

tion. Today the leading Member of this "Big Four" is indubitably France. The fact that M. Barthou quite recently did just the opposite, directly inciting our neighbours to repudiate the idea of revision, proves only that those responsible for the direction of France's foreign policy are still suffering from spiritual infatuation. But in France too we see every day that clarity of perception is gradually gaining the upper hand; nor are we entitled to presume that that sagacious nation will continue for long to foster the ideas propounded by men like M. Barthou.

The fact that the interests of France and Hungary in respect of revision are absolutely identical, is — to use a popular phrase — "as plain as a pikestaff". It is surely the vital interest of France to keep us from subservience to that German "national" imperialism the earliest stage of development of which is regarded with such misgivings by the French. The only way to save us from falling victims to the renewed influence of Germanic predominance is that France should by means of a fair and equitable revision reconcile us with our neighbours, — that being naturally in the interests of Hungary too, seeing that our common sense tells us that our first business must be to bring about friendly relations with our immediate neighbours, if they make such a procedure morally possible. Consequently the interests of France are absolutely identical with the eminent interests of Hungary; and I cannot possibly believe that people in Paris would not

realise the fact if our Government and our diplomacy were to devote their whole energy to convincing the French of the truth of that fact. With this in mind I feel particularly delighted to hear that France and Italy propose to unite forces for the purpose of solving the European problems still awaiting a solution, — naturally with the co-operation of Great Britain. Mussolini I regard as a really great man of such a calibre that even in my dreams I could not presume to believe that he would, in the course of the great task to be accomplished jointly by Great Britain, France and Italy, forget to enforce the generous view to which he has always given expression in connection with the revision of the Treaty of Trianon. It would be a crime for anyone — particularly for any Hungarian — to even presume the opposite. In our present wretched condition it is directly re-assuring that France should desire in the future to co-operate with the Duce in the work of restoring the order of Europe; for this co-operation offers a far greater likelihood of an understanding of the Hungarian attitude than might be expected in the event of France following her own devices — or rather (indirectly) those of our neighbours. It is absurd even to imagine that Mussolini proposes simply to recant all he has said respecting the Hungarian claim to revision. And the fact that Great Britain will also be a member of the combine, must enhance our hopes and our trust.

A FEW LINKS FROM THE CHAIN OF SUFFERINGS OF THE MAGYAR MINORITY IN RUMANIA

by

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Quite recently, in an interview given to a representative of the "Petit Parisien" in Paris, Titulescu, the Rumanian Foreign Minister, made the following statement: "In Rumania the minorities enjoy the fullest rights. Absolute equality prevails there in religious, educational and cultural matters. In Rumania every citizen possesses the same rights, and, in respect of rights and duties, whether the person in question is a Rumanian or member of a minority makes no difference at all".

Is this really true? Or is this merely dust thrown in the eyes of the world? We do not wish to prejudice the reader in his judgment on this matter; and for that reason we shall confine ourselves to extracting a few links from the long chain composed of the persecution and oppression — already becoming institutional — to which the Magyar minority of Rumania is being subjected and of the cases of unequal treatment manifested in dealings with that minority. We shall not include all the happenings of the fifteen years that have elapsed since the change of suzerainty, but shall restrict ourselves to giving a section of the months of July and August, 1934,

— of merely two months. Even then our readers will be able to obtain an idea of the policy of Rumania towards the Magyar minority over almost half a year, if they consult the information given on pages 41 ff. of our previous issue (Nos. 1—3), which afford an exhaustive survey of the minority happenings in Rumania between April and June of the current year.

