

EDITORIAL

MORE ELEPHANTS AND WHITE PARASOLS GONE TO GRIEF.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE financial embarrassments of the Szechenyis are of a deal deeper significance than a Hungarian court scandal.

In the feudal nobility of Hungary there are four prominent “houses”: The house of Count Paul Szapary, the house of Count Karacsonyi, the house of Count Emmerich Degenfeld, and the house of Count Szechenyi. These are feudal magnates holding vast landed possessions, and, despite the times, exercising not a few of the privileges or “vested rights” of feudality. In the riots that the Hungarian parliament of late often is the theater of upon the subject of the suffrage the houses just mentioned usually are the center of reactionary opposition.

These four houses, proud of their ancestral traditions, proud of their havings, prouder still of their power, organized themselves into a body which was either called by them, or received from others, the name of, the “Magnate Group.”

The Magnate Group was not a political body. So far as politics was concerned the four houses needed no organizing: they acted in accord enough. The Magnate Group owed its organization to other impulses, the impulse to which was given by the marriage of Count Szechenyi to Gladys, a Vanderbilt multimillionaire heiress. The Magnate Group plunged into speculations, railway-mining speculations. The group’s cash—individually and collectively—was considerable. True it did not command as large an infantry of dollars as some other and bourgeois groups. But the deficiency was expected to be made up by the cavalry and artillery of feudal power at the disposal of the magnates.

Speculations are battles delivered on the field of capitalism. It was upon that field that the Magnate Group had to measure itself with the adversaries whom it

expected to spoil, and who, in turn, licked their chops in advance at the spoils that they expected to carry off. The battle came on. The cavalry and artillery of feudal power, though brought into action, “did no damage”: the “white parasols and elephants mad with pride,” though paraded for all that they were worth, proved as un-terrorizing as the images of Christian Saints, raised over the walls of Constantinople in 1453 terrorized the conquering soldiers of Mohammed the Great. The upshot was the rout of the Magnate Group, which scattered to the four winds, leaving captive in the hands of the “shylocks” (as the feudal press expresses itself), or in the hands of veteran bourgeois financier campaigners (as the fact is), millions of soldier dollars, together with vast “equipments.”

The “white Parasols and Elephants made with pride”—the one time awe-inspiring and victory-compelling fruits of landed property—are coming to grief. One set of the parasols and elephants is simply bought out; another set, like that of the Magnate Group, is out-maneuvered, the unassuming \$, at the sight of which device the elephants lose all their pride, run away mad with fear, and leave their tracks strewn with the parasols that in their panic they throw away.

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