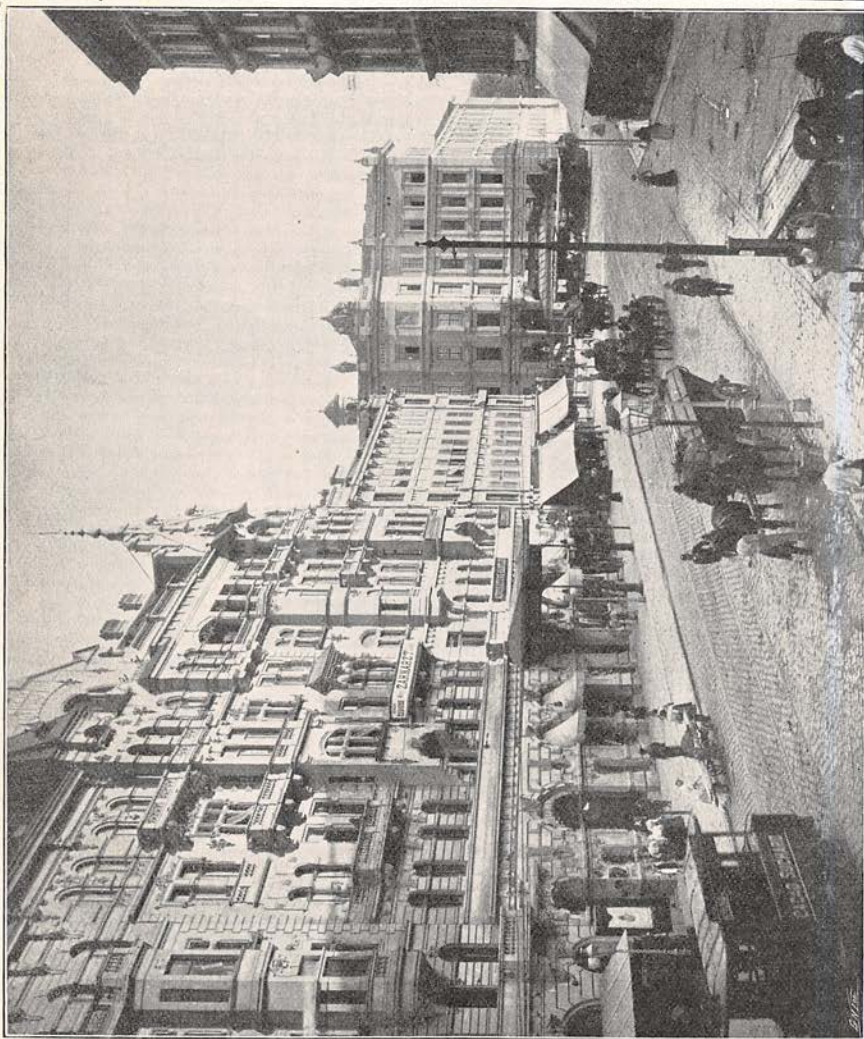
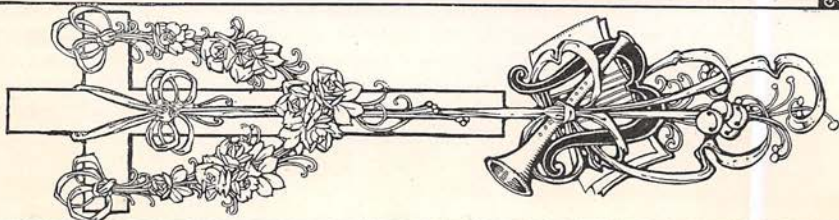


R.P.



A SUNDAY MORNING STREET SCENE IN VIENNA.
THE BUILDING ON THE LEFT IS WHERE THE SUNDAY EVENING BALLS ARE HELD.

Photo. by Mary Spencer Warren





SUNDAY IN CONTINENTAL CITIES

Vienna.

BY MARY SPENCER WARREN.

Illustrated from Photographs by the Author.