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"In Rumania the minorities enjoy the fullest rights" — thus runs the statement made by Titulescu, the Foreign Minister of Rumania. A glance at the original of this reflected image will immediately reveal a few striking data relating to the *protection of the life and liberty of the minorities in Rumania.*

The *brutalities committed by the gendarmes* which have so far also been in evidence continued during the months of July and August too to seriously afflict the Magyar inhabitants. Of the cases occurring we would confine ourselves to just a few. 1. The brutality shown by the gendarmes in the village of Ujkisoda in Temes County, where Jiles Pavel, sergeant of gendarmes, gravely injured the person of

George Kálmán, a labourer 22 years of age, one of whose teeth was knocked out, while he has become deaf of one ear; indeed, the brutal sergeant actually tore out a good lot of his hair ("Brassó Lapok", August 9th., 1934: Vol. XI., No. 178). 2. We may refer also to the case of Mrs. Alexander Ambrus, a woman of 55 living at Gyergyócsomafalva, Csik County, who suffered severe injuries as the consequence of an assault by gendarmes ("Keleti Ujság" No. 178, August 9th., 1934). 3. The most horrifying case was that of the gendarme brutality in the Visó Valley (Máramaros County), where a sergeant of gendarmes of the name of Haidu gave such a terrible beating to Peter Klausz, bricklayer, — who had been fishing without permission in the river Visó —, that "there is little hope of his recovery" ("Keleti Ujság", No. 177, August 8th.).

"My house is my castle" — this principle was subjected to a grave outrage recently by the measure taken by the police authorities of Marosvásárhely ordaining that no one may receive a guest in his house without having previously obtained permission to do so ("Reggeli Ujság", No. 181, August 12th., 1934).

In the village of Mezőtelegd (Bihar County) the gendarmes arrested 40 members of the local Reformed Women's Association on the ground that at a soirée they had pinned the badge of the Association on their dresses; they were only set free after several hours of confinement ("Keleti Ujság", No. 178, August 9th., 1934).

To illustrate the extent to which the *principle of the inviolability of property* is asserted in dealings with the Magyar minority of Rumania, it will suffice to refer to the fact that, despite the right of ownership having been adjudged to the Order by the courts of law and by decision of the Holy See, the building of the Minorite gymnasium (grammar school) at Szilágysomlyó has by ministerial ordinance been entered in the land register in favour of the State ("Ellenzék", No. 149, July 5th., 1934.). In Transylvania the civil law in force there provides that the right of ownership of landed property can be claimed only by registration in the land registers, no one being acknowledged as owner whose name is not recorded as such in those registers. A similar fate has befallen the ancient building of the gymnasium belonging to the Roman Catholic Bishop of Nagyvárad, the right of ownership of which — as in the case of the Szilágysomlyó gymnasium — has been transferred to the State by ministerial ordinance ("Esti Lap", No. 150, July 6th., 1934). In both cases property of the value of several million lei is concerned. Quite recently the *Piarist Order* was deprived without compensation of its *landed property in Temesvár representing a value of 30 million lei*, no account being taken of the Rumanian Constitution or of the civil law provisions at present in force. On the site thus confiscated are the buildings of the Piarist religious house and the lyceum. The site in question was acquired by the Piarist Order as far back as 1911, under a contract concluded with the corporation of Temesvár in re exchange of property. By one-sided application of the representations of the corporation of Temesvár — and without the interested Piarist Order being given a hearing — the land registry authorities deprived the Order of the right of ownership on the ground that at the time when the contract was signed (1911) the Order was not a body corporate

(artificial person) and therefore was not entitled to hold property — though of course the Order has been an artificial person for ages. The finding is particularly illegal in view of the fact that the real estate surrendered by the Piarists under the exchange contract signed in 1911 has not been returned to the possession of the Piarists. (See "Erdélyi Hirlap", August 8th., 1934, "Aradi Közlöny", No. 176, August 10th., 1934, "Déli Hirlap" and "Temesvári Hirlap", No. 175, August 10th., 1934).

