SOME HUNGARIAN PATRIOTS IN IOWA

[The Hungarian colony of New Buda in Decatur County, Iowa, established soon after the close of the ill-fated revolution of 1848 in the mother country, was a unique and interesting community which has long since disappeared from the map of the State. The following paper makes no pretense to being a history of New Buda — a history yet to be written — but it does reveal something of the lives and characters of the men who were the leaders in the little colony.— EDITOR.]

INTRODUCTION

As the twelfth day of August in the year 1849 drew to its close, Hungary, half in hope and half in despair, awaited the concluding act in her struggle for liberty. In the little village of Boros Jenö, Görgei, her commander-in-chief, had completed negotiations with the Russian ally of Austria. The following day brought the final humiliation of Hungary — the surrender of her army to the Russian General Rüdiger.

Added to the bitterness of Hungary's failure was the loss of her statesmen and military leaders. Of all those who had been foremost in the struggle, only Görgei was permitted at its close to remain at home in safety — Görgei, the man who, in her disappointment, Hungary believed had betrayed her. Scores of those who in national councils and on battlefields had worked for her redemption, now paid upon Austrian scaffolds and at the point of Austrian rifles the extreme penalty for their loyalty. Others escaping in disguise were fugitives: Kossuth with about five thousand refugees was in Turkey; a large number were scattered in various parts of Europe. All of them hoped for a favorable change in the affairs of Hungary which would make possible their return. But as the months passed by it became evident, even to the most sanguine, that their lives for a

few years at least must be spent in exile; or, as one of them wrote in later years: "We found we must hunt a second home, and it was easy for us to decide that there was but one free, happy country in the world — the United States of America."

COUNT LADISLAUS UJHAZY

Late in the year 1849, a party of these exiles under the leadership of Count Ladislaus Ujházy assembled in London and began making plans for emigrating to America. Naturally the United States sympathized with the Hungarian cause, and the cordial welcome which the government and the people were ready to extend to the patriots was expressed in a letter written by President Taylor to Count Ujházy on his arrival in America, which reads as follows:

Count Ujházy, Washington, Dec. 20, 1849.
Sir:—

I have duly received your letter of Nov. 2nd from London announcing the determination of yourself and comrades to seek an asylum in America.

The people of this republic have deeply sympathized with the Hungarians in their recent struggle for constitutional freedom, and in the calamities which have befallen their unhappy land; and I am sure that I speak the universal sentiment of my countrymen in bidding you and your associates a cordial welcome to our soil, the natural asylum of the oppressed from every clime. We offer you protection and a free participation in the benefits of our institutions and our laws, and trust that you may find in America a second home. I am with high respect,

Your sincere friend, Z. TAYLOR.

Ladislaus Ujházy
late Governor of Comorn
Hungary.[1]

These refugees were not of the Hungarian peasant type, as are the immigrants who have since flocked to the mines

[1] From a copy of the original letter, furnished to the writer by Mrs. Lajos Madarász.

and factories of America. Instead, they were men of gentle birth and belonged to the old Magyar stock which, six centuries before, had given to Hungary a written constitution, and had made it an elective monarchy; and which, three centuries later (1526) when their own royal house had become extinct in the male line, had accepted as their king the Hapsburg emperor of Austria, a descendant through the female line, but only on the express condition that he and his successors should be crowned with the ancient crown of Hungary, and rule according to the provisions of the Hungarian constitution. It was this same stock that for the last three hundred years had opposed the encroachments of the despotic Hapsburgs who, again and again, had deliberately violated their coronation oath. The war which these Magyars had just fought and lost was not waged, primarily, for the establishment of any new idea of freedom, but for the maintenance of their ancient liberties. The idea of establishing a republican form of government in Hungary, which was advocated by Kossuth and the patriots of his type, was an outgrowth of the revolution and not one of its causes.

Count Ujházy,[2] the leader of this company of refugees, was, at the time of his exile, about sixty years of age. He was a representative of one of the oldest and wealthiest families of the Hungarian nobility, and belonged to that generation of ardent patriots which took so large a part in Hungarian affairs during the early half of the last century. He was an intimate and devoted friend of Kossuth; and when in 1836 Kossuth was arrested for circulating his famous hand-written newspaper, and, contrary to law, was imprisoned without being admitted to bail, Ujházy, in the county parliament of Sáros protested against the illegality

[2] According to Dr. Alexander Márki, Professor of History in the University of Kolozsvár, Hungary, Ujházy was "föispan" of the County of Sáros, and in his case this title was invariably translated in America as "Count".

of this procedure. He came near paying dearly, however, for his loyalty to his friend. He was promptly indicted for high treason, but for some reason his trial was delayed, and finally prevented by the amnesty of 1841, which also brought about Kossuth's release from prison.[3] Ujházy was afterwards appointed "Foispan" or Governor of the County of Sáros, and was recognized in the Diet as one of the most eloquent magistrates in the liberal party. When the Kossuth provisional government was established in 1848, he was appointed Governor of the County of Comorn,[4] the capital of which is a royal free city of the same name located on an island in the Danube, and was a strategic point of considerable importance. It was the last Hungarian fortification to surrender to the Austrians, and its garrison was the only one accorded the honors of war.[5] Ujházy was given a passport to leave the country, but was forbidden to return. All of his thirteen estates, excepting one, were confiscated by the government. Included in the confiscated estates was the district in which the famous imperial Tokay wine is produced. This particular portion of the property the Emperor retained for himself.

Though defeated and exiled, the Hungarian patriots, for a time, refused to admit that their cause was ultimately lost. Kossuth, in Turkey, still claimed the title of "Governor of Hungary", and in that capacity appointed Ujházy as his representative in the United States, giving him the following letter as his credentials:

> I undersigned, Governor of Hungary, by this letter name Ladislaus Ujházy, Supreme Count of the County of Sáros and Civil Governor of Komárom, plenipotentiary Envoy and Representative of the Hungarian Nation in the United States of North America,

[3] See *Hungary and Its Revolutions*, by E. O. S., p. 456.

[4] This name is variously spelled Comorn, Komorn, and Komaron. Throughout this paper geographical and other proper names are spelled according to the American usage, which differs in many cases from the Hungarian spelling.

[5] See Klapka's *War in Hungary*, Vol. II, pp. 82–84.

entrusting him thereby with full powers and liberty to represent the Hungarian Nation in accordance with his instructions, until his revocation, before the government of that generous and high-minded nation.

Broussa, Asia Minor,
March 27th, 1850. *(SEAL)* KOSSUTH LAJOS
Governor of Hungary[6]

Although Ujházy was not accredited at Washington as Hungary's representative, the deference paid him personally by high officials in the United States is indicated by numerous letters which he received after arriving in America. One of these letters was written by Governor Fish of New York, and reads as follows:

General Ladislaus Ujházy, Albany, Jan. 4, 1850.
New York.

Sir: I avail myself of the first opportunity to acknowledge the receipt of your esteemed favor, from which I am happy to learn that we may anticipate the gratification of extending a welcome at this place to a gentleman whose heroic defense of the liberty of his country has excited our warm and enthusiastic admiration. Our country affords a home and an asylum to all who seek a refuge from tyranny and from oppression, and our hearts are ever ready to warm toward the brave, although they may have been unsuccessful defenders of liberty and the rights of man. I believe, Sir, that none have ever sought that refuge, which we are glad to open to all, for whom their own valor and the righteous justice of the cause in which they nobly periled their lives, have assured a more sincere welcome, or a higher place in the respect and affection of our people, than that which is freely accorded to yourself and to your brave compatriots. You have not come to a land of strangers. Your virtues and your valor have made you known to us, and have made us your friends. You and your compatriots will ever find friends and a welcome among our people.