SUNDAY in any Catholic country is more or less a day of pleasure, the people participating with avidity in every form of amusement which presents itself; and nowhere is this better exemplified than in Vienna. Some countries have a strong Protestant party, and the Catholic influence is leavened; for whilst the major portion of the population are crowding all the amusement they can into the day, quite an influential number regard Sunday as God's day, and keep it in more sedate fashion. But this is but slightly the case in the Austrian capital.

The Viennese are often described as the gayest and most laughter-loving people of Europe, and undoubtedly this description is a true one, for they hardly seem to have a serious moment. From one gaiety to another they go, and to kill time and make it pass pleasantly seems the object and aim of existence. Any one who invents a new form of amusement or gives birth to a new joke is the hero of the hour. Live and be happy is the purpose of life—and for the hereafter, nobody seems to care. 'Tis the business of the Church that they "die well," and with that—to them—comes the end.

A stranger walking through the streets of Vienna on a Sunday morning might well imagine that he had mistaken the day, for everything is just the same as upon any ordinary working day. Factory people are at their machines and benches, building operations, road making and repairing, are progress-

ing, markets and shops are carrying on brisk sales; and in fact everything is just as usual, save and except that Mass is being said in the churches—for those who have the leisure or the curiosity to go and listen.

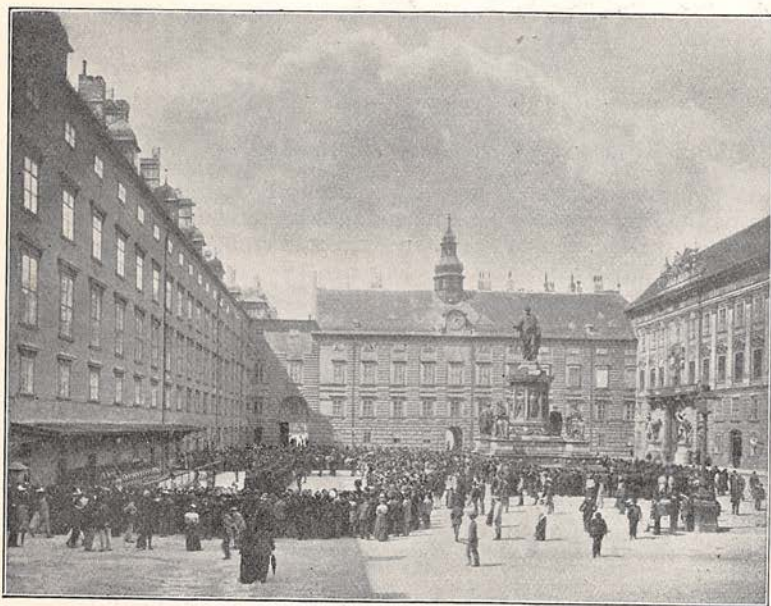
It is somewhat curious to watch one of these congregations, literally composed of all sorts and conditions of men. The haughty aristocrat and the poor labourer, the gaily uniformed officer and the horny-handed artisan, Germans, Slavs, Poles, Bohemians, Tyrolese, all mingle indiscriminately in the ever-coming and ever-going throng. But few stay the service through; when they come it is a matter of form and not enjoyment, just a something to be got over as quickly as possible. Of course there are no pews, those who care to pay for them can have chairs, but numbers prefer to stand or kneel. Here is a richly attired lady occupying a rush-bottomed chair, and kneeling next to her a poor and not over clean woman who has come in with her market basket filled with vegetables and fish or meat—according to the extent of the family exchequer. The woman hastily goes through two or three prayers, crosses herself a time or two, and then having done her duty, quietly emerges from the church and returns to her family.

Many of those who come in buy candles from a woman stationed inside the building, for the purpose of having them placed in the front of some particular shrine; some spending a modest halfpenny, others as much as a shilling in this direction. Watch one of these shrines, and you will notice how the

freshly lighted candles are always placed well in the front, the partially burned ones going to the rear, and presently disappearing altogether—on the way to the melting pot. At intervals, a beadle, resplendent in silk stockings, velvet knee breeches, gold laced coat and cocked hat, walks majestically through the rows of people, and heavily clanks his staff of office on the stone floor, thus calling attention to a priest in his rear who carries a bag to receive the offerings of the faithful. They make several perambulations, and were it otherwise they would inevitably miss many of their ever-moving congregation. The only time of absolute

early, and by two o'clock a vast exodus from the city is taking place.

