

while it must be confessed that the more sensational episodes in modern Serbian history have been such as to estrange rather than to attract our sympathies.

The reason why we have had so little to do with Serbia commercially is that by an extraordinary and fatal combination of geographical, historical, and political circumstances, the Serbs have never been able to put to any practical use the coast which by rights is theirs. This coast, which should have been the means of communication between them and other countries, has always been dominated by alien and hostile peoples, whose interest it has been to use it as a barrier to cut off the Serbs from the outside world.

Again, in the realms of art, music, and literature, the Serbs have not produced any masterpieces of a character to enforce their nationality on our notice. Serbia had a mediaeval and has a modern literature, and the national store of folk-music and folk-poetry is inexhaustible; but there is nothing of a kind which makes an immediate and urgent appeal to a remote and alien public. Serbian art has till now been not universal but merely local. The only other way in which Serbia could have become better known to England would have been by the attraction of tourist-traffic, but here again a great many things have militated against this. Distance and the difficulty of the language are two great obstacles, but there is a far more powerful reason than either of these—a very subtle and extremely tragic reason. It is that although the present kingdom of Serbia abounds in the picturesque, all the sights which are superficially most attractive to foreigners are situated in those Serbian lands which, although as purely Serb as the country round Belgrade, are under alien rule; in this way travellers who have no knowledge of the language, and