Be assured, Sir, that whenever your engagements shall enable you to visit this place, it will afford me the greatest satisfaction to pay my respects to yourself and your friends.

[6] From a copy of the original document, now in the possession of Mrs. Lajos Madarász.

Accept the assurance of the high respect with which I have the honor to be,

Your most obedient servant,

HAMILTON FISH.[7]

Similar in its cordial though cautious tone is a letter written by General Lewis Cass:

Washington, Aug. 21, 1850.

My dear Sir:

I have recently received a letter from General Kossuth dated at Kutayah in Asia Minor, in which is the following paragraph:

"Let me hope that should Mr. Ujházy (my oldest and best friend and present representative in the United States) in the interest of the holy cause to which you have so generously your protection accorded, address himself to you for something which you might, in your wisdom judge practical and convenient, you will not withhold from us your powerful support."

It affords me pleasure to be the medium of communicating these sentiments of regard from your old friend and General who commands the respect and esteem of every lover of freedom in this world.

I trust you find your new residence as comfortable as you expected. Certain I am that wherever you go, you will meet the warm sympathy of the American people for your services and sacrifices in the cause of human freedom. The noble effort of the Hungarians has endeared them to my countrymen; and misfortune has but increased the interest they feel in their favor. Their hour of deliverance will yet come. I am, dear sir,

Truly your friend,

Governor Ujházy.

LEW. CASS.[8]

A few weeks after his arrival in America, Ujházy had an interview with President Taylor, and in accordance with the President's advice he decided to select land in Iowa. He and his party traveled by rail to Burlington and from there by stage and wagon westward about one hundred and

[7] From a copy of the original letter, now in the possession of Mrs. Lajos Madarász.

[8] From a copy of the original letter, now in the possession of Mrs. Lajos Madarász.

fifty miles to the newly organized and as yet unsectionized county of Decatur. The tract of land which Count Ujházy selected is in the southern part of the county, less than six miles from the Missouri border. It was a slightly rolling, fertile prairie; along its streams were belts of woodland, and when Ujházy and his friends first saw it, the prairie was doubtless covered with a heavy growth of blue grass. The nearest post-office and trading point was Princeton, Missouri, twenty miles to the south. Des Moines was one hundred miles north, but Des Moines at that date was little more than a village.

In honor of the old Magyar capital of Hungary, Ujházy named his settlement New Buda. His dream was to establish an extensive community in which the political life should be that of free, loyal American citizens, and the social and domestic life that of Magyar land owners. He rode for miles over the Iowa prairie, choosing sites for public buildings and fixing the boundaries of the New Buda of his hopes. On his own portion of the land he built a huge log "castle", which was by far the largest and most imposing building in the county at that time. Two years after its establishment, the new settlement was granted a post-office — the first one in the county — and the former Governor of Comorn was appointed postmaster.

The tacit assurance of obtaining land from the government on favorable terms was from the first held out to these refugees; and the probable generous dealing of Congress suggested by President Fillmore in the following cordial letter written soon after he succeeded to the Presidency, refers to the granting of public lands in Iowa to the New Buda settlement:

Ladislaus Ujházy, Washington City, D. C. Oct. 24, 1850.

My dear Sir:—

Your letter of the 8th ultimo came to hand a few days since, and I was gratified to learn that your weary pilgrimage had at last

come to an end, and that you had found a resting place, and I trust an asylum in the new but fertile state of Iowa.

Accept my sincerest thanks for your kind congratulations at my unexpected elevation to the Presidency. When I met you here, I never expected to occupy this position. A painful disposition of Providence has, however, cast upon me the burden and responsibility of this distinguished station; but whether for honor or dishonor, for weal or woe time alone can determine.

You have seen enough of the cares and uncertainty of official life to appreciate its labors and its instability. I look for my reward, whatever may be the result, only in the consciousness of an honest endeavor to discharge my duty faithfully and impartially to my whole country. That being done, its destiny is in the hands of the supreme arbiter of human affairs in whose justice and mercy I have the most abiding confidence.

Though we make it an invariable rule as a nation not to interfere in foreign wars, yet our people feel a deep sympathy for the oppressed everywhere, and are ready to extend a liberal hand to those who suffer in the cause of freedom. I cannot doubt therefore that Congress will deal generously with those Hungarians who have sacrificed all for independence and freedom, and are now exiles in a strange land.

I am gratified to hear that you received communications from the noble and gallant Kossuth. I shall always be most happy to hear of his health and prosperity, and to receive through you any communication intended for me or for the American government.

With my sincere prayers for your health and prosperity and for the health and prosperity of your associates, I remain,

Your obt. svt. MILLARD FILLMORE.[9]

The same question of provision for the refugees was still more definitely mentioned in the following letter written about the same date as the above, by William H. Seward, then United States Senator from New York:

My dear Sir: Auburn, October 22nd, 1850.

Your letter of the 18th of September followed me from Washington to my residence here after the adjournment of Congress.

[9] From a copy of the original letter, now in the possession of Mrs. Lajos Madarász.

I congratulate you, your family and your compatriots in having found a resting place in a region as fertile, as beautiful and as prosperous as that which you have so wisely chosen. The late opening of the legislature was absorbed with subjects of such intense interest as seemed to forbid the action I decreed in favor of the Hungarian patriots who have sought an asylum in our country.[10] But I entertain a confident hope that the subject will receive the favorable consideration of Congress at its next session which is now near at hand. Be assured, my dear sir, of my own disposition to secure to you and to your brethren such aid as is partly due in regard, not merely to your own sacrifices and sufferings in the cause of liberty, but also in regard to the character of the American people. I am, with greatest esteem and respect,

Your friend and obedient servant,

WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

Ladislaus Ujházy,
late Governor of Comorn,
New Buda, Decatur Co., Iowa.[11]

As intimated by Mr. Seward, a resolution was introduced in Congress looking to the appropriation of land for the Hungarian refugees, but no definite action was taken. In January, 1855, however, President Pierce issued an order reserving from sale the land occupied by the Hungarian exiles; and in May, 1858, Congress passed an act extending to the settlers on this reserved land the privilege of securing title to the land they chose to occupy, upon payment of $1.25 per acre, and charging no interest for the time they had already occupied the land. There was no limit to the amount of land which each refugee might take, but only a few, if any, of them took more than two hundred acres. Many years later Galusha A. Grow stated to a son of one of these patriots that this generous provision for the Hungarian refugees suggested to him his famous Homestead Act of 1861.

[10] Subsequently the legislatures of both New York and Iowa passed resolutions favoring the granting of lands to the Hungarian refugees.

[11] From a copy of the original letter, now in the possession of Mrs. Lajos Madarász.

Before this legislation in favor of the Hungarians was passed, however, a considerable number of the New Buda settlers found that Iowa winters were too severe for the successful raising of grapes; and this was the branch of horticulture with which they were most familiar. Accordingly, in 1853 Count Ujházy and many of his original party removed to San Antonio, Texas, where, by a concession of the government, he and his friends acquired a considerable amount of land.