One would hardly imagine there were so many carriages in the city as can be seen on a Sunday afternoon, and most of them pair horse vehicles, for nearly everything to be hired in Vienna—whether from livery stable or cab rank—is drawn by two good horses, and all drivers are compelled by law to go at a sharp trot. The Prater is the general rendezvous, and every road leading to it is thronged with carriages, steam and horse cars, and pedestrians. It is like a Derby day, a never-ceasing crowd of pleasure seekers—all with one goal.



MOUNTING GUARD AT THE EMPEROR'S PALACE ON SUNDAY MORNING.

Quite a wonderful place this Prater is: a magnificent park of between four and five thousand acres, containing fine woods, grass plots, pleasure and race grounds, and wide leafy avenues for riding, driving and walking. Three main avenues diverge from the entrance, the principal one being known as the Haupt or Nobel-Allee. This is the aristocratic part of the Prater, the real centre of the fashionable world, and here

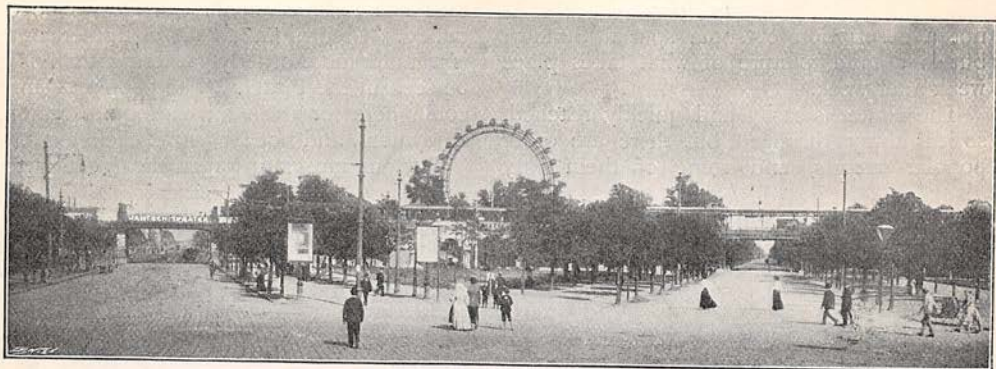
silence is when the "elevation of the Host" takes place; then all fall on their knees, and with bowed heads maintain a hushed silence that contrasts strongly with all other parts of the service.

Coming out of the church, vast numbers of people may be noted promenading the Opern Ring, this being as much a Sunday parade as Hyde Park, or the Hove at Brighton. It is a fine avenue, well lined with trees on either side, and so dense is the crowd there from about twelve to one o'clock, that it is almost impossible to get along. Austria being essentially a military nation, numbers of people repair to the Hofburg to see the troops mounting guard and to listen to the band. The majority of the Viennese dine

Society rides and drives daily, Sunday included.

The Austrian grandee is a haughty personage, proud of his patrician birth, and exclusive to the last degree. He believes very much in his own country, and very little in any other; in fact other countries are so much beneath his notice that he rarely pays them a visit. Frequently he is rich and lives in much state—but often he is improvident, squandering his money on all sorts of extravagances, gambling being his besetting sin.

