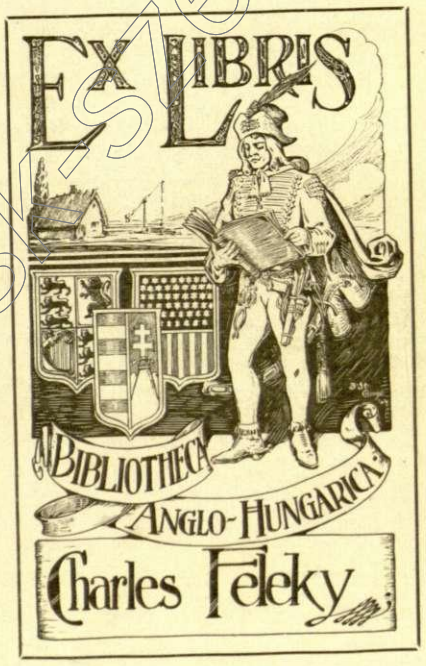
CHARLES FELEKY

AND HIS

UNPUBLISHED MANUSCRIPT



By

ANTOINETTE FELEKY

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To Rev. D. Vasvary
a great friend
Antoinette Feleky

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Charles Feleky from a painting
by Willy Pogany.

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Charles Feleky and his Books

It was nearly forty years ago that Charles Feleky, a musical director of Hungarian birth, made one of his stops in Pittsburgh while touring the United States with the Ben Hur Co. They were playing the musical melodrama based on Lew Wallace's well known book, with music written by an American composer, Edgar Stillman Kelley. Few know that Ben Hur was the most successful play ever given on the American stage. When Ben Hur would play in the large cities, the people from the surrounding towns would buy tickets long in advance and make a holiday of the event. Few also know the labor and patience which Charles Feleky put into his work to make the play a success. This was acknowledged by the composer as well as the producers of the play. Few also know that in his leisure hours he instructed the musicians in his orchestra, teaching them advanced harmony without remuneration.

It was also Charles Feleky, who for the first time in the history of the American stage engaged the people of his chorus from the ranks of ambitious students of the opera and singers with voices, rather than from the regular ranks who were engaged for their youth, form, and beauty, giving little attention to their musical ability. Voices were what he needed for his difficult chorus music which was written in the fugue form. It was the music which helped so much in making

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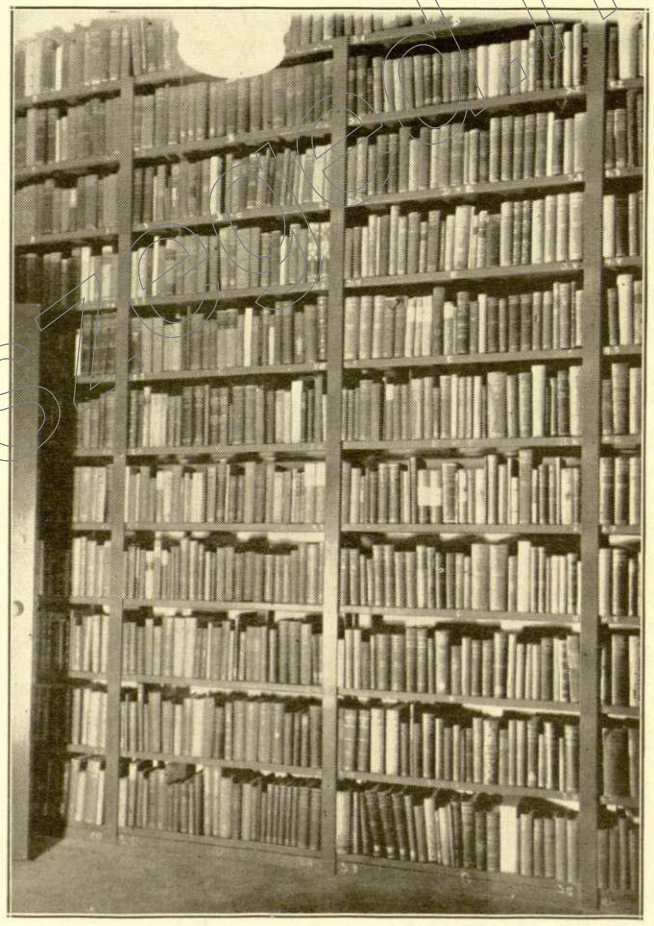
the musical melodrama such a success. Naturally, as a musical conductor he interpreted the music of the composer. Later we will find that he was also the interpreter of "Intellectual and Spiritual Hungary," his native land, where he received his education, and was not only the youngest but the best pupil in his class.

Feleky seized every opportunity to throw his full support behind any artist, dramatist, author, or scientist who showed ability in his chosen field of work. It is interesting to note that it was Charles Feleky who gave Lajos Serly, a well known Hungarian composer, his first opportunity to work in the musical field in America. Whenever he heard of any Hungarian artist, he hastened to rally his full support to his service.

It is also worthy of note that he was associated with Klaw and Erlanger for eleven years, conducting the music for Ben Hur and Prince of India. He was associated with Martin Beck for twenty-two years and during his management of the Martin Beck Theatre was affiliated with the Theatre Guild. He conducted the music of a play for Arthur Hopkins. At the time he associated himself with Martin Beck he was offered a position to conduct a musical play by one of our foremost producers, Henry Savage. It was very fortunate that he did decide to go with Martin Beck, for it was he who gave him enough leisure time to work on his great labor of love.

Let us return to Charles Feleky's stop in Pittsburgh nearly forty years ago. One day while walking along one of its streets he stopped before a quaint antique shop to look at a book that attracted his attention. It was about Louis Kossuth, the illustrious hero of his native land. He entered the shop and bought the



A section of the "Feleky Collection" in the Hungarian Reference Library, 19 West 44th Street, New York City

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book. From that one volume sprang the famous Feleky Library, the most valuable collection of books, pamphlets, and newspapers on Hungary and Hungarians written in English that exists in the world. Writing of the incident Arpad Pasztor has said: "Soon another book took its place beside the Kossuth book, and then a third, and thus an accidental shopping led to a decided interest, the interest to collecting, the collecting to a passion, and the passion created a great library without equal; the traveling conductor became the greatest scientist in Hungarian-English-American relationship, to whom college professors came for information."