But it was difficult for the man born to an inheritance of thirteen estates with scores of tenants to adjust himself to the straightened economic conditions of western farm life sixty years ago. To cut the forests was contrary to Count Ujházy's ideas of the dignity of a land owner, consequently the timber on his land remained untouched, though it made a fortune for later owners. He maintained the same lavish hospitality and, as far as possible, the manner of living to which he had been accustomed in Hungary. His house was open to army officers, officials of various rank and others whose refinement and education made them congenial company. Horses were provided for his guests who were warmly welcomed as long as they chose to remain, the only requirement being good breeding. One of the early recollections of San Antonio is of the Count's custom of driving into town behind six white mules, all perfectly matched. Socially, this sort of life was picturesque, but financially the Texas ranch was not a success.

Count Ujházy's wife had bravely shared his exile, but she died a short time after reaching Iowa. Of his twelve children, five came with him to America. In his domestic life, this commander of men was the kindest of diplomats. A remarkable linguist himself, he had required that each of his children be taught to speak fluently at least one language besides their mother tongue; and if necessary to reprove a child in the presence of others, he did so, whenever possible,

in a language that only the child spoken to would understand.

In 1867, the Austrian government proclaimed a general amnesty permitting all of the exiled patriots to return to their native land. The descendants of Count Ujházy in America claim that only his children were included in this amnesty, but that he was still excluded. Professor Márki of the University of Kolozsvár states that no one was excluded from the amnesty of 1867, but that "on May 16th, 1867 Ujházy protested in an open letter against the 'Ausgleich' between Austria and Hungary, and remained abroad by his own will."[12] At any rate, Ujházy evidently thought it unwise, or possibly unsafe, for him to return to Hungary, though he believed it best for his children to do so. Accordingly, the brave old hero at the age of eighty-three determined to make his last sacrifice. His children would not go back to Hungary leaving him in exile, so he took his own life in order to make possible their return. One daughter, Ilona (Helen), wife of Vilmos Madarász, remained in America. His other children, three sons and a daughter, returned to Hungary. One of the sons, Laszlo, eventually came into possession of the one remaining estate, "Budemer", near Kassa.

Then it was that Hungary, so long forbidden to receive Ujházy when living, was allowed to claim him when dead, and his body and that of his wife were laid in the crypt of the old church at beautiful Budemer, where rest so many generations of his forefathers.[13]

LADISLAUS MADARASZ

One of the names longest associated with the New Buda settlement is that of Ladislaus Madarász. By his com-

[12] From a letter written by Professor Márki in May, 1913, in answer to an inquiry regarding the terms of the amnesty of 1867.

[13] The tombs in this old crypt indicate that it has been a burial place for members of the Ujházy family for more than eight centuries.

patriots he was considered the most talented member of that group of unusually brilliant men. The son of a distinguished family, he had received the usual education and training of a Magyar nobleman. He was described, even in his later years, as being an ideal "prince of courtiers — the personification of suavity and politeness," and as having also that nameless quality which marks a leader of men. His political career in Hungary began while he was still in college. "You will revolutionize the country," his professor had said to him when the young man's reform speeches began to attract attention.

Immediately after leaving college he had thrown himself eagerly into the movement of resistance to the oppression of Austria, and when, in 1832, Kossuth first became prominent through his published report of the speeches and proceedings of the Diet of that year, young Madarász became his enthusiastic admirer and disciple. His ability as a leader became so generally recognized that in 1848 several counties elected him as their representative in the Diet. From among the offers, he accepted that of the county of Csakvár, and was soon afterward appointed minister of the police of Hungary.[14]

His younger brother, Joseph, was also in the Diet as representative from another county, and the radical views of the two brothers soon brought them into still greater prominence. The first question brought before the Diet was that of granting troops to the King (Ferdinand of Austria) to assist him in suppressing the uprising in Italy. The Radical party bitterly opposed this measure, and in the debate that followed, the two brothers Madarász, "noted for their impetuosity," says one historian, spoke with vehemence and even went so far as to accuse the ministers of treason. This accusation threw the Diet into such confusion

[14] From a translation of an historical sketch which appeared on November 11, 1909, in *Szabadság*, a Hungarian newspaper published in Cleveland, Ohio.

that Kossuth's presence and tactful explanations were required to restore it to order.[15]

Kossuth, however, seems to have admired the impetuous Madarász and to have found in him much that would be of service to himself personally and to the cause of Hungary; for when, two months later, the Diet made Kossuth head of the provisional ministry, he appointed Madarász a member of his Home Protection Cabinet. Another member of this cabinet was Paul Nyári, a patriot who shared Madarász's extreme views; and like Madarász he was anxious for the abolition of the monarchial system in Hungary.

At one time, though probably not in a cabinet meeting, the three friends, Kossuth, Madarász, and Nyári, had in their hands the fate of a crown, if not of a kingdom. They were seated in a room before a large open fire-place; in their possession was the ancient crown of Hungary — the crown of St. Stephen. "What shall we do with it?" Nyári asked. "Throw it in the fire!" Madarász exclaimed with characteristic impetuosity, and made a movement to carry out his suggestion. But Kossuth interposed. "No," he said, "we will not destroy it, at least not yet", and with that he took the crown and hid it behind a loose stone above the fire-place.[16] A year later when Kossuth fled to Turkey, wild stories were circulated that he had stolen the crown of Hungary. As a matter of fact, he and his followers took the crown with them to prevent its falling into the hands of the Austrians. But when they reached the Turkish frontier, they buried the crown with appropriate ceremonies on Hungarian soil, and all those participating in the ceremony were sworn to secrecy. For several years the question of delivering the crown to the Austrian monarch, on

[15] *Hungary and Its Revolutions*, by E. O. S., pp. 335, 336; and a historical sketch in *Szabadság*, November 11, 1909.

[16] Reminiscence related by Mrs. E. F. Reed of Grand Junction, Colorado, daughter of Ladislaus Madarász.

condition that he recognize the rights of Hungary and restore the constitution, was the subject of correspondence between Kossuth and Madarász and other New Buda patriots.[17] There was considerable difference of opinion regarding the matter, but the crown was finally delivered to Francis Joseph and is to-day the badge of his kingship of Hungary.

Madarász was still one of the leading spirits in the Diet when, in order to secure its safety, the seat of government was removed from Pesth to Debreczin. As a member of the Debreczin Convention which met in March, 1849, he signed the Hungarian Declaration of Independence, and offered the resolution nominating Kossuth as Governor of Hungary.[18] After Kossuth's election, the perplexing question of finance naturally presented itself to the provisional government, and it was Madarász who devised the plan for issuing currency to be used by the revolutionists. Thirteen years later, Secretary Chase, after considerable correspondence with Madarász and upon his recommendation made this same plan the basis of the greenback system of currency in the United States.[19]

In the Debreczin Convention there was a considerable representation of the "peace party", men who were willing to sacrifice Kossuth, and, as some of the extremely radical patriots believed, even the welfare of Hungary for the sake of peace with Austria. Madarász's opposition to the members of this party was emphatic and fearless. Their attitude toward him was equally antagonistic, and their influence proved strong enough to prevent his reappoint-

[17] Reminiscence related by Mr. E. J. Hainer, who as a boy overheard the discussions regarding the disposition of the crown.

