

# Greatest Flirts in the World



Hungarian Bride and Bridegroom going to church.

Miss Delia Austrian of Chicago, who has spent much time in travel abroad, studying the manners, customs, and social life of women in foreign lands, declares the Magyar girls of Hungary are the greatest flirts in the world. The results of her observations are embodied in the following article:

BY DELIA AUSTRIAN.

**T**HE American girl is a flirt, the French woman a flirt, but their ways and charms are uninteresting when contrasted with those of the Magyar girl, who is the greatest flirt in the world. This is natural, for in Hungary song and laughter, dance and music are so exuberant, women are so lovable, and lovmaking so spontaneous that wooing and wedding offer themselves as alluring themes. Naturally bright and vivacious, these clever girls find philosophy and the exact sciences a

lore, but poetry, music, and song, with their wild emotions and alluring fasciae, appeal to their girlish hearts. Their own peculiar beauty is in keeping with the form, color, and rhythm they love. What strikes one is the extreme freshness, delicacy, and purity of their coloring. Their wavy hair, as among all women of this Hungarian race, is superb, and their large deep eyes are shaded with long lashes suggesting revelry and feeling that craves for admiration and love.

### No Desire for Foreign Suitors.

Satisfied with the strong physique, manly bearing, and frank way of their men, they are content to find their suitors at home. The Magyar men are as anxious to woo them as they are to be wooed. There is something so winning in their coquettish glances and fascinating smiles; the men are so manly, debonair, and easy it is hard for either sex to resist. With them love and courtship mean so much it must be given all its color, and a wooing is often therefore a long doing. They have endless opportunities of meeting each other—visiting the markets, working in the field, and passing each other while out for a stroll. The youths feel that the scarda, or inn, is the best place to see the girls they would admire. The scarda is a club, where on Sundays and holidays old and young come to dance and make merry. Music of the gayest sort is heard, the picturesque costumes of both men and girls give added life to the scene.

### Favorite Dance a Story of Love.

The "scardas," their favorite dance, gives them plenty of opportunity to reveal their gayety, ease, and grace. It is really a pantomime and describes the course of true love. The music and dancing are at first slow, the couples walk up and down in a stately manner. Then, feigning to have made each other's acquaintance and fallen victims to their tender feelings, the music grows lively and the courtship begins in earnest. The lover approaches his fair maiden and she coyly responds; they spin around together for a few minutes when, as if she were allowing him too many privileges, the maiden retires pouting, whereupon he again approaches. This time she turns her back on him in a most flirtatious way and they dance off in contrary directions. This dance varies according to the locality and spirit of the dancers, but the theme of love, courtship, jealousy, disappointment, and reunion is always there. Sometimes at the end the lover throws himself on his knees before his mistress while she dances about him in triumph. The waving of hats,



Hungarian Bride and Bridesmaid.



Magyar Girl.

chatting while they revel in the beauty of the hour and amuse themselves listening to managers of the theaters shout and see the marionettes whirl, twirl, and dance. When winter comes and it gets too cold for them to promenade out of doors the young people spend happy evenings at the home of some friend. Here they hold weekly assemblies, not to cook on the chafing dish but to spin; their hostess acts as their chaperon and they give her their work in turn. They work industriously but not too hard; with their toll they mingle stories, riddles, and plenty of laughter—the only thing they cannot talk about is love. Nothing is said against shy glances, pouting, and contagious laughter. They are not anxious to bring their love affairs to a climax; they feel that love, like champagne, improves with age, and the longer they prolong the courtship the better the love.