After a time all the book dealers of the United States, England, Ireland, Canada, British Africa, Australia, and India came to know of Mr. Feleky's great interest in collecting, and as soon as they acquired an English book pertaining to Hungary or books written in English by Hungarians, they immediately got in touch with him. So, over a period of years, the library became one which could not be surpassed, for it is a unique one that has not its like in the world. It contains all books, including translations, relative to Hungary, written in English since the year 1562, as well as innumerable periodicals and pamphlets. One of its most valuable possessions is the oldest British newspaper in existence . . . an early issue of the Weekly News (1620-21) in which a long article appears on Gabor Bethlen. Many English and American libraries and museums have made requests for photostats of it.

Another noteworthy feature is the collection of volumes in which more than ten thousand magazine articles are bound together, all relating to Hungary or its people, and published in English in more than eight hundred periodicals. One cannot write about

Hungary or the Hungarians unless the rest of the world is mentioned. There is absolutely no such thing as an Isolated Nation. Hence the library is a history of the world or civilization. It, however, is a specialized library of Central Europe which includes Hungary, Austria, Germany, Russia, Czechoslovakia, Jugoslavia, Roumania. Also included are: The British Empire, America, Asia, Central America, and so forth. An inexhaustible wealth of material is contained therein, that could be tapped to furnish subject matter for hundreds of research scholars. The collection is virgin territory for those who are interested in exploring a field more or less neglected in the past.

The Charles Feleky library, consisting of over six thousand volumes, is now in the possession of the Hungarian National Museum, and housed in the Hungarian Reference Library at 19 West 44th Street in New York City, with Dr. Laszlo Telkes, a Harvard graduate, as the director. The collection, according to the Royal Consul General of Hungary, the Honorable George de Ghika, and the National Hungarian Museum, will henceforth be known as the Feleky Collection.

It is at the disposal of all scientists, students, journalists, etc., and will prove an invaluable aid in their research. It will serve the interchange of cultural values between the United States of America and Hungary. It will foster mutual knowledge and understanding of the cultural achievments of the two countries, acquainting each with the fine arts, music, drama, poetry, and other artists, scientific, and educational achievements of the two nations.

It is really remarkable what one single book can do for a person — influence him to great heights, great achievements, or mar his life. It depends upon the

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material which is contained in the book. What was in that book that could inspire one man to be so moved by the inspiring and burning words which he found embalmed in the work that it resulted in a great labor of love? If there was something so great to impress the mind and soul of one man, perhaps, if it is presented to others, it will inspire them also. Let us give a sample of the work on Kossuth. It is an abstract from the introduction written by Horace Greeley, former editor of the New York Tribune:

"The life of Louis Kossuth, truly portrayed, has for us many impressive lessons; among them that of 'the uses of Adversity' . . .

"Nor can we over-value the lesson taught us by Kossuth of the essential oneness of humanity, the unity of interests, and the consequent atrocity and madness of all wars waged for glory, for conquest, or the base phantom misnamed national honor. It has been the fashion of our Fourth-of-July orators for two generations to boast of ours as the only land in which true liberty is understood and appreciated— in which the golden means between anarchy and despotism has been attained— in which men could submit to be governed without ceasing to be free. But at the very height of our self-complacency a voice from the Far Pannonia of Roman history breaks upon our ears, which even our self-conceit cannot mistake for aught but a true and living utterance from the great heart of humanity. With the eloquence of Demosthenes and the sublime fervor of Isaiah, it utters burning words which call men of diverse creeds and races to the battle-field in which the rights of all are to be asserted, the usurpations of the crafty few, however entrenched and hoary, are to be overborne and stricken down. At first we

pause to wonder how this dweller by the far Danube... had learned those great truths which we have supposed discoveries of Jefferson and the special property of our own Republic; but, pausing, we discover . . . that he has not merely imitated our fathers in their immortal declaration, but that what with them were figures of rhetoric, or at least barren abstractions, are with him living practical verities. They *declared* all men rightfully born free and equal, but left one million of their own countrymen in slavery, in part to their individual selves; he grappled boldly with serfdom and abolished it; they *declared* all men by nature entitled to 'life, enjoying liberty, and pursuing happiness'; he apportioned lands without charge to the emancipated serfs, so as to insure them the means of supporting life, enjoying liberty, and pursuing happiness in the homes of their childhood. Who can rationally deny, therefore, that the great principale of equal rights was better understood and more faithfully regarded in Hungary in 1848 than it was in America in 1776? And how could the sincere lovers of human rights among us refuse to accord to Kossuth a welcome as hearty and as imposing as that paid, a quarter of a century earlier, to the great and good LaFayette? How could they hesitate to hang upon his eloquent words and catch inspiration for new struggles for freedom and humanity from the light of his kindling eye, the sound of his trumpet voice?

"Yes Kossuth has visited our shores—even as I write, his presence hallows and ennobles this chief city of the western world. He is here, though unconsciously, to rebuke the degeneracy and factiousness of our partisan squabbles, the hollowness of our boasted love of liberty, if we turn a deaf ear to the cry of the oppressed

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in either hemisphere, the sordidness of our common life and the meanness of its aims. He is here to arouse us to a consciousness of the majesty of our national position and the responsibilities it involves; to show us that we cannot safely sleep while despots are forging chains for the yet unfettered nations, as well as to bind more securely their present victims; that even if we have no regard for others' rights, we must assume an attitude of resistance to the expanding dominion of the Autocrat if only to secure our own. That 'God hath made of one blood all the nations that dwell on the face of the earth,'—that we should 'do to others as we would have them to do to us,' — that we have no right to repel solicitude as to the fate of tyranny's victims, by the callous question, 'Am I my brother's keeper?'— that the free nations of earth cannot afford, even were they base enough to wish, to leave each other to be assailed in succession by the banded might of despotism, and so overwhelmed and crushed— these are solemn truths which Governor Kossuth is among us to proclaim and enforce with the earnestness of a martyr's conviction and an exiled patriot's zeal . . .