[18] Historical sketch in *Szabadság*, November 11, 1909.

[19] Unfortunately, Madarász, before his death, destroyed much of his correspondence, including that with Secretary Chase; but Mr. E. J. Hainer, now of Lincoln, Nebraska, and other former members of the New Buda community distinctly remember hearing it read and discussed.

ment to the cabinet when it was reorganized a few months after Kossuth was elected Governor.[20] He remained an influential member of the Diet, however, until the surrender of Görgei; and even in that crisis, the bewildered patriots turned to Madarász. The news of Görgei's surrender was brought to his house at a late hour in the night. Soon afterward, a body of under-officers waited upon him and asked him to lead them against the Russians. This proposition, however, was as impractical as it was patriotic. All of Hungary's forces, save a few scattered remnants, were in the hands of the Russians, and the only safety for her patriots was in flight.

Madarász went first to a town near Vienna where his secretary met him with a suit of workingman's clothes, some money, a ticket to Hamburg and a passport for a "cooper". On the arrival of the train at Munich, a police officer with telegraphic orders to arrest Ladislaus Madarász entered the compartment where Madarász sat. "What is your trade?" the officer asked. "A cooper", Madarász replied. "You have very fine white hands for a cooper," the officer replied with a smile as he left the compartment. Whether he suspected the identity of the cooper is a matter of conjecture. Throughout Europe the sympathies of the common people were with the Hungarian patriots, and there were numerous instances of apparent credulity on the part of the police, and even on the part of under-officers in the Russian and Austrian armies. Between Berlin and Hamburg, a woman and a little girl occupied the compartment with Madarász. At Hamburg there were more police officers with orders to arrest Madarász, who was described as traveling alone and in the disguise of a cooper. As there was no one at the station to meet the woman and her child, Madarász, with the courtesy of a fellow-traveler, took their

[20] Historical sketch in *Szabadság*, November 11, 1909.

baggage, offered the woman his arm, called a cab, and drove with her to a hotel; and the police took no notice of the workingman accompanied by a woman and a little girl.[21]

Madarász's wife, the Baroness Elizabeth Majthényi, had died six years before his flight from Hungary. His only child, a son (Vilmos) about thirteen years of age, was, through the efforts of friends, enabled to join his father in Hamburg. Together they went to London, and in the following year they came to America and to the New Buda settlement.

Practically all of Madarász's property had been confiscated by the Austrian government, so that it was necessary for him after coming to America to take up the unaccustomed work of a pioneer farmer and endure the hardships of frontier life. Through it all, however, his generosity and hospitality were unfailing. His compatriots, especially some of those who came at a later date, were temporarily without means, and were welcomed for months at a time at his home. Others, in better circumstances, came to the settlement on account of their friendship for him. One such guest later bore his share in the affairs of his adopted country. This was Theodore Majthényi who came to New Buda with his father, Baron Majthényi, a brother of Madarász's first wife. At the opening of the Civil War, Theodore Majthényi enlisted in the northern army, and was soon afterwards appointed Adjutant in Fremont's bodyguard, which was commanded by Charles Zágony, another Magyar, though not of the New Buda group. On October 25th, 1861, when Zágony made his brilliant charge into Springfield, Missouri, routing a detachment of Price's army which greatly outnumbered his own force, Adjutant Majthényi was one of those who distinguished themselves, and received special mention in the reports of the action.[22]

[21] Reminiscences related by Mrs. E. F. Reed, daughter of Ladislaus Madarász.

[22] Information furnished by the War Department of the State of Missouri.

Another of Mr. Madarász's guests was the naturalist János Santösh, who, assisted by his host, made a large collection of insects for the National Museum of Hungary.[23]

Mr. Madarász's younger brother, Joseph, was imprisoned for several years after the revolution, but was released about 1860. In 1865 and 1867 he was again in the Diet, fighting the battles for personal rights, property security, and self-government in Hungary. Soon after his release from prison, he visited his brother Ladislaus in America, and after the Austrian government in 1866 proclaimed an amnesty in favor of the exiled patriots, he tried to induce his brother to return to Hungary and enter political life again.[24] But all hope of establishing a republican form of government in Hungary, the dream of the elder Madarász's life, had vanished; and rather than accept a compromise, he chose to live his peaceful life in America, in the companionship of a few friends of his earlier days, exiles like himself, who loved and trusted him, and surrounded by his American neighbors who had welcomed him in his exile.

Like others of his compatriots at New Buda, Mr. Madarász was an exceptional linguist. Latin, in his time, was the language used in the courts of Hungary; and in his boyhood he was for several years required to use it always in addressing his father. In 1894, at the age of eighty-three, he was asked by his youngest daughter to assist her in translating a passage in Virgil. Without looking at the text-book, the father recited the first two books of the Aeneid and translated them into German.

In 1855, Mr. Madarász was married to Sybilla Asbach, a daughter of a German family. Eight children were born of this marriage, six of whom are still living. Vilmos, his

23 Reminiscences related by Mrs. E. F. Reed, daughter of Ladislaus Madarász.

24 Joseph Madarász, now ninety-nine years of age, is still a member of the Hungarian Diet.

son by his first wife, married Count Ujházy's daughter Ilona, and later removed to Texas. Two sons of this marriage (grandsons of both Madarász and Ujházy) grew to manhood. One of them, Lajos (Louis) Madarász, who died in San Francisco, California, in December, 1910, had a national reputation as a skillful penman.

For many years Madarász corresponded with leading statesmen in America: with Lovejoy and others regarding the slavery question, with Salmon P. Chase regarding the Greenback system of currency, with others regarding the issues of the Civil War and reconstruction; and at a later date with still others regarding the tariff. Again and again he was offered political appointments, but always his reply was the same: "You are welcome to any suggestions that my experience may afford, but I wish no office — nothing that will bring me into prominence. My life work was in my own beloved country, and through no fault of mine, was a failure."

But as the years passed, his love for Hungary, the strong passion of every Magyar heart, overcame even his disappointment at her failure and his. To an old friend he wrote letters filled with expressions of longing for his own country, but his advanced age made the journey impossible. His life of more than ninety-eight years closed on November 6, 1909, at his home near Good Hope, Missouri, where he had gone from Iowa a few years before.

FRANCIS VARGA

In the autumn of 1849, while Madarász was in London, he became acquainted with one of his exiled countrymen whose friendship proved one of the compensations of his sixty years of exile. This man was Francis Varga, who, during the following year, joined Madarász in New Buda. By birth and early training he was as little fitted for the life of a pioneer farmer as were Ujházy and Madarász. He was

born in the city of Debreczin, and had received his education at the Debreczin University, in which his father, Stephen Varga, was a professor of theology. His mother, Clara Péczely, was the daughter of the Rev. Joseph Péczely, a distinguished Presbyterian clergyman. Her brother, Joseph Péczely, Jr., was a prominent professor of Latin, universal history, and Greek eloquence. In 1830, the father, Stephen Varga, died, and the care of the thirteen year old son Francis was entrusted to his uncle, Joseph Péczely, who directed his education and to a considerable extent shaped his career.

