by the women of the families of Magyar landed proprietors living in Upper Hungary, who introduced the same there : and the art of the Renaissance, which came northwards from the S., brought masters to the

country, not from Bohemia, but from Italy. Gobelin-making, Madeira embroidery, tulle net, cross-stich, plait-stich, chain-stich, ajour, punto tirato, punto tagliato, netting, filet guipure, application etc., — these were, and still are, all in vogue in Slovak peasant art, the chief motifs of which are the rose, the tulip, the apple, the heart, the star, the dove, the cock, etc. The same motifs are to be found in the peasant art of the Magyar territories too; and it is undeniable that in common territory the two have developed under strong reciprocal influence. The peasant art of the Czechs is a mixture of quite different elements and of German influences; and, though in its triviality there is a certain resemblance to Slovak peasant embroideries, this is due to the fact that the peasant art of all peoples is at bottom similar, for the trivial artistic conception of the people, the primitive elaboration of the elements, is similar: however, it is in the later development that the individual popular tendencies display themselves; and it is just in this point that we can see that Upper Hungary entirely lacked any Czech influence in this respect, — indeed, the embroideries of Upper Hungary at one time were imported in great quantities to Bohemia and Moravia, where Slovak embroideries were much in demand. It was therefore the Slovak embroideries, which developed on a common basis with those of the Magyars, that were of influence on the Czech and Moravian embroideries, and not vice versa.

Of the older handicrafts *lace-making* deserves special mention; its character does not either show any relation to that of Bohemia. The variety of *crochet-work* also shows evidence of reciprocal Slovak-Magyar influence. The cording work too developed entirely from Magyar influence. The tulip-like fur-coat and the braiding of mantles also points to an exclusively Magyar influence. The *Slovak costumes* vary according to districts; they were originally completely simple and unadorned. In those places where foreign influences have scarcely made themselves felt, the popular costumes are hardly decorated at all. Embroidery, cording and the various kinds of lace were added to Slovak costumes under Magyar influence.

The fur mantle is entirely of Magyar origin; its shape varies

according to districts. There are various kinds of these mantles, though in most places they are richly decorated with embroidery and cording. The furcoat (bekecs) made of sheep-skin is a typical Slovak dress, whereas the embroidery and needlework applied to such are of Magyar character. In many places the Slovaks wear the »mentec« (a kind of dolman), which with its cording, buttons and fur edging is absolutely Magyar. In many places buttoned dolmans, which are also Magyar, are worn. The trowsers are made of net-cloth, or of other cloth, are tight, of Magyar cut, and corded; and the trowsers are of this type, even in districts where high boots (»bocskor«) are worn. Above the leather belt, which is already going out of fashion, a bodice is worn, with lead, brass or other buttons. The boots are in most places topboots of Magyar cut. The boots called »bocskor« are of a quite peculiar kind not to be found in the case of any other Slav people; their lacing is also peculiar. In many places the popular costumes are absolutely Magyar in character. The unadulterated Slovak popular costume consisting of clothes made of net-cloth and of »bocskor«, also shows Magyar influence.

We may find Magyar influence in the women's costumes too. The wearing of the »párta« (head-dress of girls) is quite in the Magyar style. The ribbons, coiffure, kerchiefs, skirts, high boots, bodices, and lace, all are the products of the invention common to Magyar costumes. In particular in the Slovak territories adjoining the »Palócz« districts, it is hardly possible to distinguish between the women's costumes from the Magyar and Slovak point of view. On the other hand the Czech and Moravian national costumes differ completely from those of the Slovaks. The Czech manner of dressing shows completely the influence of the Germans. The long cloth coats of old-fashioned cut and German in style, the German waistcoats, the German trowsers and German cravats . . . In many places we find German knee-breeches, stockings and shoes, sleeved spencers and cloth hats, or fur caps, which are of an entirely different character in Bohemia. On the other hand, the women's costumes, with the head bound up, or with bows in the hair, and with the coats fringed with fur, show no features in common with the Slovak