Vienna in the season will vie with any capital in Europe for its fashion and display of wealth, thus the Prater has an assemblage thoroughly representative of the city. A

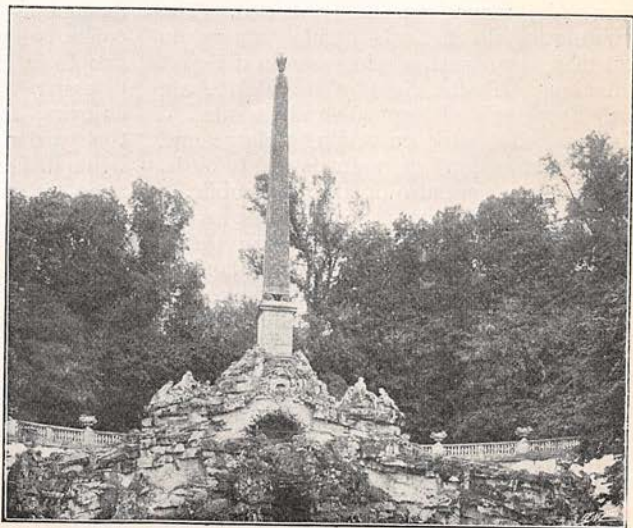


ENTRANCE TO THE PRATER—THE GREAT SUNDAY RESORT OF ALL CLASSES.

Grand Duke will career by on horseback, a Princess sweep past in an open carriage, whilst throngs of titled and exalted personages with well appointed equipages and high stepping steeds drive up and down the Haupt Allee at a smart pace. Here there are several famous and expensive restaurants, where everything from light refreshment to a recherché dinner can be obtained. The tables are all in the open, beneath shady trees and partially secluded from the general public. Music of the best contributes to the enjoyment of the scene; and I may here remark that in no place in Europe can finer music be heard than in Vienna. The military and all other bands are brought to a very high state of perfection by the rigid training to which every instrumentalist is subjected previous to membership. But the result has made the Viennese bands famous the world over. Every good restaurant there has its band, an immense attraction to the people.

Straight through the Allee—with its quadruple rows of chestnut trees—is the Freudenau, the scene of the horse races. Needless to say this is very largely frequented, the racing and betting community being considerable in Vienna. Over on the left is the Trotting Course Place; and here huge crowds assemble Sunday after Sunday to witness the sports of every sort which take place. But to see the recreation of the lower classes one must go through the part of the Prater known as the Volks or Wurstelprater. This is a scene which baffles description, and more

nearly resembles a very third rate English fair than anything else to which I can compare it. Shows of every description abound, the programme the proprietors place before the public not being of the most refined description. Every show has its outside touts in half dress, and its outside pictures, music and shouting. Panoramas and peep shows, some of them of the coarsest description, are plentiful, and are complacently regarded by the authorities. Roundabouts assist the din with their brazen toned organs; trumpets blare forth from the interior of dancing booths, guns are continually firing in the shooting galleries, and the beer saloons are thronged to suffocation. It is a perfect pandemonium, and the braying and roaring of the animals from the neighbouring menagerie are tuneful and peaceful in comparison. All this is kept up until a late hour in the evening, often



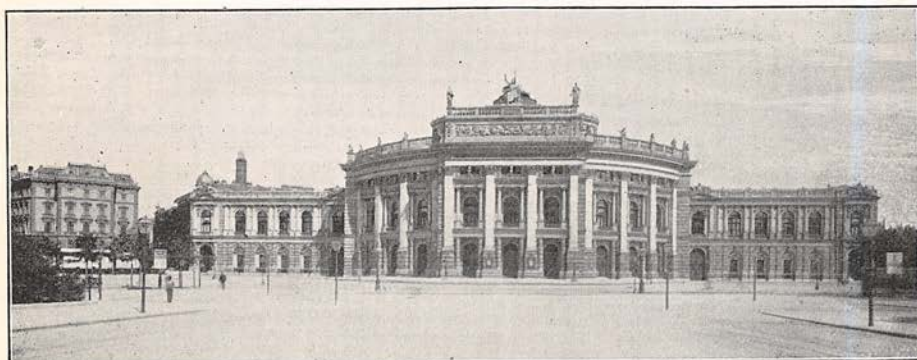
THE FOUNTAIN AND OBELISK SCHÖNBRUNN.

terminating with a firework display. This is not a description of some special Sunday, but is a mild picture of what takes place week after week.