"There can be no question as to the leadership of the general movement— the finger of history (may we not venture to say of Providence?) points unerringly to Louis Kossuth as marked out for that position. The prayers of millions are with him; the hopes of hundreds of millions rest upon him. His success will lift the crushing weight of despotism from off the breast of prostrate humanity, and bid her rise and walk forth erect, redeemed and disenthralled. Who cannot give *something* in aid of such a cause? Who can hesitate to pray and labor and hope for its success?

"But, even if, in the inscrutable Providence of God, the upheaval for which the millions are now pre-

paring be destined to temporary miscarriage and discomfiture, the great Hungarian will not, cannot fail. '*His* fame at least is secure.' His character has stood the ordeals of poverty, of sudden eminence, of courtly temptation, of bondage, of exaltation, of unbounded sway, of triumph, of deepest calamity, of exile, of strangers' adulation and of reviving hope, and has nobly overcome them all. He may be called to die in a palace or a dungeon, in his prime or in decrepitude, amid tears or execrations, but his place in history is already fixed and cannot be changed. Among orators, patriots, statesmen, exiles, he has, living or dead, no superior. His throne is in the heart, and he can only be discrowned by tearing that heart from the breast of humanity. Or, rather, let me close with the noble tribute of Lowell, Bard of Freedom, and after him say—

"A race of nobles may die out,
A royal line may leave no heir;
Wise Nature sets no guards about
Her pewter plate and wooden ware.

But they fail not, the kinglier breed
Who starry diadems attain;
To dungeon, axe, and stake succeed
Heirs of the old heroic strain.
The zeal of nature never cools,
Nor is she thwarted of her ends;
When gapped and dulled her cheaper tools,
Then she a saint and prophet spends.

Land of the Magyars! though it be
The tyrant may relink his chain,
Already thine the victory,
As the just Future measures gain.

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Thou hast succeeded; thou hast won
The deathly travail's amplest worth;
A nation's duty thou hast done,
Giving a hero to our earth.

And he, let come what will of woe,
Has saved the land he strove to save;
No Cossack hordes, no traitor's blow,
Can quench the voice shall haunt his grave.

"I Kossuth am; O Future, thou
That clear'st the just and blott'st the vile,
O'er this small dust in reverence bow,
Remembering what I was erewhile.

"I was the chosen trump where through
Our God sent forth awakening breath;
Came chains? Came death? The strain He blew
Sounds on, outliving chains and death.' "

(New York, February, 1852)

Yes, Louis Kossuth inspired Charles Feleky as he inspired not only the greatest minds of his era, but all the people of Europe and America who sympathized in a just cause and for the liberation of all people from despotic rule. Not only James Russell Lowell wrote a poem on Kossuth, but more than 150 poems were written by Americans and the British, among whom we may find Matthew Arnold, Algernon Swinburne, J. G. Whittier, Emerson, George Meredith, Gerald Massey, Walter Savage Landor, and many others, who were all inspired by his great patriotism, and his love of liberty, truth and justice. Hungary and Kossuth cannot be separated. We have here a poem written by W. M. W. Call which may be found in the Feleky collection—

KOSSUTH AND THE HUNGARIANS

Kossuth and the brave men of Hungary!
Champions ye are of freedom and of truth;
Like children of the world in her fresh youth,
Stand forth, stand forth, for all the earth to see!
A very ancient and a noble cause
Invites you, calls you, clothes you with new might.
Oh, doubly weaponed are you with the right,
Supported by the old majestic laws.
Now for all noble growth of mind and heart
The nations look to you; be strong and free,
And, with a fame that never shall depart,
Stand forth, stand forth, for all the earth to see!
O champions both of temple and of mart,
Kossuth and the brave men of Hungary!

Words as well as thoughts are things and Feleky found inspiring words in the books which he collected for so many years. It seems that even a president of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt, must have been greatly impressed by Kossuth's mission, for, in an address at a dinner given in his honor in 1899, while he was governor of New York, he states before a Hungarian-American audience, "There is nothing this country needs more than that there shall be put before its men and its future men — its boys, and its girls, too — the story of such lives as that of Kossuth..."

As the following poem shows, Americans of Kossuth's era were taught, in the schools, of his fight for Liberty, Democracy, and Truth.

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WELCOME TO KOSSUTH

By Malvina A. Wily

(*Pupil of the Normal School*)

We welcome thee, oh great Kossuth,
Our country's honoured guest—
Wronged victim of the tyrant's hate,
Bright hope of the oppressed.

When young Columbia felt thy touch
Upon her happy strand,
A sympathetic thrill went forth
That trembled through the land.

And as she listened to thy words
Of eloquence that burned,
Back to the dark and gloomy past
Her tearful eye she turned,

And bade remembrance summon forth
From dark oblivion's tomb,
The wrongs that bowed her spirit low
In slavery's night of gloom.

She saw her sons all bleeding lie
Upon the battle-plain,
And Freedom trembling 'neath the weight
Of tyranny's cursed chain.

But oh, she felt the darkest cloud
That shadowed then her brow,
Was far less threat'ning and less dark
Than hangs o'er Hungary now.

But mourn not, Hungary, she cries,
From slav'ry's sleep thou shalt awake,
For thou, too, hast a Washington,
With strength thy chains to break.

The clarion voice of thy Kossuth
Shall ring through all the world;
Nor cease its sound till from his throne
Old Despotism's hurled.

The light of his great mind will drive
Oppression's clouds away,
And usher in upon the world
Fair freedom's glorious day.