costumes. The national costumes of the neighbouring Moravia are also of an entirely different character, though here certain other influences are to be observed in the various items of costume. The national costume of Moravia, in particular that of women, is in most places Germanlike. Czech culture has not had any influence whatever on Slovak national costumes; nor indeed could it have exercised any such influence, for these two nations have never lived together, and have not developed together: they have had quite divergent lives, and have done their work amid quite other views of life. The »cultural unity« should without fail have left traces, however slight, in this respect too; it would have been documented by these outward signs and expressions. The alleged community of culture has not manifested itself either in the language, or in art, in costumes or in peasant art; but, it may be asked, in other fields? Perhaps there may be common traits in the more trivial things of peasant art, in ceramics, in wood-carving in, wood-building, in folk-poetry, in popular art, — may be the question asked by one who would still believe in the muchvaunted cultural unity of the Czecho-Slovak Republic.

The products of the ceramic industry of Upper Hungary have become world-famed. The products of the Slovak popular ceramic industry are today bought by collectors for high prices, for they are the finest and purest creations of peasant art. The abundance of clay to be found there predestines the inhabitants of this territory to engage in pottery. The original inhabitants of this territory also made clay vessels. Pottery here has naturally developed out of cottage industry, as have all other branches of industry. In the Slovak villages in former times men and women made all the things they needed in the house or farm, — tools, instruments, vessels, — at home. The women did the weaving, spinning, sewing, embroidering, while the men were tailors, masons, carpenters, basket-makers, wheelwrights, joiners, and smiths making implements and tools for the neighbours too. This is how pottery too developed, though it requires more skill and a certain expert knowledge,

for without the practice acquired during generations the making of earthenware vessels is inconceivable. In the Slovak territory extensive districts were engaged in pottery, which did not begin to develop into an independent branch of industry till the XV. century. Till that period, namely, — i. e. till the days of King Matthias —, only the common people had used earthenware vessels, while in the houses of the upper classes metal vessels were in use. The potters' guilds were established in the XVI. century; and in the XVII. century in Hungary the production of majolica had reached a high level. There are Czechs of the opinion that the majolica industry was introduced into Upper Hungary by Czech exiles. This is a mistake, for there was an industry of the kind here even before the immigration of the Czecho-Moravian Brothers. This was introduced from Italy; and the ornamentation of the products of the kind is of a purely Renaissance character. This Renaissance character was supplemented and transformed by the inhabitants in keeping with their popular taste; and they followed another taste in respect of the colouring too. This is how there developed a Slovak fayence, a Slovak majolica, which differs completely from the corresponding Czech art alike in the forms of the vessels (i. e. in the lines of the forms of the vessels) and in the decorations and colouring. The colours are yellow, green, blue and brown, and the vessels may be divided into various groups in accordance with their ornaments. Thus the first group includes the vessels made before the cultivation of the Renaissance ornaments. These are very similar in their ornamentation to the pieces with Magyar motifs. The other groups are: Italian Renaissance, Slovak Renaissance, Rococo; then the forms of decorative drawing are: the regular circular rose; the blue rose, the red rose, the many-leaved rose, the light blue type of ornament.



The ornamentation has for the most part been drawn from the plant world, — borders, garlands, bouquets and groups growing out of pots being the results. Pictures from the animal world are frequently found drawn on the vessels; landscapes or houses are rare. The

later rose-motifs of the ornaments are to be seen on Magyar products too; while the Czech and Moravian products have sprung from the invention of a different popular soul. If we place side by side series of Slovak, Magyar, Czech or Moravian vessels, we are at once struck by the almost similar forms of the Slovak and Magyar vessels, while the products of Czech and Moravian ceramic industry are quite different in shape. The standard of life of the Slovaks and the Magyars respectively is far more akin than either is to that of the Czechs.