The "fullness" of the "rights enjoyed by the minorities" is shown very clearly by the measures introduced during the last two months in respect of the *use of minority languages*. In Nagyvárad — where the mother tongue of the vast majority of the inhabitants is Magyar — the Rumanian-Magyar inscriptions (i. e. inscriptions in two languages) have been removed from the town-hall on the ground that it behoves citizens belonging to minorities to learn Rumanian ("Brassói Lapok", No. 149, July 6th., 1934); the revenue officers have been forbidden to use Magyar when treating with tax-payers, while even the granting of information drafted in Magyar is forbidden ("Magyar Ujság", No. 148, July 4th., 1934); the chief constable of the county has ordained that the Magyar names should be removed from the tablet in memory of War heroes in the cemetery at Szederjes (Udvarhely County), though the whole population of the village is Magyar, as were also all the heroes whose names were to be found on the tablet ("Keleti Ujság", No. 174, August 4th., 1934). In one of the regiments stationed in the town of Galati in the Regat (Rumania proper) — a regiment in which Magyars too are serving — the Magyar soldiers are forbidden to use their native tongue when off duty. Nor may they write letters home in Magyar; for if they do so, they are severely punished. Serious penalties are also inflicted on those who receive Magyar letters from home ("Brassói Lapok", No. 180, August 11th., 1934). The use of the mother tongue of the Magyars is restricted by legal measure (the Act dealing with the protection of national labour dated July 16th., 1934) in business life, undertakings required to keep books not being allowed to use any other language than Rumanian in their journals, ledgers and inventories. Suet a restriction of the use of mother tongues of nationalities was unknown in pre-War Hungary, the Rumanian banks and concerns having been alle to keep their books in Rumanian inthout let or hindrance.

Is it consistent with the principle of "equal rights" that the authorities should prevent the Magyar minority from arranging meetings or festivals? It is characteristic of the atmosphere prevailing in the land of the Szeklers that the under-sheriff of the county of Udvarhely refused the people of Székelyudvarhely permission to arrange a festival in honour of the memory of the Szekler Baron Blasius Orbán, but did not make his refusal public until the choirs and audience were about to take their seats. (*Keleti Ujság* No. 148, July 5th., 1934.) At Szászrégen the police prevented the members of the Womens' Alliance from forming a procession on their way to the Congress of the Reformed Church Womens' Alliance. (*Keleti Ujság* No. 154, July 12th., 1934.) At Lippa in the county of Arad Opincea, Police Commissioner, sent for all the leaders of the Magyar cultural societies, the conductors of

choirs, and the members of the Magyar Party, and threatened them with the rod if they dared to persist in their activities. (*Brassói Lapok* No. 153, July, 11th, 1934.) The Carpathian Society of Transylvania was forbidden by the authorities to hold the tourist gathering convened to meet at Balanbánya on August 18th, 19th and 20th, 1934, at which about 400 members had announced their intention to be present. (*Esti Lapok* No. 185, August 18th, 1934.) The police authorities also refused the Temesvár sections of the Magyar Party permission to hold a committee meeting. (*Brassói Lapok* August 25th, 1934.)

The true value of M. Titulescu's statement to the effect that in the spheres of religion, education and culture the fullest equality of rights prevails in Rumania, will be seen on a perusal of the governmental and administrative measures instituted in July and August of this year, as set forth below. Stress must be laid on the fact that these are no sporadic instances or exceptional measures, but the work of a system bent on putting hindrances in the way of the religious minorities. A decree issued by the Ministry of the Interior refused the Catholic Peoples' Alliance permission to hold the Catholic mass assembly convened to meet at Kézdivásárhely on September 1st and 2nd. No reasons were given, nor was any account taken of the fact that the programme of the proposed assembly was purely ecclesiastical and cultural in nature. It was only through the intervention of ecclesiastical circles that the authorities were brought to a better frame of mind. (*Erdélyi Lapok* No. 175, August 26th, 1934.) No signs of equality of rights in religious matters are visible in the order issued by the Rumanian Government by which the session of the *constitutional department of the Unitarian Church, the High Council of the Synod, was dissolved* at Székelykeresztur on September 2nd on the pretext that permission to hold the session had not been applied for. In terms of the legal statutes valid at present no special permission is needed in the case of assemblies of the constitutional departments of the Churches; though notice of the proposed meeting was given to the local authorities: and that they knew about it is amply proved by the fact that the local magistrates turned out to welcome the Rt. Rev. George Boros, Unitarian Bishop, who arrived to attend the Synod. The members of the Council waited as long as possible, hoping against hope that the order to dissolve would be revoked, but at last they were ordered by the gendarmerie to disperse. (*Keleti Ujság* September 4th, 1933.) Nor is there much sign of equality of rights in religious matters in the administrative order which in May put a stop to the building of the new Unitarian church in Brassó, in spite of the fact that the work of building had already begun. The order was the result of the action taken by the Chauvinist Rumanian press, which indignantly protested against the Magyars wishing to build a church in the middle of the town and severely criticized the mayor elected by the previous régime for presenting a municipal site to the Unitarian Church. That order has not yet been revoked, although M. Lepadatu, Rumanian Minister of Education, gave Dr. Joy, an American Unitarian Minister, at the time of his visit to Rumania, a promise in writing to the effect that the matter would be settled equitably. Report has