Though in a dungeon tyrants dared
A Kossuth to confine,
The radiance of his glorious soul
Through prison walls would shine.

That light formed on despair's dark cloud
A glowing rainbow bright,
That filled the hearts of Hungary's sons
With hope's enlivening light

Oh, great Kossuth, here every heart
Contains for thee a shrine,
Where fervent prayers are offered up
For the rights of thee and thine.

We honour—aye, we reverence one
In whom so brightly shine
The virtues which made Washington
Appear almost divine.

And oh, we pray that God may shed
His choicest gifts on thee,
And guide thee on in thy career
Till Hungary shall be free.

From "Youth's Welcome to Kossuth"
(Philadelphia). 1852.

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"Louis Kossuth's place in history is already fixed and cannot be changed. Among orators, patriots, statesmen, exiles, he has, living or dead, no superior. His throne is in the heart, and he can only be discrowned by tearing that heart from the breast of humanity."

HORACE GREELEY

Theodore Roosevelt

"If you bring into American life the spirit of the heroes of Hungary, you have done your share. There is nothing this country needs more than that there shall be put before its men and its future men — its boys; and its girls, too — the story of such lives as that of Kossuth . . . ."

Extract from President Theodore Roosevelt's address delivered at the dinner of "The Hungarian Republican Club" May 31, 1899, when he was Governor of New York State.

Americanism is not a matter of birthplace, of ancestry, of creed, of occupation: Americanism is a matter of the spirit that is within a man's soul. (Great applause). From the time when we first became an independent nation to the present moment there has never been a generation in which some of the most distinguished and most useful men were not men who had been born on the other side of the Atlantic (applause); and it is peculiarly appropriate and to me

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peculiarly pleasant that in addressing this Club of the men upon whose efforts so much of the future welfare of this city, of this State, of this Nation, depends I should be addressing men who show by their actions that they know no difference between Jew and Gentile, Catholic and Protestant, native born and foreign born; provided only the man, whatever his creed, whatever his birthplace strives to live so as to do his full duty by his neighbor and by the country as a whole. (Tremendous applause and cheer.)

Extract from President Theodore Roosevelt's address delivered at the dinner of "The Hungarian Republican Club" February 14th 1905.

Charles Feleky and his Manuscript

Not content with merely collecting books, Charles Feleky, the distinguished scholar and musician, decided to compile a bibliography of all works pertaining to Hungary and Hungarians written in English, and which Professor Toth, former professsor of Hungarian literature and history at Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, called a "Magnificent Obsession." To this gigantic task, he applied himself for more than twenty five years. The magnificent result of his labor has been referred to as "one of the greatest achievements of our times in its cultural and literary fields." Called a "one-man encyclopedia" by the Royal Hungarian ambassador, His Excellency John Pelenyi, Charles Feleky was qualified as no one else in the world to undertake such a work.

The bibliography, a manuscript of nineteen volumes, contains excerpts from every possible book, article, pamphlet, and so forth printed in English pertaining to Hungary. The bibliography is really more than the usual bibliography; it is a cultural, scientific, and historical digest of Central Europe. The history of the United States and that of England is not complete without the explanation and source material of the historical, scientific background of the central European nations that formed an essential part of the people of the United States. Not only that, but it contains

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unknown American and English historical facts. It treats of such subjects as the following:

Anthropology, Archaeology, Architecture, Agriculture, Army, Art, Autographs

Balkan States, Banking, Bimettalist, Biographies

Chemistry, Citizens of the World, Commerce, Chamber of Commerce, Church of England, Chronicles, Civil Engineers, Class Struggles, History of Literature, Current History

Drama, Diplomacy, Discoveries

Encyclopedia (Hungarian and Children's)

Education, Economics, Electrical Engineers, Entomology, Ethnology, Engineering

Fine Arts, Folk Lore, Foreign Affairs, Foreign Policy

Geology, Geography, Geographical Society, Genealogy, Gypsy Lore

History of the World (American, Central European, Czechoslovakia, Jugoslavia, Roumania, Turkey, Austria, Germany, Hungary, China, Japan, etc.), History of Iowa, California, Ohio, Wisconsin (Old Settlers), Hungarian nation from the beginning to the present day

Immigration, Industry, Islamic Culture, International Law

Law, Literature, Land Values, League of Nations

Kossuth MSS and relics, Kossuth books, pamphlets and magazine articles

Mechanics, Medical Science, Mathematical Science, Music, Moving Pictures

Numismatics, Newspapers, Natural Science

Ornithology, The Orient

Physical Culture, Painting, Political Science, Physiology, Philosophy, Philology, Public Health, Photography, Psychology, Psychoanalysis, Poetry, Press

Radioactivity, Religion (various denominations) Relief Bulletins, Rare books and pamphlets, Reconstruction in Europe

Science, Science and the Arts, Sports (chess, etc), Statistics, Student Movements

Theology, Technology, Teachers, Travels, Theatre Universities

World Events — World War

Zoology

Hungary has been the center of the sundry diplomatic, economic, scientific, and artistic activities of Central Europe. There has hardly been a European problem that has not likewise been a typical Hungarian problem. Hence the work pertains not only to Hungary and Hungarians but to all of Europe, America, Asia, and hence all the world.

In 1926 Eugene Pivany, in his work, *Hungarian-American Historical Connections: from Pre-Columbian Times,* said in reference to Mr. Feleky's bibliography of English Hungarica that it "should be published without further delay." Over ten years have elapsed since that time and the bibliography still lies unpublished. The expense of publishing such a work is too great to be assumed without outside assistance.

Because of its great cultural and scientific value to America and the world, there is no doubt that every library in the world would want to possess the valuable work.

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THREE ROOMS IN NEW YORK

By

ARPAD PASZTOR

Translated from "The Pesti Hirlap"

New York, 508 West 114th Street. This is the full address of a little three room apartment in greater New York. Its door is to the right of the gate, and as you open the door, you must stand still for a moment and gaze with reverence around the surroundings. There are books to be seen at the very first glance . . . books, books, and more books, from the floor to the ceiling all around the room. This sight fills you with reverence and inspiration. The many books, the order of the books, the folios filled with secrets . . . all the books filled with secrets . . . all represent a life, a man, a personality, someone, and as soon as you have stepped into the room, you ask:

"Who lives here? Whose are these books?"