A great part has been played in the manufacture of Slovak ceramic products by the »habán« people, whom the Czechs claim for themselves, though the »Habáns« who settled in the vicinity of the Sobotists were in reality a German sect of Anabaptists which founded settlements of hardworking industrials there. The »Habán vessels« made by them, owing to their rich ornamentation, enjoyed great popularity. The »Habáns« had led a life of vicissitudes; for they were expelled from Germany, Bohemia and Moravia, until they finally settled here in Upper Hungary. Their products show traces of German industry and thoroughness. These products were not the creation of Czech culture. And in any case Slovak majolica is Italian in origin; and, when the Czech exiles came hither, they found a highly developed industry of Italian origin. On their settling down, these exiles naturally worked at this industry too. — This branch of industry was introduced by the Italians, not only in Upper Hungary, but in other districts of Hungary too; but it developed best in Upper Hungary, owing to the abundance of clay. This industry sent its products to Magyar territory; and its ornamentation drew therefrom new ideas which it introduced, while on the other hand the mixed Magyar-Slovak ornamentation passed by means of »Habán« vessels and Slovak majolica to Czech and Moravian territories, where it also found imitators. This is how Magyar-Slovak elements reached foreign territory. The Slovak ceramic industry, which has created so much that is beautiful in Upper Hungary, was driven into the background by manufacturing industry; but it will at all times be a proof of the fact that Slovak and Magyar peasant art became welded into one to create its works in this territory. Traces of Czech influence may at most be found in the fact

that the »Habáns« drew Czech and Moravian emblems on those products intended for Czech and Moravian markets. The background of this fact is purely of a practical commercial character, — just as today, for instance, the boots and trowsers exported for the use of the bushmen are such as suit their taste.

One very interesting part of the peasant art of Upper Hungary is *wood-carving*, several kinds of which (e. g. the carved ladles) are not to be found elsewhere. The wood-carving of Upper Hungary is not in any respect in connection with the Czech products of the kind. In connection with wood-carving mention should be made of the creations of woodarchitecture, — of the wooden churches, the wooden village houses, and the wooden towers, many very beautiful and typical examples of which will be found among the illustrations.

The abundance of timber naturally led to *wood architecture*. In almost every county of Upper Hungary — without distinction of nationality — there are to be found wooden churches, which may be divided into two groups, according as they are Gothic or Byzantine in shape. The Gothic wooden churches were introduced into Upper Hungary by German settlers. These are to be found mostly in the eastern counties, while Byzantine influence is to be found in the counties of Sáros, Szepes and Liptó. The *wooden church at Oravka* shows northern Slav influence, while the *Thököly Church of Késmárk* with its plan in the shape of a Greek cross is a belated creation of the Byzantine style. The belfry-towers of *Turicska* and *Okolics* are the finest specimens of the wooden architecture of Upper Hungary. Despite their simplicity, they are picturesque and are the growths of the primitive art and sense of art that springs from the people.

The wooden churches have for the most part been built in the centre of churchyards. It is in these wooden edifices that the effects of Gothic style may be discovered most frequently. The tower either stands apart from the church, or rises out from the roof. The tower in most cases has a platform on the top. If we consider the Czech and Moravian wooden buildings, we shall be unable to find the least similarity between those and the wooden buildings of Upper Hungary, despite the fact that they too are in

the Gothic style. They have towers built as annexes; and round the churches there are covered passages, which are not to be found in Upper Hungary. The Czech and Moravian wooden churches are more massive and lack the characteristic slenderness of wood architecture, while the wooden buildings of Upper Hungary — as shown by the illustrations too — are a complete reflection of the properties of the material used in building them.

Czech culture has rendered no services in Upper Hungary in the field of wood architecture either. We cannot pass over in silence the fact that the friends of the Czechs have alleged that certain wooden buildings to be found in the counties of Gömör and Nógrád are of Hussite origin e. g. the *church* and *tower* of *Rimabánya*, as well as other buildings at Olajtörlék and in some other places. The origin of these wooden buildings thus claimed is all the more to be questioned, seeing that in style and arrangement they do not deviate from the style of the buildings of Hungary proper. It is possible that they were erected in the age in question; but by Hungarian masters. The form of the towers, the platforms, the form of the door, — in nothing do they resemble the Czech wooden buildings. The Hussites did erect wooden castles in these districts; but these have long been demolished by war. They had no time for the construction of stone castles. In some villages there are indeed smaller stone cottages which the people call «Czech houses», for the Hussite warriors equipped them for defence with high staircases and small windows; but the origin of these too is extremely doubtful.