it that under the title of an "equitable settlement" the town of Brassó, acting on instructions from the Minister of Education, will invalidate the donation of the site. (*Brassói Lapok* August 22nd, 1934.) To complete the picture attention must be drawn to the latest ordinance of the Minister of Education in terms of which *religious instruction in State schools must be given in Rumanian*. Previously, pupils belonging to the minorities had been allowed to learn the fundamental principles of religion in their own mother tongue, even in State schools; but the Government has made this impossible in the school year now beginning. The ordinance was sent to all the minority denominational authorities by the education inspectors. (No. 30.239 ex 1934.)

The assertion that *equality of rights in educational and cultural matters exists in Rumania, is refuted by facts*. Innumerable intricate ordinances hamper the freedom of the schools maintained by the minority Churches; indeed, the Rumanian Government does its best to ruin them altogether. On August 19th the Magyar press throughout the length and breadth of Rumania published full details of the recent *withdrawal of the licence of the Arad Roman Catholic Lyceum*. The order, which was issued by the head inspector's office and bore the number 7439 ex 1934, states as the reason for this step that when in 1931 the Prime Minister, M. Jorga, gave back the licence to the school he did so without observing the necessary legal formalities. This is the third time the licence has been withdrawn. In default of this licence the students cannot be examined by their own teachers, but must appear before a committee of State school teachers, which, besides adding to their expenses, means that they cannot have certificates from the school they attended. In effect it means the ruin of an educational institute. *So far as cultural matters are concerned* the boasted equality takes on quite another aspect in the light of the governmental measures which prevented the Cluj Hungarian Choir from giving concerts abroad. By delaying the granting of a collective passport till the very last minute and then refusing it altogether, the authorities made it impossible for the Choir to sing in Geneva, simply because the idea that the Transylvanian Magyars should display their art in the town where the League of Nations has its headquarters, was not pleasing to over-zealous nationalist circles. (*Keleti Ujság* No. 182, August 13th, 1934, and *Brassói Lapok* No. 182, August 13th, 1934.)

Mention must also be made of one or two other cases that throw light upon M. Titulescu's statement that "every Rumanian citizen" enjoys equal rights; "so far as rights and duties are concerned there is no difference between Rumanians and the minorities". This statement implies that *all are equally entitled to official posts, equally entitled to pursue their professions and trades, and that all must bear an equal share of the burden of taxation*. In reality, however, we find that the Magyar minority in Rumania is being exposed to a cruel and systematic attack the object of which is to deprive Magyar public employees of their means of livelihood and fill every place in any way connected with the public service with men belonging to the national majority. An excellent means to this end is provided by the institution of *language tests*. For years back minority officials — especially Magyars

— have been harassed by the worry of these language tests, but this year things have reached a climax, the institution of language examinations having developed into an actual crusade against the Magyar minority civil servants. On the pretext that their knowledge of the official language of the country was inadequate, the Magyar employees of the C. F. R. (Rumanian State Railways) were again subjected to an examination in Rumanian in the spring of this year, at which from 60 to 70 per cent. of them failed. Those who failed were handed their dismissal dating from 1st September without any pensions or compensation. The army of several thousands of Magyar railway employees thus thrust into the direst distress will be reinforced by the victims of the recent language examination which the minority employees of the Post Office and Telegraph Service were forced to undergo on July 15th, the sad results of which have not yet been made public. In the first fortnight of August Magyar secondary and elementary school teachers and the teachers of infant schools had again to pass an examination, not only in Rumanian, but also in political science, sociology and economics. The final results of their language examination are unknown, for M. Anghelescu has reserved the right to decide himself. There is no doubt, however, that the Magyar teachers who failed in Rumanian will be ruthlessly dismissed and that this measure of