Through the door leading to the second little room more books gaze upon you, books, books and more books, and the same is true in the third room, and even the kitchen is filled with newspaper clippings and circulars are piled in orderly fashion close against the walls.

Who lives in the crowded little three room apartment? One deceased, who lives, whose spirit probably returns on the hour of midnight to sit down at his desk as he did in his bodily life and look upon his great marvels; the library, which he gathered with the fantasy of a scientist and the enthusiasm of a collector from all parts of the world and which he tried to compile in a bibliography, which he himself called the "never completed masterpiece," but which, for pro-

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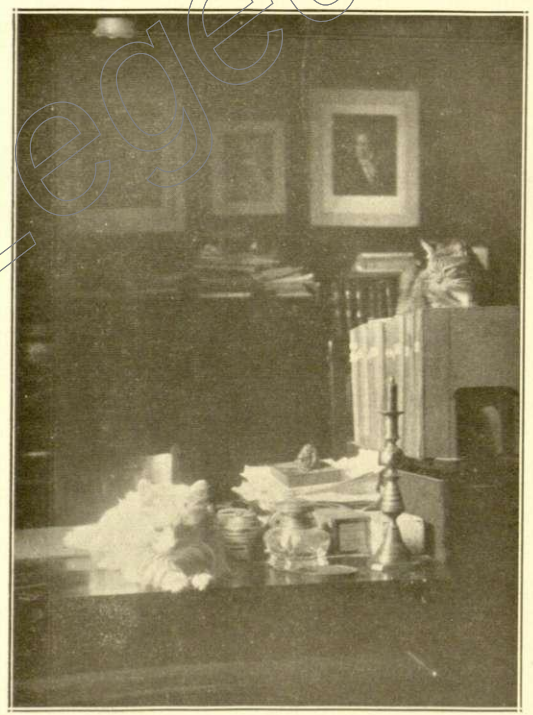
priety's sake, he titled "Intellectual and Spiritual Hungary," On this he worked night and day to his 67th year, until October 4th, 1930 when the pen dropped from his hand and the great masterpiece was left incomplete. I did not dare to use the word "unfinished"

Charles Feleky at work

because there are certain parts which in their state of incompletion surpass many which are whole.

That one deceased, who lived in the crowded little three room apartment in New York, is Charles Feleky.

The great library, which guards his spirit, contains all the books written and published in the English language about Hungary or Hungarian affairs since 1566, but it also contains the official English reports on the Battle of Mohacs.



His vacant chair

All the book dealers of England, United States of America, Canada, Australia, British Africa, and India were acquainted with Mr. Feleky's "Hobby" and as soon as they obtained an English book dealing with Hungary,

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they immediately wrote or cabled him at his New York address, and thus in 40 years the library became one which could not be surpassed.

In 1924, Feleky was still living, and then I was a frequent visitor at his home. He told me how he became a collector.

He was twenty-odd years old when he emigrated to America to try his luck. His tool was music: The piano and the conductor's baton. He played in night clubs and he conducted outstanding theatrical orchestras; he toured the large cities of America with Ede Remenyi and for years he was the conductor of Ben Hur which traveled all over the United States for many years. This was how he came to Pittsburgh once. While walking along the street, he stopped before the window of an antique shop where a book was displayed written in English; the book was about Louis Kossuth. He bought it, and this led to Feleky's destiny. Soon after another book took its place besides the Kossuth book and then a third and thus an accidental shopping led to a decided interest, the interest to collecting, the collecting to a passion, and the passion created a great library without equal; the traveling conductor became the greatest scientist of the connections of Hungarian-English-American relationship, to whom college professors came for information.

At one time I was talking to William Fraknoi about Charles Feleky. "In 1912 I was in New York," said the historian-bishop, "I heard something of Charles Feleky and his collections. I don't think much of such amateurs, but still, I thought I would visit him. I went over and began to brouse around the books, and the time I set aside to remain in New York, I spent there. The library is something unique. Charles Feleky is the most outstanding man of English-Amer-

ican-Hungarian literary researchers, as well as the sage of the 1848-1849 American emigrations."

This was in 1912. But how the library had developed by 1930! the time of Feleky's death! When I was in America, in 1924, it contained 5,500 books, and circulars and over 100,000 newspaper clippings and magazine articles. Feleky lived for six more years after this, and during that time the library was enriched by at least 2-3000 more volumes.

All of his money, all of his earnings were spent on this. In his official capacity he was the musical director and manager of the Martin Beck Theatre. Unofficially he was the fanatic defender of the Hungarian dreams and ideals: to show the English-Saxon world what a treasure hold of intellectual strengths Hungary is, his birthplace.

He spent his money for this, and he taught the art of appreciation of this work to his wife, Antoinette Feleky, the well-known American psychologist, his faithful life's champion, the caretaker of the Feleky library.

The library is divided thus: history, geography, music, literature, science. His oldest book dates back to 1560 (some of the circulars are older still), the newest to the year of his death.

The historical division forms three groups:

1. From the time of the Turkish rule to the liberating of Buda.

2. The war of independence. Kossuth and his period.

(There are a large number of original letters by Kossuth, among them one written to President Fillmore of the United States. Also, Kossuth's American hotel bills, lists of his expenditures and various relics of Kossuth.)

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3. The literature on the World War and the Peace Treaties. (And topping all this, all those literary and scientific works which had appeared as English translations up to 1930.)

The famous pride of the library is the oldest British newspaper in existence, one the first issues of the "Weekly News" (1620-21) in which a long article appears on Gabor Bethlen. A crippled mate to this newspaper is treasured by the British Museum, but the Feleky Library contains the uninjured, perfect copy. Most of the American and English libraries and museums have photographed this.

