

lain, ride for thy life,—for thy life". Such a direction upon an envelope would, in this nineteenth century, cast considerable doubt upon the sanity of the writer thereof. But the times are changed.

But people grumbled hugely, and Mr. Palmer, who eventually introduced great reforms into the service, complains a little less than a hundred years ago, that the post, instead of being the swiftest, is almost the slowest conveyance in the country, and that though from the great improvement in the roads, other carriers have proportionately mended their speed, yet the post is as slow as ever.

But the penny post came and put a stop to all this. Some who read this page will remember the scarlet coated postman of their early days, with his chimney-pot hat, adorned with a cockade. His uniform probably cost nearly three times as much as that of the busy Mercury of to-day, and he took things considerably more easily.

But these are days of express speed in this as in other matters, and the work of the Post Office never ceases, now, by night and day.

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The Stamps of Servia.

BY CHARLES FRANCIS ROBINSON.

Servia is a kingdom belonging to Balkan peninsula of Europe, lying between Bosnia on the west and Bulgaria and Roumania on the east, and between the Turkish province of Albania on the south and the Austrian Military Frontier on the north. From Bosnia it is separated by the Dwina, from Austrian and Roumanian territory by the Danube and the Save, and from Bulgaria partly by Timok. Some parts of the southern frontier are indicated by mount-

ains but elsewhere there are no natural boundries. In shape Servia is an irregular trapezium, situated between 42° 30' and 45° N, Lat. and 19° and 22° 30' E. Long.

The area is 18,760 sq. miles, and the population was estimated at the end of 1884 to be 1,902, 419, thus giving a density of about 100 to the sq. mile. This low density, only about one-third of that of the U. S., is explained by the nature of the surface, the inland position, the defective communications with the exterior, and the absence of manufacturing industries. As a general rule the Servian highlands consist of detached groups of mountains and conical hills with gentle slopes rising from verdant valleys, and they are mostly covered to the top with forests, chiefly of oaks and beech, the higher summits in the south also with conifers. But the plains, though numerous, are of no great extent, and occur chiefly along the banks of the rivers.

The stamps of Servia first appeared in 1866, consisting of 1, 2, 10, 20 and 40p. They exist in various varieties, until in 1868 they appeared imperf. The next year a new issue came out, being perf. 9½, 11 and 12. consisting of the following denominations 1, 10, 15, 20, 25, 35, 40 and 50p. In 1872 the 1p appeared imperf., with the addition of a 2p black, and, in 1879, some of the higher values appeared perf. with wider margins. A new and beautiful design appeared in 1881, of the denomination of 5, 10, 20, 25 and 50p., and a 1d. They were perf. 13. Another design somewhat similar, came to view in 1890; it consisting of the same denominations as the last issue.

In 1894 the design was again changed; this time the head being in an oval frame instead of a square one as before. It was on white wove paper and consisted of the usual denominations. The only outside issue indulged in by Servia is a series of unpaid letter stamps; having issued no envelopes, wrappers etc. The stamps of Servia can reach the collection of them illionaires as well as the school-boy, as the catalogue value extends from 2c to \$25.00.