the Rumanian Government will be instrumental in adding thousands to the crowded ranks of the Magyars who have been plunged into poverty. Treatment of this sort was unknown in pre-war Hungary, where quite a large number of civil servants were recruited from the minorities. In 1900 9% and in 1910 6% of the railway as well as of the Post Office employees in Hungary could not speak the official language of the country. The railways had 4636 minority employees belonging to the lower categories in 1900, and 5366 in 1910, who could not speak Magyar, while the number of Post Office minority employees with no knowledge of that language was 683 in 1900 and 769 in 1910. On the educational staff, in 1890, there were 1994 teachers who could not speak Magyar, 223 of these belonging to Transylvania. In 1900, 802 teachers in the 15 Transylvanian counties could not speak the official language of the country. Most of them were Rumanians. The Hungarian State nevertheless never thought of subjecting the railway and Post Office employees and the teachers who could not speak Magyar to a language test, or of dismissing them from the civil service.

This is what M. Titulescu's statements look like when held up to the mirror of facts. The reader may safely be left to judge whether the mirror shows a true picture or a distorted one.

COUNT STEPHEN BETHLEN'S ARTICLE ON THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

"**S**ituation of Hungary on the Eve of a Political Rapprochement between France and Italy", — this is the title of an article by Count Stephen Bethlen published in the September 8th. issue of the "Pesti Napló" which to a certain extent is of historical importance and an event in the political life, not only of Hungary, but also of the whole of Central Europe.

First of all Count Bethlen shows that the development of the present international situation in Europe is being decisively influenced by two factors — the endeavour of the principal usufructuaries benefiting by the Treaties of Peace to institutionally ensure the new order created by the Great War against all eventualities, and on the other hand the inner political events in Austria, which threaten to disturb the status quo of the Danube basin. The first of these tendencies has been given fresh impulse by the failure of the Disarmament Conference and by the decision of Germany to leave the League of Nations, as also by her military preparations. Today France feels more impelled than ever to weld into a powerful alliance those countries which are threatened by the re-vengeful endeavours of either of the vanquished States. Count Bethlen reviews in succession the steps taken by France for the purpose of bringing such a block into existence — from the establishment of the Little Entente through the Rhine Locarno Treaty and the Balkan Pact right down to the proposed creation of an Eastern Locarno. — down to that Eastern Locarno the objects of which are considerably more far-reaching than those embraced in the previous agreement of the kind, it being proposed that the Contracting States should guarantee reciprocal military assistance in the event of either of them being attacked by any European State. Count Bethlen believes that this Eastern Locarno is merely a cloak to disguise a new Franco-Russian Entente aimed principally against Germany. The search-

light concentrated on international politics reveals the incipience also of a Mediterranean Locarno still wrapped in obscurity, — the only reason why this agreement cannot be spoken of as yet too seriously being that there are still important points of dispute between France and Italy.

Bethlen then shows that France's system of alliances ensures those States which have combined to maintain the "orthodox" status quo — for the moment at least an inconceivable power and predominance in Europe — a hegemony not possessed by any Continental combination of States since the days of the Holy Alliance.

We Hungarians must make no mistake about this: and Count Bethlen reminds us of the ruthless campaign which this hegemony encourages our neighbours to carry on against those of our Magyar brethren who have been torn from us. This campaign of extermination is being carried on exclusively against the Magyar minorities; not against the German minorities, seeing that the uncertainty of the situation as between Austria and Germany warns those neighbours to be careful.

The former Premier's article then points out that Austria and Hungary — particularly the latter — occupy the position of corner-stones in the Danube valley. Should Austria come under the control of Germany economically and politically, not only would German influence become far more powerful in Hungary, but the value to France of the alliance of the Little Entente would also become very problematic.

"In that case it is to be expected" — continues Count Bethlen — "that Yugoslavia, for instance, will look to Germany for support against Italy, while Czecho-Slovakia will as a result of her "investment" prove incapable of action, and Rumania, left to her own resources, will not — with the unsettled question of Bessarabia threatening her from behind — venture to continue unaided an anti-German policy."