A comparison of the wooden houses is of importance. The Czech «cultural unit», had it existed, must without fail have manifested itself here too. The Czech wooden houses, the peasant houses, are certainly more developed than those of the Slovaks; and, had there been any connection between them, the simple Slovak house must have been constructed after the more developed Czech model. However, that is not what happened. The Slovak houses in the mountain districts have remained in their primitive simplicity, while on the strip of territory lying near the Magyar districts there are traces of Magyar influences. A picture of the characteristic Slovak house is offered by the *ancient*

street (Felvégi-utca) in *Igló*, with the intervening eaves. In the villages the houses were not built close to one another, but are separated by courtyards. Today there are chimneys everywhere. We cannot discover the line of contact between Czechs and Slovaks in this detail either.

If there were any question of a Czecho-Slovak cultural unit, we should find kindred traits in the *folk poetry*, which is the most direct expression of a people's soul. It is the folk-song from which we can best draw conclusions as to the mutual relations of the two peoples, and decide whether they really stand so close to one another, whether they really feel one another's troubles and sorrows, joys and pride? Of the original Slovak folk-songs there is not one that sings of the Czech brother; while on the other hand the fact must be established that alike in form and substance, and in respect of rhythm, the Slovak folk-song deviates entirely from the Czech folk-song, and rather resembles that of the Magyars, — a further proof of the fact that, though not related in tongue, the two peoples have a community of sentiment and culture. Cornelius Ábrányi sen., one of the greatest Hungarian authorities on music, says of the Slovak folk-song and music that, whether we regard its melody or its rhythm and harmony, it stands far higher than the folk-music of the Germans, Serbians or Roumanians of Austria-Hungary. In particular its *prosody*, its wealth of rhythm, deserves special mention. Gayety, humour, plasticity, and a most pleasant harmonious, contrapuntal peculiarity, are its main features. From this point of view it stands very near to Magyar rhythm. Of the nations which live among the Magyars, not one stands so near to the Magyar in the creation of melody, as the Slovak nation. There is a historical reason for this; viz. the fusion of Magyar and Slovak blood. It is equally evident that, after living together in peaceful unity for a thousand years, the Slovak and Magyar peoples must have adopted many customs, peculiarities of language and songs from one another, so that it is now very difficult to determine which of the two peoples was the original author of certain songs. This mutual intermingling is still going on; and in this process the advantage will always be with the Magyar, who is intellectually superior.

Recently the Czechophile propagandists have endeavoured also to invent a theory to the effect that the Magyar folk-song is not Magyar at all, and that the Slovak folk-song is not Slovak in character, but that the former is gipsy, the latter Czech ! This ridiculous exertion shows what means have been resorted to to frustrate the peaceful agreement of the Slovaks and the Magyars. It is difficult to draw the dividing line between the Magyar folk-song and the Slovak folk-song, for we may hear tomorrow on the lips of a Magyar the selfsame Slovak folk-song sung to us today, and vice-versa. Almost all the Magyar folk-songs are sung in Slovak too.

The older songs echo the trials and pain of our nation of old ; and when the feet of the Turks trampled on our downtrodden country, the Magyar song sobbed of our pain in a strain like that of the Slovak :

„Prosime Ťa Bože náš
 Prosine Ťa Bože náš
 Hej zachraň Uhrov každý čas,
 Nech z Tvej svatej pomoci,
 Nech z Tvej svatej pomoci
 Hej vždy z víťazá nad Turci !“ *

This Slovak folk-song preserved to us from the days of the Turkish wars, proves that in feeling Slovaks and Magyars then too were one ; and when, during Rákóczi's war of independence, the cause of the champions of liberty looked as good as lost, the Slovak »Kurucz«-songs — some of which will be everlasting gems of Slovak folk-poetry—resounded :