With the passing of time, Charles Feleky, the book collector, became a scientist, a historian, whose life work was not the library, but the "Intellectual and Spiritual Hungary"; in other words the "bibliography." After coming home from his daily work, he wrapped himself in his Japanese kimona . . . he liked to be very comfortable . . . and sat down at his desk, with his big white cat at his feet and the mapped-out work of the bibliography under construction, before him: the material which was to go into the bibliography with which he was to show the world Hungary's intellectual and spiritual worth and to clarify her connections with the English world.

Who knows that the oldest registered student at Oxford University was Hungarian?... Nikolas de Hungaria, to whom Richard the Lionhearted gave a "scholarship of not less than one half golden marks" as the Pipe Rolls document states. "The first scholar whose name has been preserved" writes H. C. Maxwell Lyte, Oxford's historian, who has also determined the fact that in the history of the university this is the only name that has existed, other students being listed only one hundred years later.

And who knows that in the English literary period of the XIVth and XVth centuries "Hungary is the gallant land of wonders and legends" and that the subject of the "pagan people's reform to Christianity" excited the fantasy of the English writers, and that in 1848 the English poet, John Gower begins his romance, "Confessio Amantis" thus:

How that whilom of Hungarie
By old Daies was a king
Wise and honest in alle thing . . .

The Hungarian king was the king of the stories, wise and honest in all his actions, and for whose daughter it was a great honor to vie, as it is stated openly in the famous romance of 1520: "The Squire of Low Degree"

It was a squyre of low degree
That loves the kings daughter of Hungre.

At that time in England the Hungarian princesses were considered princesses of stories; in fact, the noble and brave Hungarians are encompassed by many legends and this explains the fact that Shakespeare makes many mentions of Hungary and Hungarians . . . the story of "Nails with Nails", (Szeget-szeggel) was told by Jozsef Macarius to his friend, Count Nadasdy, and the story travels to England . . . Feleky determines. Ben Jonson writes a tragedy on Gabor Bethlen (Stape of News) and on the flyleaf of Philip Massinger's tragicomedy, "The Picture", (1629) the following is written: "This true Hungarian history."

Many English volunteers went to Hungary during that time to fight against the Turks, and this accounts for the fact that the Hungarian Uri's are descended from the famous English Urry family. The Leslies, relatives of kings, are the ancestors of the Hungarian Laszlos. Sir John Mandeville visited Hungary in 1499

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and wrote in amazing wonder of "this rich country, which has a great king and whose powers are immeasurable."

In 1924, I merely jotted down these notes from the bibliography under construction, when we were talking of the English-Hungarian literary results. Every source of work, every writer, every memory developed, remembered and properly catalogued, and these works (although some are only copies or later editions) are in the library.

It is the pride of a nation's intellectual treasures and the life-work of a soul who loves his country.

"How is it, and what happened to the Feleky library?" I asked many times after October, 1930. "Is it still in existence, isn't the widow forced to sacrifice this important cultural and historical treasure of the Hungarians to the cares of life and its daily existence, to dissolve or auction it?"

I did not dare to write to the widow; I was afraid of the reality. However I recently met Mme. G.—, Charles Feleky's sister, who lives in Budapest.

"What news is there of the library," was my first question.

"I don't know. I haven't received any letters from Antoinette for many years".

I persuaded her to write again, in the hope of receiving an answer. It came. The widow wrote. The library is still perfectly and wholly in existence but for how long, God only knows. Mrs. Feleky is struggling and suffering, but she is holding onto the little three room apartment in New York and in it the everlasting memory of a Hungarian immigrant.

It is everlasting while it is together. But what will happen when they begin to take it apart? It is feared that this will be its end.

CHARLES FELEKY

PORTRAIT BY MENYHERT LENGYEL

We could not consider New York with its seven million inhabitants a small city. It is an ocean of humans, strange waves rolling through it. Who knows the other one here? Who cares for the other one? Sometimes for weeks I don't see a familiar face. Still, if I walk with Charlie Feleky on Broadway or on the dashing mobbed Fifth Avenue, at every step we hear "Hello, Charlie". Friendly faces smile at us, and people stop to shake hands or exchange a few friendly words with Charlie.

Everybody knows Charlie, and everybody likes him.

I don't know how many thousand theatrical workers, writers, directors, actors, painters and producers live in New York, but I know there are very few of them who do not know about Feleky. But he also knows everything about everybody.

Feleky is the great fable teller, in this great city without fables.

About people, facts, things in general, about theatres, stories behind the footlights, from the past and present, Feleky knows everything. And he does not only know what is on the surface of the people, but if he looks at somebody over his eyeglasses, he sees even the things that lie behind the surface. He is a marvelous observer, and he has a talent to remember things. He is a very educated and very smart man. With these talents of his he renders unestimable service

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to the cause of the American-Hungarians. Feleky is one of the managers of the Palace Theatre. He is a very important man in this great theatrical enterprise, which has about 80 theatres throughout the country. He is the most intimate friend of the president and founder of this enterprise, Martin Beck, with whom he started out simultaneously on his career. Feleky did not save money. He saved something which will live as long as the Hungarian nation lives. Feleky collected documents about the activities of the Hungarians in the United States of America, from the time they first came over. Whatever the Hungarian art, music, literature, painting, industry, commerce, produced in America, these books, these documents, can be found in Feleky's collection. Feleky possesses all the English and American books, in which there is a reference to Hungary from the oldest times; maps; and the works of Hungarian authors translated into English. All these are indexed with the conscientiousness and wide knowledge of a scientist.

Hungary does not know what Charles Feleky did for her.

This perfect collection is the result of 35 years of hard work. It is a treasure of which every Hungarian can be proud.

I dare say, that Feleky is the only wise man in New York who was not swept off his feet by the unheard of business wave, which got hold of everybody here. He lives his own rich inner life. He sees everything and observes everything, and he spends his spare time for noble activities.