The Prater is easily and quickly reached, so it is always thronged, but there are other popular resorts, and some of them very

music and refreshments can always be obtained. Great numbers resort thither, but it is a much more orderly gathering than is to be seen in the Prater. The people seem to come here for fresh air and quiet rational enjoyment, and not for active excitement.

But one must not forget the Volksgarten,



THE HOFBURG THEATRE.

beautiful ones. Take Schönbrunn, for instance, where is a fine old summer palace of the Emperor's, containing upwards of one thousand rooms. There are some magnificent grounds attached to it, and these his Majesty in a very kindly manner has thrown open to the public. The grounds are laid out in French style, and many of the avenues are flanked with high walls of foliage. Facing the palace there is a receding background of sloping terraces leading up to the Gloriette, from the summit of which a magnificent view of Vienna can be obtained. The grounds are replete with marble statuary, no less than forty groups being seen in different directions. To the right of the Palace are the Emperor's Botanical and Zoological Gardens, the latter containing a large and varied collection of animals and birds. These gardens are also open to the public.

On summer Sundays, steamboat trips on the beautiful Danube are indulged in freely, Nussdorf being one of the favoured landing places. From here one can go to the top of the Kahlenberg heights by the Zahnradbahn, or "rack and pinion" railway. 'Tis a charming ride, passing through vineyards and fine woods and finishing at a height of over fourteen hundred feet above sea-level. The view is grand: Vienna and miles of the Danube, and the Styrian Alps and the spurs of the Carpathians. There is a good hotel and restaurant at the summit, and others near stations on the steep railway, where

for it is renowned throughout the world principally through its seventy years association with the Strauss family, four members of which have successfully wielded the bâton at the *al fresco* concerts which are such a feature of the place. All classes of the community have always been in the habit of frequenting these gardens, Archdukes, military celebrities, ambassadors, and all the leaders of wealth and fashion, as well as the shopkeepers and the working classes. Multitudes of little tables, wooden chairs and open refreshment stalls invite the frequenters to coffee, wine, beer, ices, etc.; and here the people sit contentedly sipping and smoking, listening to the really exquisite music and enjoying themselves immensely. At dusk the gardens are brilliantly illuminated, the lights in the foliage giving a fairy-like appearance to the scene. In the spring and autumn the walks and seats are inconveniently crowded, not only on Sunday but on every evening in the week. The Stadtpark is another famous resort, but the frequenters are not so cosmopolitan, the rich only being catered for in its aristocratic shades.

On Sunday evening, the Opera and every theatre and hall of variety is crowded out, as well as the different dancing saloons and circuses. The Emperor puts in an occasional appearance at the Opera, and a private sloping carriage-way has been constructed from the Hofburg to the Royal entrance, so that his Majesty can gain his box without the

fatigue of steps. No less a sum than £700,000 was expended in the erection of this handsomely appointed building, which, I can safely say, is the most beautiful and luxurious in Europe. When the audience is fully assembled, the scene is regally grand; the decorations of white and gold, the paintings and sculpture, the flash of diamonds and the varied hues of the richly dressed ladies, the splendid uniforms of many of the gentlemen (and Austrian uniforms are, to my mind, the most beautiful and picturesque in Europe) and the scenery of the stage and resplendent dresses of the artistes, all combined, produce an effect which is rarely equalled. I have already spoken of the exquisite music one hears in Austria; what then can be imagined of an operatic performance where every one who takes part is a finished artiste in his particular rôle? And the audience is musical too; for the art is part and parcel of the nature of the people, born and bred in them, and transmitted as is a sacred heirloom. And were not some of the greatest composers the world has known natives of the soil? and have not the people every reason to be proud of their country's music?

To describe the theatres is simply to repeat what may be said of the theatres of other

big Continental cities, only that some of the Viennese excel in many particulars; but if you want to see the people, you must go to one of the concert or music halls. The entertainment is not particularly refined, but one need not go to Vienna to find a programme of that description. The interest to a visitor is centred on the large number of small supper tables dotted about all over the floor, family and friendly parties being seated around them in full enjoyment of a square meal while the performance goes on. And the smoke! Here as in all the restaurants, you must eat and drink in such a dense atmosphere, that it is not possible to see the people sitting on the other side of the hall or saloon. Occasionally, a ladies' refreshment room may be found at a restaurant, but it is not much frequented, for the simple reason that the Viennese woman has no compunction about lighting her own

cigarette in public; to abstain is the exception and not the rule.