At the age of twenty-three Francis Varga was admitted to the bar, and began the practice of law in Torontál, one of the southern counties of Hungary. Just before the outbreak of the revolution, Varga, then thirty-one years of age, was elected Vice Lord Lieutenant of Torontál; and after the establishment of Kossuth's provisional government he was made Commissioner with full power to act in his county. He was also appointed judge of a special tribunal, having authority in cases of treason, and from his decrees in this court there was no appeal.[25]

In the southern part of Torontál were a great many Servians who were always more or less unfriendly to the Hungarians; and at the time of the revolution they were incited by the Austrians to insurrection and encouraged to commit the foulest murders and other crimes. The situation in which the young attorney was placed was, therefore, a difficult one, and it proved his resourcefulness and capability.

On investigation, Varga found that a priest of the Greek Church was the agent mainly responsible for the atrocities in Torontál, and summoned him before the court. The priest plead the sanctity of his office, and claimed that he

[25] From an autobiographical sketch written by Mr. Varga a few months before his death.

could only be called to account by his bishop. This plea was in accordance with the law, and Judge Varga ruled that the priest could not be tried at civil law until his bishop had relinquished jurisdiction over him. The bishop, however, flatly refused to appear in court, whereupon Varga remarked that the "mountain could not go to Mahommet, therefore Mahommet must come to the mountain." Calling his gendarmes, he ordered them to politely summon the bishop, but to take with them a large tarpaulin, and immediately upon delivering the summons to throw the tarpaulin over the bishop in his chair, and bring him carefully and safely, but surely, into court. The gendarmes obeyed the order to the letter. When the bishop, tarpaulin, and chair were brought into court, the judge, with all deference explained the evidence that had been found against the priest, and directed that the bishop and priest be conducted to a private room for a brief consultation. Accordingly the gendarmes conveyed the bishop in his chair to the judge's private office, and at the end of fifteen minutes brought him again into court. Judge Varga then gravely argued that as all the evidence in the case had been submitted to the bishop, and as he had been given every opportunity to verify the charges, the court felt assured that the bishop would certainly do what was right. Therefore, the court would order the clerk to enter on record the bishop's renunciation of jurisdiction over the priest, and would further order that the trial proceed. The priest was speedily convicted, and was executed at sunrise the next morning. As a result, the atrocities in Torontál were promptly discontinued.[26]

When Görgei surrendered, Varga was at Világos, only a few miles away, and with other prominent Hungarians was taken prisoner by the Russian officers, but escaped three

[26] Reminiscences related by Mr. E. J. Hainer, who was an intimate friend of Varga.

days later and began a long and anxious pilgrimage. Adopting various disguises, he wandered through Hungary for eleven months before he was able, with a forged passport, to leave the country. He spent a year in Hamburg, Altoona, and London, and then, as there was no favorable development in Hungarian affairs, he decided to follow his friend Madarász to New Buda. Varga's farming experience in Decatur County, which was moderately successful, covered a period of twenty years, or until 1871, when he was elected treasurer of the county and removed to Leon, the county-seat. In the meantime, he had married one of the young women of New Buda. Perhaps no member of the New Buda community became so thoroughly an American citizen as did Francis Varga. True to the highest ideals of manhood, he yielded unfailing loyalty to his country, his home, and his religion. So fearless was his patriotism, and so sincere and consistent his Christianity that in later years it was truthfully said that his whole life was a continuous lesson in manliness.

For more than thirty years he was prominent in local politics. He had many bitter opponents, for he was a strong partisan; and yet, so beyond question were his capabilities, his faithfulness, and his devotion to public welfare that no charge of political trickery was ever sustained against him. Only on one occasion was such a charge brought, and then, in his characteristically dramatic way, he routed his accusers.

Just before his election as county treasurer, his predecessor, who was of the opposite political party, had defaulted. Moreover, the law at that time prohibited the treasurers from loaning the county funds in any way whatsoever, but it had been the custom of many treasurers to make loans surreptitiously and pocket the interest. When Mr. Varga was elected he worked for the repeal of this law, and then, as he did not consider the vault in his

office a safe place in which to keep the money, he openly deposited it with reliable banks, making a good bargain for interest. This interest he used in paying the salaries of deputies and in defraying other county expenses. A few of his bitterest opponents, however, claimed that it was only a scheme to defraud the county.

While matters were in this condition, the town was startled at 3 o'clock one Sunday morning in the spring of 1877, by a terrific explosion. On hastening to the public square, the citizens found the courthouse in ruins. One of the walls enclosing the treasurer's office had been blown away by a charge of powder. This was a golden opportunity for Mr. Varga's opponents. Immediately the report was started that he had wrecked the courthouse and had absconded with the funds. By daybreak the report had reached the nearby towns. A son of one of the New Buda patriots was principal of the school in a village eight miles away. Immediately upon hearing the rumor regarding Mr. Varga, he saddled his horse, and with characteristic Magyar loyalty rode in hot haste to the county seat to champion the cause of his father's friend. Meanwhile, a crowd had gathered in the square, some accusing the treasurer, others defending him. When the wreckage was cleared away, the safe was found uninjured, but before displaying its contents, Mr. Varga addressed the crowd, telling them just how he had handled the county funds, and explaining that had the culprits succeeded in opening the safe they could not have robbed the county. He then read from the ledger the amount of money credited to each fund, and produced from the safe a certificate of deposit for each amount. Singling out the man who had been foremost in circulating the false reports, Mr. Varga called him forward and repeated the charges the man had made; and, shaking his long index finger under the man's nose, he shouted to the crowd: "That d—n rascal, himself, would do it." He then compelled the

man in the presence of the crowd to admit that the certificates of deposit tallied with the amounts shown on the ledger. By this time the sentiment of the crowd was overwhelmingly in Varga's favor, and if he had not interfered, his accusers would have been roughly handled.[27]

In all his years as a western farmer and as a leader in county politics, Mr. Varga never lost his courtliness of manner, nor the marks of his scholarly training and inheritance. During the greater part of his thirty-years residence in Leon he was a member of the school board and a frequent visitor of the schools. His especial interest was in the history, political economy, civics, and Latin classes. Generations of high school students will always remember the courtly old gentleman with white hair and beard and brilliant black eyes, who recited Virgil from memory and with a rhythm unimagined by them, and who always had a gracious compliment for their every effort.

In 1896, after forty-five years of exile, Mr. Varga and his son Stephen visited Hungary. Nearly all of those who had taken part in the revolution were either dead or still in exile. One, however, they found in Hungary. In a little town they passed the house where Görgei lived, shunned by all his people. Young Varga was eager to see the great military genius, but his father had not forgiven the man who had surrendered Hungary to the Russians; and his son, in deference to his father's wishes, did not insist upon making the visit.

On leaving Hungary, Mr. Varga took with him a small package of the soil. Six years later, when he died at the age of more than four score years, this soil from his beloved Hungary was placed beneath his head, with the inscription: "A handful of native soil to quiet the heart's longing."

[27] Reminiscences related by Mr. E. J. Hainer, who accompanied Mr. Varga to the public square and assisted him in opening the safe.

The men who wrecked the building were arrested later and convicted.

GEORGE POMUTZ

The New Buda community contained a few members who were not content with the slow gains from agriculture. Even in the early fifties they became infected with the germ of "frenzied finance", and undertook to exploit a greater New Buda than Count Ujházy's most hopeful dreams had ever pictured. Chief among these enterprising spirits was George Pomutz.