Few people know as much as he does about literature and art, and few people understand the secrets

of the theatre art more than he does. He is a great enthusiast. He can greatly disdain. And he has another trait; he is a very good man. He is ready any time to help, to patronise, to give information, to support, and takes part in Hungarian affairs with his whole heart.

I know I will annoy him and it will be disagreable to him that I wrote these thing about him, but this is the truth ....

Magyarok Amerikában
Színházi Élet, 1921.

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OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE ACTOR'S EQUITY ASSOCIATION, NOV., 1930.

ON THE PASSING OF CHARLES FELEKY

By EDWIN MILTON ROYLE

(Editor's Note: The following is the address which Mr. Royle, Shepherd of the Lambs, delivered at the funeral of Charles Feleky, at Campbell's Funeral Church, on October 6th, under the title "Commencement." It is printed as the result of request to Mr. Royle for its perpetuation.)

All of us speculate on the meaning of life and the mystery of death. Francis Thompson, as he was dying, said: "We are born in another's pain and perish in our own." The reply to that despairing cry might be: "It is not all of life to live, nor all of death to die."

A Harvard astronomer has recently announced that, "We are a colloidal aggregation, parenthetical to the Nth degree."

Shakespeare said with more simplicity; "We are such stuff as dreams are made of, and our little life is rounded with a sleep."

Edwin Booth once said to me that his religion was comprised in the lines of Hamlet: "There is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all. Since no man knows aught of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes? Let be! Let be!"

Speaking of myself, and for no one else, may I say that death seems to me as much a part of life as birth, and no more lamentable. We finish with the

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Grammar School, we rightly call it Commencement. We finish High School, we call it — Commencement. We complete and end a University career. We call that Commencement. We graduate from this experience we call Life. Death is our Commencement. Death is the open door to that progression which never ends, but which leads us to that state where "We shall know even as we are known."

What do we know of this our friend and pal who has graduated before us? this man who devoted himself to knowledge.

The Greeks continually cried: "Know thyself!" How can that be here and now? Amiel, the Swiss poet and philosopher, has told us in his famous Journal that introspection, self-examination, only made him self-conscious and self-critical, and stultified his creative faculties. Many have attempted, or pretended to give us a self-revelation, but even the effort to be sincere has been a pose, an affectation, as in the case of Rousseau, Marie Bashkirtscheff and others.

Yes, we do know some things about our friend and comrade who lies here now in holy silence.

I have met many men of many minds, in many lands and many times, but never have I met a man so utterly and completely Simple. He was without pose or pretence, without side or ego, and as kind and gentle as he was simple, and as modest as he was all these.

Matthew Arnold invented a phrase which has been ridiculed by some shallow minds: "Sweetness and Light." It covers our friend like a garment. Light is such a marvelous thing. We measure the distance of the stars by it. We carry a tiny candle into a pest hole. We let the light in on a darkened mind.

This man was warmth and light.

He did not tell us so, but we know that Charlie was an accomplished musician, and that he taught some of our best directors and composers, that he was a loved and honored member of The Bohemians, an inner circle of artists. We know that being an artist at heart he fulfilled all the functions of a business man with devotion, honesty, and great ability; that he was with one firm almost all his life, a tribute to the firm and to their representative. We know that this service developed into a life-long friendship between himself and his chief, Mr. Martin Beck.

But if we do not know ourselves, how can we know each other? I had known Charlie for many years and had a deep affection for him. To the day of his death he always called me, "Eddie", with that delightful trace of a foreign accent which, thank Heaven he never lost, but I did not know him until I saw him in his own home, on a sick bed, pale and weak and dying. I had known that he was a widely read man, of obvious culture, but I did not know that his home had no walls but books, books everywere, in every room, from floor to ceiling. I did not know that he was a scholar of inexhaustible patience and energy, that he had spent his life on a colossal work whose purpose was to reveal to the world his beloved native land, Hungary. Think of the reading for this Magnum Opus!— the notes, the research! In a life busy and useful in its devotion to the theatre— when did he find time to do his labor of love? How did he do all he accomplished?

That too I know for it is the only thing about himself he ever told me. He waved a pallid hand towards his wife and said: "I couldn't have done anything without her." Only he knew what she had been to him, not only in sickness and in health, which is

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a thing too sacred to dwell on, but as inspiration, critic, co-laborer, for, as you probably know, Mrs. Feleky is a distinguished scholar, teacher, author, and authority on psychology.

I know too that he had a great love for The Lambs, where he came for rest and relaxation, and for communion with his pals. Mrs. Feleky said to me: "Next to me, he loved the Lambs." I hope we may be worthy of that. He said to me: "The Lambs is my other home; I couldn't get along without it." He added, with a smile, that he was going to get well in order to get back and beat Dave Warfield at pinochle. He always ate at the round table in the Grill Room, where he would meet most of the boys at any one time. There, as everywhere, he diffused "Sweetness and Light."

In these my closing words I have tried to realize him for myself and for you:—

A ray of light comes to us from afar,
And makes no noise to herald its approach,
But silent moves and lives, and silent speaks
The living word amid the blatant strife,
And cruelties of life:
Giving unasked again and yet again,
Until it slips back into silence whence
It came.
Living in all that lives, to be
The silent symbol of eternity.
So are these silent souls who bring to life
Its unseen blessings, gentleness and warmth,
And kindliness without the outward show.
Who bless by living and by living bless.
So we are silent too when we would lay
Our loving tribute at his feet this day.
Farewell, dear friend! We'll hope to meet again.

TRANSLATED FROM THE HUNGARIAN.

From "Szabadság," a Hungarian daily published in Cleveland.

October 6th, 1930

CHARLES FELEKY IS DEAD

The Hungarians of America have sustained an irreparable loss with the death of Charles Feleky, one of the most outstanding personalities of the Hungarian-Americans, the popular Charles Feleky of the American theatrical world, an excellent musician, well-known scholar and book collector, the library of whom was peerless in the whole world. He died in his New York apartment which is so much like a museum.