Dances and balls find much favour with the people in the winter months, when outdoor amusements are not possible after dusk, the Colosseum being most largely frequented by the democracy. This establishment has six halls and a large garden, so that concerts, dances, and theatrical entertainments can all go on at the same time. Occasional balls are given by the municipal authorities, by the students, and others; some of these are masked, especially during the carnival season, and the majority of them are very brilliant. Sunday or week-day, it is all alike to them, and whatever day is most convenient is fixed upon. But one can always make



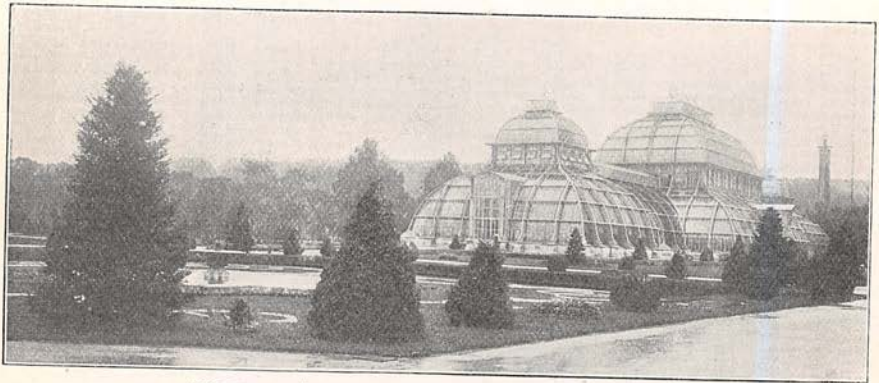
ST. STEPHEN'S, THE CATHEDRAL OF VIENNA.

sure of dances on Sunday night at some of the saloons—not always attended by the aristocracy, but perfectly orderly, although it must be confessed the dancing is more vigorous than graceful. Introductions are not by any means requisite, the gentlemen look round, make up their mind which lady they would like to dance with, and go up to her with a polite bow and request. Ices and weak beer are indulged in between the dances, and everybody looks thoroughly happy and satisfied. Some of these dances are kept up until a very late hour, and then the residential concierge waxes rich, for every one who crosses the portals after ten p.m. must pay to this personage a fine of 2d. To make this intelligible to those who know not the city, I must explain that nearly all the working population—and indeed large numbers of really well-to-do people—live in flats, the enormous rental value of private residences making such impossible. Thus, in some large blocks, several hundreds of persons may be living under one roof; and the curious levy of a fine for late comers is rigidly exacted, and always paid without question or protest; still, staying out late is an expensive luxury for any one not in flourishing circumstances, so on ordinary occasions the streets of the

city are extremely quiet and empty by ten o'clock at night. But on Sunday, a day when the last few hours are given up to enjoyment, there is a tendency not to hurry home, and the 2d. is cheerfully handed over.

Of course I have not mentioned nearly all the amusements or the places where they are obtained in Vienna. It would be impossible to do so in a limited space when writing of a city whose inhabitants have but one thought on the Sabbath—how best to enjoy themselves. It is not an edifying spectacle. An aristocracy living for pleasure alone, often beyond its means; and a democracy who not only toil the week through, but during many of the early hours of God's day, and then as a sort of compensation throw themselves madly into every amusement that presents itself.

Of course there are exceptions—there must be in every case; but the general tone is much below the average. Where there is little or no real religion, the *morale* of the people is at a low ebb in every respect! But I will leave this question for a future paper. Does not such a state of things, however, bring forcibly to our minds the sacred words "Righteousness exalteth a nation," and can it be denied that ungodliness has always tended to deterioration?



THE EMPEROR'S GARDEN, SCHÖNBRUNN, OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.