„Nebudem v Suránoch
 Lež pojdem bojovať
 Hej, až bude Rákóczi
 Pod zástavu volať.
 Nedám sa prinútiť
 Sám pojdem do boja
 Hej, s Uhry husármi
 Oddám sa do zbroja.“**

* »We pray Thee, God, protect the people of Hungary at all times, that with Thy holy aid they may ever be victorious over the Turk.«

** »I cannot remain at Surány, I am going to fight, as soon as Rákóczy calls me to the colours ; I am not forced, of my own will I recruit, ho ! I will take up arms with the Magyars, with the hussars.«

Or, to take another example :

„Rákóczi, Bercéni
Boli veľki páni
Od vychodu slhce
Vojnu započali :
Ked ju započali,
Ne Boha voláli
Pomož nám, Bože náš,
Vnašom bojováni !“ *

There are numerous Slovak songs of the kind speaking of Hungary and the golden apple which came into being amid the struggles and sufferings shared in common with the Magyar brother. The »kurucz« tárogató (a kind of oboe) brought tears to the eyes of the Slovak just as it did to those of the Magyar ; while it was the Czechs who came to Upper Hungary as the mercenaries of the imperial power of Austria and suppressed the struggle for independence alike of Slovak and Magyar. No echo of any attempt to unite Czech and Slovak is to be found in the heart or soul of the Slovak people ; and this shows how foreign to that heart and soul is the very idea.

The only ground on which the Czechs have been able to find arguments in favour of their plan, is *Literature*. They have, namely, emphasised the fact that there has been no Slovak literature, but only a Czech literature, and that the Slovaks owe their intellectual culture, their poetry, entirely to the Czechs. The silence of Slovak literature for centuries was due to two causes. The first was the use of Latin in State-life, the second the illegitimate intrusion of the Czech language in the Slovak religious books. We have evidence to prove that, previous to the spreading of the Czech emigrants all over Upper Hungary, those who could write used the Slovak, not the Czech language. The emigrants, zealous apostles of the Reformation, introduced the Czech Bible. The Catholic Church used the Slovak, not the Czech, language in its hymns and in preaching ; and the reason why the Anti-Reformation

* »Rákóczy and Bercényi were great lords, from the Orient they began a great fight, — when they began, they cried to Heaven : „Help us, our God, in this our fight !“



was victorious in Upper Hungary in the days of Pázmány, was that noone understood the Czech Bible or the Czech sermons. The introduction of Czech in the life of the Church evidently had the purpose of making that language the dominant one and of Czechising the Slovak language; but that is not what happened. The Czech language, being an absolutely foreign one, failed completely. At the opening of last century the Slovaks finally broke with the idea that the Slovak nation should be prevented having a national literature of its own merely because the Bible had come to them in Czech! In one or two years the Slovak language entirely drove out the Czech; this is a proof that the latter tongue had not yet struck root or had any effect.

Slovak literature is permeated with foreign influences. These influences are German, Russian, Polish, and preponderantly Magyar; there are Czech influences too, but these are of such insignificant extent that in the literature and the poetic creations of the Slovaks they are barely perceptible. The great figures of Hungarian literature — e. g. Vörösmarty, Arany, Tompa, Petőfi, Ady, Jókai, Mikszáth — have found worthy imitators and disciples in Slovak literature. The several leading figures of Czech literature cannot by any means be traced or their influence recognised in the products of Slovak poetry; while on the other hand Magyar culture has lived in so close a union with Slovak culture that the Magyar intellectual tendencies have exercised an unimpeded influence thereon.

Czech and Slovak literature are not uniform; the only thing that is true is that the Czech tongue was employed in the religious books at the time of the use of the Latin language and was used in correspondence too. However, the Magyar tongue too was neglected on account of the use of Latin. The revival of Magyar awakened the Slovak tongue too from its trance. If there had really been a Czecho-Slovak «cultural unit», literary Slovak would never

have come into being. But as there has never been — and is not today — any Czech culture in Upper Hungary, it was possible to create a Slovak literature.