Younger than the majority of the refugees, he had taken only a minor part in Hungarian affairs, and his flight to America had probably not been a matter of life and death as had been that of Madarász and Varga, but was doubtless more in the nature of an adventure, or at most, a means of escaping a brief punishment. He was one of the first settlers in New Buda, but in 1853 went with Ujházy to San Antonio, Texas. He returned a year or so later, however, and with his "major domo", Fakich, occupied Ujházy's log "castle". In appearance he was unlike the typical dark-skinned, black-haired Magyars. He is described as a tall blond with full beard and mustachios, and light, wavy hair. His bearing was distinctly military; and when mounted upon his white mare, "Highland Mary", he was an unusually striking figure. Besides his native language, he spoke French, German, and English fluently and with but slight accent; he quoted Byron freely and was evidently familiar with Burns. He had a decided charm of speech and manner, as many of the settlers had good cause to remember, for he occasionally used this gift to his own advantage and to their detriment, and was consequently unpopular with his compatriots.[28] In the unwritten annals of the settlement there are many stories of his sharp dealings with his neighbors, his skill in negotiating loans from

[28] From a sketch prepared for the Decatur County Historical Society by Mr. G. P. Arnold of Garden Grove, Iowa, based on his own recollections of Pomutz.

them, and his plausible schemes for inducing them to make investments from which he received all the returns.

But his aspiring nature was not content with practicing upon the New Buda community. With the aid of a draughtsman in the settlement, Drahos by name, he prepared a most attractive map of the "City of New Buda", showing Boehm University and Kossuth Platz, and College Square, together with libraries, parks, and avenues, on which he bestowed elaborate foreign names. It mattered nothing that the site of all this splendor was virgin prairie, and that the New Buda shown on the authentic maps of Iowa was only a rural post-office. So winning was the manner and so convincing was the speech of the promoter that in St. Louis and in Hoboken he sold and traded his city lots, and induced several German families to move to Decatur County in search of the fabulous City of New Buda. These exaggerated descriptions of New Buda gained a wide circulation; and even experienced historians were evidently misled by them, for in a history of Iowa published as late as 1876, New Buda is described as a "town" founded by Hungarian exiles. "One of its streets", the historian adds, "is denominated Magyar street, and the centre of the town is known as Kossuth Square."[29]

The outbreak of the Civil War interrupted Pomutz's city development enterprises. He was a born soldier, and he promptly responded to the call to arms. He was Adjutant and later Lieutenant Colonel of the 15th Regiment of Iowa Infantry. His war record was a brilliant one. He distinguished himself at Pittsburg Landing, the first action in which he participated, and later at Corinth and in other engagements. In an account of the services of his regiment, he is referred to as "a highly accomplished officer," who "rendered efficient aid as assistant adjutant general, and at

[29] Tuttle and Durrie's *History of Iowa*, p. 483.

the same time as engineer in connecting and strengthening forts, constructing short interior lines, etc."[30] His New Buda associates, perhaps not without prejudice, attributed his success to one Kompolti, a compatriot who accompanied him through the war, and who was regarded by the Magyar patriots as the best tactician of them all.

Soon after the close of the war, Pomutz, as a recognition of his military service, was appointed Consul General to Russia. According to newspaper reports, he was accustomed to gratify his taste for the spectacular by appearing at public functions in St. Petersburg in the full regimentals of an American Brigadier General. He fulfilled the duties of his position very creditably, however, and remained at his post until his death, which occurred in 1894. Unlike the majority of his associates who were Protestants, Pomutz was an adherent to the Greek Church.

After his death, papers were found among his belongings which indicated immense wealth in American lands, and holdings of great value in the "City of New Buda." Encouraged by these apparent evidences, his creditors in Hungary were stimulated to make inquiry in the hope of collecting some of the Consul General's debts. But New Buda had long before passed, with clear title, into other hands, and Kossuth Platz and University Place were meadow land and cornfield; and the late diplomat's title deeds were of the same legal status as his highly colored plats.

IGNACE HAINER

One November day in the year 1856, two black-bearded men with ox teams drove down the main street of Princeton, Missouri, and stopped at a hotel. They were Hungarians from New Buda, and had come to buy the winter's supply of groceries for the settlement.

30 Byers's *Iowa in War Times*, p. 504.

Princeton was unusually excited that November day. The District Court was in session; and with land title disputes, shooting affrays, and horse stealing cases, it was a busy tribunal in those early times. But more than this, it was also the time of the presidential election, and the hotels were crowded with politicians, jurymen, and attorneys.

The Hungarian ox-drivers, with their rough clothing and heavy boots bespattered with mud from their twenty-mile walk, hoped to find a corner in the dining-room where they might eat their dinner unnoticed. But in those days, a Hungarian refugee was almost certain to be a guest of honor wherever he went, and the landlord insisted upon seating the New Buda men at the table with the presiding judge. This official immediately entered into conversation with the guests, and soon learned that one of them not only spoke English fluently, but German and French as well, and was familiar with the classics of both languages. Before leaving the table, the Judge, who was also one of the regents of the University of Missouri, remarked to this man: "The chair of modern languages in our University is vacant; will you accept it?"

The man to whom this unexpected offer was made, and who soon thereafter received the suggested appointment, was Ignace Hainer. He was a Magyar of gentle birth, had received a liberal education, and had been admitted to the bar in his native country. Between those college days in Hungary and the November morning when he drove his ox-team into Princeton, there lay a period of exciting experiences. At the time when Hainer was admitted to the bar, Kossuth was already the idol of young Hungary. He had tried to show clearly to his countrymen the method of Austria's increasing oppression by publishing a periodical called *The Report of the Diet,* which contained the speeches and proceedings of the national assembly of Hungary. When these printed reports were condemned by the Aus-

trian censors of the press, he had, with the assistance of copyists, circulated the proceedings of the Diet in manuscript form.[31] He had been imprisoned and liberated again, and when Ignace Hainer entered upon his professional career, Kossuth through his paper, *The Pesti Hirlap,* was thundering his denunciations of Austria's perjured monarchs, and calling upon Hungary to defend her constitutional liberties.

Hainer soon became one of Kossuth's most enthusiastic assistants in publishing and circulating the *Hirlap,* and naturally came into prominence when the revolution began. In 1848 he was chosen a member of the staff of General Count Casimir Batthyányi, a representative of an old and distinguished family of Hungarian nobility. Later Hainer was appointed Adjutant General under Batthyányi, and when Batthyányi was made Secretary of State under the Kossuth provisional government, Hainer was appointed his secretary. When the Hungarian cause was lost, Batthyányi escaped to France, and many of Hainer's associates were either imprisoned in the fortresses of Hungary or condemned to death, but by reason of a singular clerical error, he escaped punishment. After the close of the war, he resumed the practice of law until 1854, when a royal edict decreed that all court pleadings both oral and written should, thereafter, be made in German instead of in Latin. Though thoroughly familiar with the German language, Hainer became indignant at this arbitrary ruling, gave up his law practice and came to America. He located in Chicago, where he met with financial reverses, and during the following year he set out with his family to join his countrymen at New Buda.

