

DANUBELAND.

The Danube is about 1,700 miles long, and maintains a general easterly direction from its source in the Black Forest to the Black Sea. It becomes navigable for small boats at Ulm, and hence this place has been of historic importance. Further east on the river is another place also noted in history—*i.e.*, Ratisbon, situated where the Danube changes its direction, and where traffic might diverge to the Elbe or Rhine. In this, its upper course, the Danube crosses the Alpine foreland, which slopes slightly northwards to the German Jura and Bohemian Forest, and receives on its right several tributaries from the Alps—*e.g.*, the Isar, on which Munich stands, and the Inn, with Innsbruck on the route which leads over the Brenner Pass.

Vienna is situated on the Danube where the river leaves the plateau, and somewhat west of the point where it breaks between the Alps and Little Carpathians, and enters on its middle course across the plain. The city benefits by the easy communication to the north afforded by the valley of the March tributary, which leads on by the Moravian Gate to the Oder and Vistula, as well as by the route southwards defined by the valley of the Upper Leitha and Semmering Pass, which is followed by the railway to Trieste. Part of the Leitha forms the boundary between Austria with Bohemia, which are therefore called Cis-Leithan States, and Hungary, which is Trans-Leithan.

Still further east the Danube flows between the Bakony Forest and the mass of mountains which culminate far to the north in the Tatra, and constitute the Western Carpathians, and here it turns abruptly south. The view from Budapest, which is situated near this point, 'seems to open up all the East of Europe,' and has been described by G. Cole in his 'Open-Air Studies' as follows :

'In the north behind us we have the tumbled masses of the mining country and the far blue line of the foot-hills of the Carpathians ; but south and east stretches the plain of Central Hungary, with the gray-green Danube, some 400 yards in width, flowing through it in long, sweeping curves. Ever since the river left Vienna it has tended to divide and join itself together again, producing enormous elongated islands running in the direction of the stream. Some of these have been carved out of the older alluvium, some have been deposited in the course of the present river ; and were it not for human intervention, floods and redistribution would be the order of the day. The plain itself is richly fertile, and is gradually becoming one of the great corn-producing countries of Europe. At sunset a warm pink haze settles across it, and gives even the cultivated portions the aspect of an untouched prairie. Rough brown roads, worn by carts in the surface soil, connect the hamlets of one-