The culture of Upper Hungary is Magyar, Slovak and German. The *printing presses* established here have never been Czech. The first printing press in this territory was estab-



lished at Lőcse; that was naturally not of Czech origin. The later development of the printing presses shows that they were mostly Magyar and German institutions. The Czechs used bad methods to carry out their czechising schemes. They distributed their books by means of colporteurs in former times, instead of having the books printed here; though it is most probable that no Czech printing press could have prospered in this territory.

The *newspaper literature* which began to develop in the XIX. century took root among the Slovaks too. The first newspapers appeared in a Czech language adulterated with Slovakisms; this means that the public were unable to understand Czech yet, while literary Slovak was not highly developed enough or sufficiently in use, so that recourse was had to the expedient of introducing Slovak expressions into Czechish, the result of this procedure being in reality the creation of literary Slovak. Subsequently, when the public had declared war on the Czech language, not a single Czech newspaper or book was able to appear continuously in this territory; and this went on for a whole century. Every county and indeed every town had its local Magyar journal, which spread Magyar culture. The Czech Press was unable to take root in this territory; and even today, though the Czechs have prohibited the import of the newspapers of Hungary and are doing all in their power to force the spread of Czech papers, it is not the Czech journals that are being read by the public of Upper Hungary, but the Austrian or Upper Hungarian Magyar papers which have not been prohibited, for these are intelligible and not strange products.

A proof of the community of culture would be a unilingual

press. Such is entirely lacking. Just as no Slovak paper can thrive in Prague, so can no Czech journal possibly prosper in Upper Hungary ; and, as a consequence of the new state of things, the journals of Upper Hungary are made sensibly conscious of having sunk to the level of provincial organs, for both the Slovak and the Magyar Press had been bound up closely with Budapest, alike by the geographical situation, by opportunism, and by the political union. Upper Hungary is completely isolated from the centre of the new Republic, from which the material of the Press should be disseminated. The same is the case with technical literature too. The striking lack of a cultural unit is one of the principal causes of the looseness of the Czecho-Slovak Republic. This Republic cannot definitively unite the nations living in its territory, because the fundamental condition of such a result — the Czecho-Slovak unit — is also derived from a fiction.

Much is being written by the Czechs concerning the common *commercial interests*. As already stated, Upper Hungary has at all times concentrated the main arteries of the traffic of the country. As early as the reign of Louis the Great Kassa was an important staple of foreign trade. From the XIV. century onwards this town was one of the chief stages of the route of Eastern trade with Europe ; it was from here that this trade directed its wares to North Germany and Poland. The waterways in this territory all ran in a southerly direction ; not one in a northerly. The towns of Upper Hungary were the intermediaries for the trade between North and South. Upper Hungary was indeed a market for the industry and commerce of Bohemia ; but the trend of Upper Hungary in economic matters was partly in a S. E., partly in a S. W. direction. Between the two was the county of Szepes, which served to unite these two parts. Not the slightest traces of Czech culture penetrated to the eastern territory, whose language too developed in an entirely different direction and has so far defied Western influence. As soon as Upper Hungary came within the Czech sphere of economic interests, its commercial importance, which in Hungary was paramount, shrank to a position of subordination. Upper Hungary has become a colony.

Nor can we attribute any good work to Czech culture in *industrial* respects either. Bohemia possesses a highly developed, splendid industry, which has need of a market. As a result of the over-production of the manufacturing industry of the West, the Western markets have become automatically closed to Czech industry, which has had to look eastwards. It goes without saying that the Czechs have not been particularly anxious to develop the industry of Upper Hungary, for it has been in their interest not to strengthen, but rather to weaken, their rivals; and in any case this particular rival is nearer to the East than they are. The Czecho-Slovak «cultural unit» has therefore done nothing in the way of developing the industry of Upper Hungary either; on the other hand the Czechs have been endeavouring for decades to get that industry into Czech hands and thus to draw the Slovak territory into the service of Czech economic interests. But the industry of Upper Hungary lives an independent organic life and right down to the days of the recent «occupation» successfully defended itself against the Czech schemes.