Charles Feleky spent forty years in New York. In the beginning he maintained close connections with the Hungarians of his city. He was the leader of the Hungarian "Singverein" and he was the coach of their amateur theatricals. He was responsible for the first performance of "Hero Johann", in which Ilona Thury made her debut in the role of the witch. The great success which attended the performance and which encouraged the foundation of professional Magyar theatres in America was due to Feleky's efforts. He was then a well-known figure in the theatrical life of America. As the leader of Erlanger's orchestra he had been touring the country for years with the spectacular melodrama "Ben Hur," and as such came to Cleveland where he was the guest of Tihamer Kohanyi and Henry Baracs. Later he became the manager of the Orpheum Circuit, Martin Beck's undertaking, and when Beck sold his vaudeville interests to the Keiths, he became the manager of the new Martin Beck Theatre. In the theatrical life of America "Charley", as the members of the Lamb's Club called him, was a very popular

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man. Charley was readily at the disposal of every one. One could enter his hospitable home without knocking at the door and there he showed the visitors his invaluable Kossuth relics and books.

This library was his all. It was 35 years ago that he began to collect the Hungaricanas — English-language books about Hungary or refering to Hungary. This collection is unique in the entire world and there is nothing like it. It consists of many thousands of volumes and not one book is missing that has anything to do with Hungary. Charles Feleky, who for many years spent all his revenue and free time on this library, supplemented it with a bibliography, which exists in manuscript, and comprises nineteen volumes. As most scholars, he was a modest man.

Vilmos Fraknoy, the scholarly bishop, went to see Feleky, spent many days in his library, wrote a study of his activities and promised him to prevail upon the Academy to publish his MSS. Vilmos Fraknoy died and the invaluable manuscript, which has lost its author is still unpublished. He spent all his life and wealth in the service of Hungarian scientific research. Feleky remained fanatically attached to his country. He was passionate in the propagation of the Hungarian cause among his American friends and he called the attention of the theatrical world to the Hungarian talents.

He was a great man, a noble-hearted and puritanic Hungarian, a valuable man and his death is a great loss to America, Hungary and the Hungarian-Americans.

His library is a regular museum, his collection of pamphlets and of rare autograms are treasures. Every Hungarian-American must be conscious of our loss and should pay homage to his memory.

TRANSLATED FROM THE HUNGARIAN.

"Az Ember," a Hungarian Weekly
Published in New York

October 11th, 1930

CHARLES FELEKY

Charles Feleky, who died in New York last Saturday, was active in this city for the last forty years. He was sixty-two of age. Although for many years Charles Feleky has not taken part in the affairs of the American-Hungarians, yet he could never dissociate himself from Hungary. In Broadway, in New York's theatrical life, he occupied an important position and until the end he stood at the head of the Martin Beck Theatre. Managers, producers, famous actors and actresses lavished their affection on Feleky, a first-class expert of the American stage. He was a credit to Hungary, for, although he was known in his field as an American, he was never ashamed of his ardent love of his native land.

Charles Feleky was an unusual man, highly educated, an expert research-worker. Coming home from the theatre, he sat down to his desk and devoted many hours to the study of books and original documents. Charles Feleky's marvelously rich library has not its equal anywhere in the world. He dedicated an industrious and rich life to the accumulation of all English-language material of Hungary. With the passion of the antiquarian he acquired for his library all scientific and literary works, books and newspaper articles

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published in English in America or in England. He was a scholarly bibliophil of the English language literature of the Hungarian nation, and specialist of Kossuth relics. He had treasures in his library and in his collections. Charles Feleky's estate represents inestimable value, the result of the devoted work of a sainted man.

Those who saw Charles Feleky among his books, as he studied and catalogued them, as he caressed them with tender care, those who saw him in his retirement of the realm of his books, will never forget this great old man. Deeply moved, we take leave of Charles Feleky, than no better and no more valuable man ever lived in America. Even though he lived a retired life and took no active part in Hungarian public life, all his interest was in Hungarians and he followed the course of events in his old country with as much attention as he did that of the Hungarians in America. He was glad to know of the success of Hungarians and in his field he did all he could to help Hungarians. He wanted to help every one and no one ever appealed to his magnanimity in vain. His door was open to everybody, particularly to his countrymen. A pure and noble-minded Hungarian left this world, but his memory will abide among us. We feel deeply the great loss which befell all of us with his death.

CHARLES FELEKY — A TRIBUTE
by
THE AMERIKAI MAGYAR NEPSZAVA
an American Hungarian Daily

When we enter the world we bring nothing with us, when leaving it we take nothing away. In this respect all men are equal. The acid test of one's true worth is in what one leaves to posterity when making the final exit. A man cannot be truly judged during his life, because his good deeds of today he may destroy tomorrow. But when "finis" is written to his last chapter, then and only then can we truly appraise him.

Charles Feleky, the immigrant American-Hungarian, was a successful man. His inspiring work in the theatrical world gained him the applause and admiration of his professional co-workers as well as the audiences. His successes with the musical spectacle "Ben Hur," his work as director of the Martin Beck Theatre and similar accomplishments are a matter of theatrical history. His real work, however, was accomplished in the hours he spent unselfishly in scientific research.

Jovial, modest, Charles Feleky assisted by his quiet, unassuming wife, who is herself a noted educator and psychologist, gave himself unstintingly to a most praiseworthy task, for which posterity will ever remember and bless him. He toiled with a passion born of his love for Hungary, the country of his birth and America, the land of his choice. His laborious task yielded a rich collection of rare treasures, books, pamphlets, publications and articles dealing with cultural, political, social and scientific subjects relating to Hungary and Hungarians.

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The priceless Feleky collection will do more to forge an unbreakable link between the Magyar civilization and the great English speaking peoples, than any other known force. His compatriots have good reason to honor his memory and long remember the brilliant patriot and humanist, Charles Feleky.

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