He had selected his land, had built his log cabin, and had entered upon his hitherto untried career as a farmer when

[31] De Puy's *Kossuth and his Generals,* pp. 135, 136.

he was called to the more congenial life at Columbia, Missouri. He retained his position at the University for four years, or until the summer of 1860, when he and several other professors were dismissed on account of their anti-slavery sentiments. A few months later, the call of 1861 took the young men from college halls to southern battle-fields, and for four years the University was practically closed.

Mr. Hainer then returned to his farm, but the New Buda of Count Ujházy's time was passing away. He replaced his log cabin by a typical Iowa farm-house, and there he spent the greater part of the remaining thirty years of his life, reading his beloved Latin and modern classics and educating his children, four of whom were graduates of the Iowa Agricultural College at Ames. His sons developed the father's preference for the law. One was admitted to the bar in Nebraska, and from 1893 to 1897 was a representative in Congress from that State. Another was one of the early settlers of Oklahoma and was for several years a federal judge of the Territory. The third son was for several years professor of physics at Ames, but later was admitted to the bar in St. Louis. Mr. Hainer's youngest daughter was graduated from Ames and afterwards became the wife of one of the professors in that institution.

Mr. Hainer visited Hungary and Europe twice, once in 1880 and again in 1885. Although he took no active part in politics, he was often elected to minor official positions, and was for several years postmaster at New Buda.

STEPHEN RADNICH

Among the Austrian prisoners of war in the fall of 1849 was a boy less than eighteen years of age. He had come from one of the Danube counties, and had served in the heavy artillery under Hungary's Polish ally, the famous General Bem. His two elder brothers were in prominent

army positions in different parts of the kingdom. The detachment to which this young man belonged had been captured by the Russians and delivered by them to the Austrians.

The prisoners were not guarded very rigorously, however, for one day the young man with six others escaped from the house where they were quartered. A company of infantry was marching down the street on its way to the District Court rooms to receive orders for rations. Mingling with the crowd in the street, the escaped prisoners succeeded in entering the court room unobserved. The judge, an unwilling servant of Austria, was an uncle of the young man from the Danube. When he could do so without attracting attention, the young man explained his situation to his uncle and asked for a passport for himself and his comrades. The uncle explained that he could not prepare a regular passport without danger of detection by persons who might be spying upon him. But the tie of blood was too strong to be ignored, even at Austria's command. Handing his nephew a blank form, the judge instructed him to insert his own name and the names of his comrades. This done, the judge signed the paper, and explained to his nephew that it had no legal value, but that it would doubtless be readily accepted by friendly guards and under-officers in the army, and that it might also serve to deceive ignorant sentinels.

Acting upon his uncle's advice, the young man and his friends waited until nightfall to make further efforts to escape. They started out just after sunset, and had almost reached the highway leading from the town to the open country when they were stopped by a sentinel who refused to look at their alleged passport, and probably could not have read it had he done so. Arguments and persuasions were alike unavailing. He was an Austrian sentinel and his

sympathies were with Austria. It was his duty to prevent any one from leaving the town, and it was evident that he proposed to discharge his duty. As a last resort, one of the patriots, a stalwart young fellow, sprang upon the sentinel, who at once shouted for help. The situation was serious. His outcry would soon have attracted the attention of a detachment of cavalry guarding that part of the town. A few moments' delay meant recapture and punishment for the young patriots. The penalty for trying to escape and for assaulting a sentinel would, no doubt, be death. It was war; the sentinel was their enemy; it was their life or his. They took the natural alternative. A few moments later they were on their way to the mountains, leaving behind them a sentinel asleep at his post, but no Austrian court martial would ever bring him to trial.

When the death of the sentinel was discovered, a detachment of cavalry was sent to recapture the fugitives. Perhaps the pursuit was not a very determined one. At any rate, the young men, hungry and ragged, succeeded in reaching the mountains, and were given food and shelter by the hardy, loyal mountaineers. Pushing over the mountains, they came to a stream across which was a bridge guarded by a detachment of Austrian cavalry. The fishermen along the banks dared not row the young men across. After a delay of two or three days, the fugitives decided upon a bold movement. Relying upon the fact that many officers as well as soldiers in the Austrian army were in sympathy with Hungary and had been impressed into the Austrian service, they determined to make an effort to cross the bridge. They reckoned well, so far as the first officer was concerned, for the guard at the bridge readily accepted the supposed passport. At that moment, however, a superior officer approached and demanded the passport. He sternly accused the young men of being fugitives, and con-

ducted them a little distance away for further examination. When alone with them his manner changed. He was a Hungarian who had been forced into the Austrian service. Briefly, but very explicitly, he instructed the young men how to reach a convenient town on their way to the Danube, and told them of a butcher to whom they might apply for help. Just as they were leaving, he slipped two silver pieces into the hand of the young man from the Danube.

With the friendly help of the butcher, whom they easily found, and by virtue of the extreme leniency of a Russian commander through whose lines they were obliged to pass, the fugitives escaped from immediate danger; and within one month after beginning his flight the young man from the Danube reached his uncle's home at Arcsen, one of the Danube towns. But escaping from a military prison and killing a sentinel were offenses which the Austrian government was not likely to pass over lightly. A cavalry company was stationed at Arcsen and the uncle's premises were under surveillance, so the nephew was obliged to keep himself concealed. At length, influential friends succeeded in securing for him a passport to America, and one day, evading the soldiers who were guarding his uncle's residence, he made his way to the river and boarded a passing barge. Danube bargemen were used to receiving such passengers, and this one accommodatingly hid the fugitive in his own quarters under the cargo of hay. A few weeks later, the young man arrived in Glasgow, and with twenty-four other refugees was given free passage to America by the Glasgow ship-owners.

This is the story told one summer day in the living room of a large, white farm-house, a few miles from the old New Buda settlement. It was told by a gentle-voiced old man whose shoulders were stooped with the weight of more than

eighty years; but his brown hair and beard were only slightly streaked with gray. His blue eyes were clear and bright, and they twinkled merrily as he related his adventure with the Austrian officer at the bridge, or described his hay-barge journey on the Danube. This was Stephen Radnich, the last survivor of the New Buda group of patriots.[32]

For eleven years after arriving in America he tried his fortunes in Little Rock, in Louisville, Kentucky, and in Davenport, Iowa; and then, in the latter part of 1861, joined his compatriots at New Buda. He entered his quarter-section of land and built his log cabin, to which, a year or so later, he brought his bride, the eldest daughter of Ignace Hainer. In a few years, the log cabin gave place to the white farm-house, and other land was added to the original quarter-section, for Stephen Radnich was one of the few successful farmers of the New Buda community. His wife (Laura Hainer) died leaving two little children, and a few years later he married the daughter of an American family.

For more than fifty years he occupied his homestead, living a quiet, prosperous life. There his children were born and have gone out, thorough American citizens, to establish homes of their own; and there, since these chapters were begun, he departed this life.

At one time and another, there were in the New Buda settlement probably thirty or forty of the exiled patriots, but those whose careers are sketched in the foregoing chapters, were the ones prominent in the history of the settlement, either by reason of the part they took in its establishment, or because of their long residence in its immediate vicinity. They are also representative types of the men, who, by the ill-fated revolution of 1848, were Hungary's loss and America's gain.

[32] The story as related above was told by Mr. Radnich to the writer of this paper.