And finally, we would ask, — has Czech culture given this territory any poets or scholars apart from Tranoscius? (Amos Comenius found refuge for a time with Prince Rákóczi in Transylvania). A glance at the history of Slovak literature shows us that it was the Slovaks who gave the Czechs eminent figures in the persons of Kollár and Saffarik. The centre of Czech science never attracted the people of Upper Hungary. The University of Prague, founded in the reign of Charles IV., has included Magyars, Slovaks and Germans among its students. This university was engaged in spreading Latin culture. Not for long did the inhabitants of Upper Hungary cultivate the university of Prague; instead, they frequented the German universities, particularly after the Reformation. And even the number of those who went to German universities was considerably reduced by the organisation of the academies, theological colleges and universities of Hungary.

We do not know of a single Czech scholar who settled in Upper Hungary in consequence of the «cultural unit» and helped to develop Slovak literature or science in the Slovak tongue. There

are Czech scholars who have dealt with the Slovak question from a linguistic, ethnographic or political point of view ; but for the most part in the service of the efforts to realise a Czecho-Slovak union.

We do not know of a single Czech painter or sculptor who — on the basis of the »cultural unit« — devoted his life to the Slovak nation or who chose Zsolna or Turócszentmárton as the scene of his artistic labours, in preference to Prague. We do not know of a single Czech composer who spent his life in the cultivation of Slovak music. And the same could be said of other fields of cultural life too.

Czech *histrionic art* has been unable to find a home in Upper Hungary, for the simple reason that the people were unable to understand the Czech actors. Nor have there been performances by itinerant companies ; and even today these latter have to play to empty houses ; — there being no »cultural unit«. Czech and Moravian wandering comedians were constant visitors to this territory. It is true that the popularity here of »roundabouts« and marionette shows (Punch and Judy) must be attributed to Czech and Moravian influence ; so much so that even today these »shows« are accompanied by Czechs. In the same way grinders and umbrella-repairers are generally Czechs, as are the strolling musicians who wander from village to village.

This is not irony or ridicule. Far be it from me to adopt a scoffing tone in this very grave question, which, owing to its present position, is an extremely sad one too ; but it is a fact that those who created culture in this territory, who laboured and toiled, whose deeds are proclaimed by the works of centuries, have been expelled from the said territory, and have become homeless, while those who came here to sharpen scissors and turn »roundabouts«, have — on the basis of the »Czecho-Slovak cultural unit« — become the privileged wielders of the power.

The only conclusion to be drawn — and that a firm one — from this brief summary of data, is that *there is no Czech culture in the territory of Upper Hungary !*

We see the beginning of the first stages — quiet, but all the bitterer — of a violent cultural struggle in Upper Hungary, where every cultural relation is most decidedly in opposition to the Czech national idea. While on the one hand it would divest the Slovaks of their original folk-characteristics, this idea would on the other hand prevail on the Magyars and Germans living here to forget the work done during centuries for the development of civilisation and culture by their forefathers and continued by themselves. They should forget that this soil has been watered for a thousand years by the blood of their kin and the sweat of their brows, — they should forget that it was from here that their kin hastened to the Sajó to meet the Tartars, — they should forget that it was here that their kin broke the force of the waves of Turkish invasion, — they should forget that it was here that their kin unfurled the banners of the Hungarian wars of independence, that it was here that Thököly and Rákóczi recruited their forces! Nor can they erase from their memory the Highland campaign of the Hungarian War of Independence of last century. Upper Hungary has given the nation many eminent historical and intellectual figures; Thököly, Rákóczi and Kossuth were born here. It was here that the poet Valentine Balassa sang his melancholy and warlike songs. It was here that Imre Madách reflected on the lot of mankind. It was Komárom, now occupied by the Czechs, which gave us Maurice Jókai, the great novelist. Gyula Andrassy is a native of the county of Gömör; and the same district gave birth to our first modern sculptors. It was here that Imre Henszelmann and Francis Pulszky, the archaeologists, imbibed their love for the arts: and pages of names could be quoted, — great names the bearers of which have been the pride of Hungarian culture and were born in Upper Hungary.