### Family Present at Courting.

Strong as is the heart of the Magyar he sometimes grows impatient and starts courting in earnest. Though he usually makes his visit at night, he does not climb up on a balcony. He knocks at the door and, getting no answer, he exclaims: "Your wooer has rapped long enough on the door; open and let him in." After some hesitation the young woman usually decides to admit him, and the young Romeo finds himself in the family kitchen at last. Here the courting usually takes place; they are not disturbed, though parents and inquisitive brothers and sisters be present. When the girl's blushes grow too red and his laughter too merry the young man puts his arm about her waist, not to embrace her but to cover them both with his long cloak. In this fashion they sit chatting and laughing as only lovers know how to laugh and talk. These young people are not sworn lovers, yet they are only trudging together along love's path, without the slightest notion of how they will come out nor have they any desire to know. "They are as changeable, as evasive, and as unique as their own music, which now laughs, now wails, now caresses, now sighs, and moans." They pose over their lovmaking, play with it, and so suffer the less and enjoy it the more.

### How She Receives Proposal.

Not every youth is sturdy enough to stand this teasing and torment; he cannot bear to be smiled at one minute and scorned the next. When he is too shy to go a-wooing he has it done by proxy. He sends some older woman to find out if his attentions are agreeable; if she returns with words of encouragement he hastens to her home, but if he cannot make up his mind to go alone he takes some young man along to speak the thought he feels. The suitor is careful in selecting his aid-de-camp, for he knows well that a Magyar girl has decided views on love and one mistake in this courtship may destroy his fondest hopes. Though he often speaks to her with words of wildest praise, she hears them with shyness, for every Magyar girl has plenty of savoir-faire. If the words spoken please her she calls to her parents to come and drink from the loving cup the spokesman holds in his hand. The lover then takes it, and after a long glance quaffs deep; then he kisses the brim, turns to the girl, and she presses the cup to her lips. Divorce is more unpopular with the Magyars than it is among many people, so three days of grace are allotted for the engaged couple or their parents to change their minds. They test each other with much coquetting, with pleasant accusations, and innocent charges, designating them lovers' quarrels. At the close of this trial the lover and his spokesman go to hear if the girl is of the same opinion. Sometimes the messenger goes alone, and after getting a favorable answer he hastens back with the news.

### Kissing Feast Accompanied by Music.

More interesting than the betrothal and the wedding is the kissing feast; it is just what it claims to be. The young couple seal their vows with one-two-three and sometimes many times three kisses. This is the first time she has been guilty of this offense, though she has mocked him with her lips and kissed him with her eyes many times before. The kissing is done in public, often accompanied by happy music, laughing, and dancing. The picturesque dress of these women does much to give warmth to their coquettish glances and gay laughter. A full flowing skirt with a long train increases their height, and a tight bodice brings their splendid form in clear outline. Their necks and arms are often decorated with splendid jewels. Young girls seldom wear veils or caps, but often twine strands of pearls in their hair. The men are of tall stature and have a robust frame. The chief feature of their dress is the white shirt extending only to the chest, and the immense white trousers terminating in fringe at the knees. A blue jacket often embroidered in gay colors is thrown over the shoulders, while the head is covered by a broad brimmed hat of black felt ornamented in the most fantastic manner. The Magyars are certainly a romantic, handsome, and attractive people and though they recognize the value of love and courtship they are frank, sincere, and earnest. This is to be said of the women as well as the men. Although the girls are so gay and coquettish that it would not be surprising to hear a timid Italian girl murmur "how dreadful," the American girl would offset these remarks with "how charming," "perfectly fascinating." What harm has she done, for she develops into the dearest and brightest of housewives and is as good a life comrade as any man can hope to find.



Magyar Bride and Bridegroom.

the stamping of feet, the wild strains of the violin make the scardas a most lively and fascinating dance.

### Fairs a Favorite Rendezvous.

The fairs are another favorite rendezvous for these young men and women. The girls visit these rows of shops to look at the bright scarfs, gay jewelry, only incidentally to see the young men. The men go to admire the long beautifully embroidered cloaks, high boots, and only incidentally to buy sweetmeats and cakes for their girls. In the cool summer evenings when the business of the day is at an end the young folks come out to see the sun play on the blue Danube, and the splendid rock built citadel of Buda-Pesth. They stand