AUSTRIAN FEAR OF HUNGARIAN EXILES

An ordinary American settlement in the early fifties was probably a matter of the least possible concern to an European autocrat, and certainly not one calculated to arouse his suspicions. But New Buda was not an ordinary settlement, and its founders, for a few years at least, were the source of no little anxiety to the Austrian government. Moreover, the friendly attitude of the United States did not tend to allay the fears of the court at Vienna; and as a result, an American tourist in the years immediately following the Hungarian revolution received, at best, but scanty welcome at the hands of Austrian officials. If he happened to admit having any knowledge of Count Ujházy or his settlement, the consequences, according to Charles Loring Brace's account of his own experiences, were likely to be extremely embarrassing.[33]

Soon after the Hungarian revolution, Mr. Brace visited Hungary for the purpose of obtaining, for publication, accurate information regarding the country, its people, and its institutions. One day in June, 1851, while dining with a Hungarian professor at a hotel in Gros Wardein, an Austrian military station in Hungary, Mr. Brace's host made a casual inquiry regarding "Ujházy and his Hungarian colony in America." Having no acquaintance with Ujházy, Mr. Brace could only reply in a general way that the colonists were in a good locality, but like all immigrants had to work pretty hard; and added that Count Ujházy was much respected in America.

As there were two strange men at the table, Mr. Brace was particularly guarded in his remarks, but his caution was of no avail. The two strangers, as he afterwards learned, were members of the Austrian secret police, and the following day Mr. Brace was arrested and formally

[33] Brace's *Hungary in 1851.*

accused of being an agent of Ujházy and other exiled patriots, and of coming to Hungary for the purpose of "spreading revolutionary movements". In vain he protested that he had never spoken to Ujházy, nor had any communication with him. He was imprisoned, and day after day was questioned regarding his "correspondence" and "agreement" with Ujházy. After thirty days of exceedingly disagreeable prison life, Mr. Brace was liberated, but only through the intervention of the American Chargé d'Affaires at Vienna.

Two years after Mr. Brace's unpleasant experience, another episode occurred which was even more closely connected with the New Buda settlement, and one which assumed the importance of an international affair.

About 1851, Martin Koszta, one of the patriots who had fled to Turkey to Kossuth, came to America, declared his intentions of becoming a citizen of the United States, and afterwards went to New Buda. In the meantime, he returned to Turkey to attend to some business matters of a purely personal nature. On June 28th, 1853, while waiting in Smyrna for an opportunity to sail for America, he was seized and taken on board an Austrian war vessel. The United States corvette, "St. Louis", happened at that time to be in the port at Smyrna, and the commander, Captain Ingraham, learning that Koszta was entitled to the protection of the United States, demanded his release. The Austrian commander refused. The contention between the two commanders, and also between the consuls of the two governments continued until July 2nd, when Captain Ingraham, learning that the Austrian commander was secretly arranging to send Koszta to Austria, peremptorily demanded his release by 4 o'clock that afternoon. The Austrian commander still refused, and both vessels cleared their decks for action; but actual hostilities were prevented

by the consuls of the two governments agreeing that Koszta should be delivered to the French consul, who consented to take charge of him, pending the adjustment of the affair between the government of the United States and that of Austria.

During the following August and September, a considerable amount of correspondence passed between the Vienna cabinet and the State Department at Washington. The Secretary of State defended the action of Captain Ingraham, and maintained Koszta's claim to the protection of the United States.[34] As a result, Koszta was released unconditionally on October 25th, and the same day took passage on an American steamer for Boston. The position taken by the United States in this case has been adhered to ever since, and the "Koszta Case" established a precedent in international law.

So intense was the feeling aroused in the United States by this incident that the *New York Tribune* declared that "regardless of his politics, had Capt. Ingraham sunk the Austrian vessel, he would have been the next president of the United States"; and the *Examiner* of September 3rd, commenting on this assertion, claimed that the *Tribune* had not exaggerated popular sentiment. The interest in the affair was so general that President Pierce in his annual message, on December 5th, 1853, gave a somewhat detailed account, closing with the statement that "He [Koszta] has been released, and is now in the United States."

LIFE OF THE EXILES AT NEW BUDA

While the Austrian emperor and his officers were suffering alarm at the mere mention of Ujházy's name, and while Martin Koszta was the subject of correspondence between the cabinets of the United States and Austria, the New Buda settlers in their log cabins were watching with keen interest

[34] Moore's *Digest of International Law*, Vol. III, contains this correspondence, together with a detailed account of the episode.

the affairs of nations. They were in constant correspondence with Kossuth, who for many years after the revolution, still cherished the hope of establishing a republican form of government in Hungary. To the last hour of their lives, the New Buda founders were patriots of Kossuth's type, and had Hungary again undertaken to realize his hopes, it is possible that their activities might have fully justified Austria's fears. But no such uprising occurred, and the exiles adapted themselves as best they could to conditions in America. A phase of their life in the settlement is described in personal letters written by a son of one of the patriots. Among other things, he says:

> Nearly all these Hungarians were educated, cultured men. They dearly loved the old classics and talked much of world politics and dreamed of Utopian conditions. Even in those early days when mails were very infrequent, they were subscribers to standard periodicals in both Europe and America. With the coming of the postman, supposedly once a week, they gathered and held many interesting conferences. These were usually had at the home of Col. George Pomutz [formerly Ujházy's log castle] who occupied what seemed a palatial mansion consisting of four rooms, each about twenty feet square, forming a row with doors opening between. The Colonel had a large globe, and also many maps which were displayed on the walls. In their discussions they paid great heed to the character of the peoples of the world, their religion, their customs, and traditions, and to the productions of the various countries.
>
> It was my good fortune to attend these conferences with my father, and though but a small boy, became greatly interested in the discussions. I recall distinctly that the correspondence between Secretary Chase and Mr. Madarász was gone over at these meetings and very fully discussed. These men also corresponded regularly with such men as Horace Greeley, Edward Everett, Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, Owen Lovejoy, and others who were in the fore front of public and advanced thought. To listen to their discussions was in itself a liberal education.[35]

[35] Personal letter written by Mr. E. J. Hainer of Lincoln, Nebraska.

As a permanent settlement, however, New Buda was not a success. Its founders, as a rule, were exceedingly impractical and lacked the qualities necessary for developing the resources of a new country. They were statesmen and scholars, but not pioneer farmers; and their crude attempts at agriculture, such as gathering their corn by leaving their teams outside the field, and carrying the corn in sacks and emptying it into the wagons, were sources of amusement to their American neighbors. The population of the settlement, never perhaps more than seventy-five persons, was always to some extent a shifting one, and gradually even those who acquired title to their land disposed of their holdings and removed to cities or towns or to other farming localities.

When the township organization in Decatur County was completed, the civil township in which the settlement was located was called New Buda; and this alone perpetuates the name, for the postoffice was discontinued many years ago, and no trace remains of the original settlement. Its founders one by one have passed away, but perhaps the spirit of their larger hopes hovered over the southern Iowa prairie; for with the passing of their little settlement another people, skilled in the ways of agriculture — a peculiar people with a genius for organization — came in to occupy a portion of the land of New Buda and its neighboring township. A few miles from the old New Buda postoffice they have built for themselves a town with broad streets, with banks, philanthropic institutions, and schools; with a college and a publishing house and a temple of strange architecture. In their own practical way, they have realized the dreams of Count Ujházy; but their story belongs to another chapter in the history of New Buda.

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