Czech ruthlessness has almost everywhere demolished those monuments which proclaim an unswerving loyalty to this country. In front of the Cathedral of Kassa stands the «Honvéd» monument, many of the companions of which have been destroyed or mutilated by the Czechs, e. g. at Igló and Lőcse. This monument is a memorial of the love of liberty of the people. The people of this territory has risen in arms, whenever the cause of liberty has

been in danger. It is possible to suffer and endure for a time; but the people of Upper Hungary has never allowed the cause of liberty to be definitively given up. Why should the »Czecho-Slovak cultural unit« fear the monuments? Why has it been in such haste to remove these memorials, which, though dumb, appeal so strongly to the heart? If the cause of the »Czecho-Slovak unit« is so sure, so true, — why is vandalism called in against those who have no other weapons in Upper Hungary save only their attachment to the traditions of the past, no other defence save only their feelings and their trust in a better future? While the monument at Kassa with its profound conception recalls the memory of two interwoven struggles for independence, opposite the Danube embankment, at Pozsony there stand engraved in stone the words »Vitam et sanguinem!« This monument not only symbolises the historical greatness, loyalty to its dynasty and honesty of the Hungarian nation, but at the same time — from the point of view of the history of art — informs us that every creation here bears on it the stamp of Magyar culture, that everything here has been created and built with the aid of Magyar culture. The Magyar spirit, Magyar genius, has worked to raise the standard of the culture of Upper Hungary; and it is Hungarian hearts that are wounded by credit being given in foreign countries to the unfounded argumentation that Upper Hungary is being annexed to the Czech territory on the basis of a »cultural unit«. The great achievements and the memorials of Magyar culture protest most eloquently against the »Czecho-Slovak« tendency.

One fundamental condition for the establishment and development of culture is peace, — unity, the harmony and mutual understanding of the peoples. Where that is lacking, there can be no question of the development of culture. It is with brotherly anxiety that the Magyars regard the struggle arising out of the cultural antagonism of Slovaks and Czechs; and their sympathy is fully with the Slovak sister-nation. The nations of the world must regard the new Czecho-Slovak formation as the incarnation of a great injustice, for not in vain did Wilson say that no nation can be transferred, against its will and without its wishes being consulted,

to another State. This fundamental truth has not, indeed, been asserted and has not been employed as a leading principle; but that fact does not detract one whit from its value in substance. An injustice has thus been done in Upper Hungary, not to one, but to four nations, — to the Magyar, Slovak, German and Ruthenian nations. Of this Upper Hungary the Czechs declared to the Council of the Nations that they had lived with it in geographical, historical and cultural union and that the impulse for the initiation of their far-reaching Slav policy was given by its constituting a link between the Northern and Southern Slavs. The Czechs are certainly doing all in their power to create the appearance of the «cultural unite». The suppression of the Magyar and German tongues has become the State policy of the Czechs. They are being ousted by force from schools and offices, and even from the signs of the shops, — these tongues to which the culture of Upper Hungary owes its whole past and its development. But even the Slovak language is being thrust into the background, for it is a drawback to the «unite».

It was Magyar culture which converted the neglected village hovels of Upper Hungary into palaces, to the credit of civilisation. The development of the towns, the European standard of the schools, the encouragement and ever beautiful creations of the arts, the development of industry and commerce, the popularisation of culture, — all these things are the exclusive work of the State policy of the Magyars and of Magyar culture.

To counterbalance all this the other scale shows the «Czecho-Slovak cultural unite», — an empty catchword: but in its place the Supreme Council has intervened with its power, which has upset justice, — the justice of the peoples —, which cannot however be buried in oblivion.





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