

INTRODUCTION

Hungary is a small country lying in the heart of Europe, in the Danube Basin embraced by the Carpathians. Its area of 93,030 sq. km. (36,000 sq. miles) occupies less than one per cent of Europe, and its 10 million inhabitants make up less than two per cent of the population of the Continent.

While Hungary has no approach to the sea, and cannot boast of snow-capped peaks within its boundaries, it has fertile plains, gently undulating hills, and picturesque woods on its mountains. Two thirds of Hungary's territory is taken up by industriously tilled plough-lands that grow the best durum wheat, and by well-cultivated gardens, orchards and vineyards which produce spices rich in vitamins, aromatic fruits and excellent wines.

Hungary's *physical geography* is determined by its position in the temperate zone, about half-way between the Equator and the North Pole. Distant though it is from both the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, the Mediterranean and Oceanic influences act upon its climate almost as much as the continental ones. The entire area of Hungary belongs to the drainage system of the Danube, and all its rivers flow—directly or indirectly—into the Danube.

The factors affecting the *economic geography* of the country, which result from the prevailing political and trade relations with the neighbouring countries, have often changed in the course of history.

Before the war unilaterally dependent on the economy of the leading capitalist powers, the economy of the country has im-

proved in structure and now fits harmoniously into the economic organization of the European socialist countries. In accordance with a rational division of labour, based on the natural and economic resources of the countries concerned, this group of friendly states contribute power and important industrial raw materials to Hungarian industry and represent a reliable permanent market for Hungarian products, both industrial and agricultural, thus ensuring the steady development of Hungarian economy.