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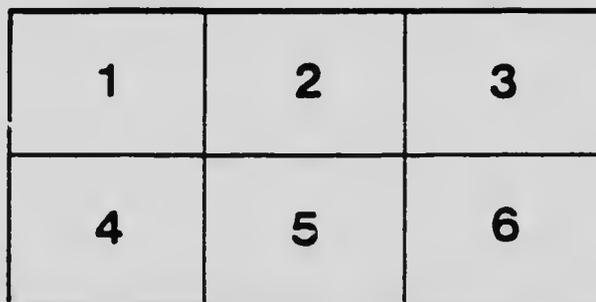
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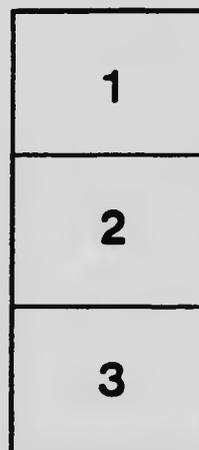
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THE SOUTHERN
SLAVS

BY

NEVILL FORBES

READER IN RUSSIAN IN THE UNIVERSITY

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MAP

(from a map supplied by Sifton and Praed)

Between pp. 16 and 17

THE SOUTHERN SLAVS

At the outbreak of this war one often heard the question, 'What have we to do with Serbia?' and to such a question it could until the end of July 1914 with a considerable amount of truth have been answered, 'Nothing.' There is scarcely any race in Europe of which most people in England know less than they do of the Serbs, and there is no European country with which we have had less intercourse. This ignorance is not altogether our own fault; it is the result partly of geographical, partly of historical facts which have till now contributed to distract our attention from the western half of the Balkan peninsula.

There never has been any vital historical, political, commercial, or sentimental reason for England to be interested in Serbia, at any rate no reason obvious enough to outweigh the difficulties which have until now prevented closer acquaintance. But the war has changed all that. The Serbians have suddenly become our allies. Our old attitude of ignorance and indifference, which even the bravery of the Serbians during the two Balkan wars of 1912 and 1913 was only able to turn into one of qualified approval, is now no longer possible, and it is gratifying to notice that the endurance and valour of this brave people are now thoroughly appreciated in this country. But at the same time it is absolutely necessary that more light should now be thrown on the race whose ultimate destinies formed the

pretext for Austria-Hungary to initiate the present war. Serbia's share in the European crisis which preceded the war has been admirably described by Sir Valentine Chirol in his pamphlet published by the University Press. Our object now is to examine the Serbian problem from the historical and ethnographical points of view. The Serbian or Southern Slav question was undoubtedly one of the subsidiary causes of the war, and it will be one of those most difficult of solution at its close ; it is, therefore, important that public opinion in England should be better informed on this question than it is at present. There is abundant and excellent literature on Serbia and the Southern Slavs in English ; I need only mention the names of Mr. Seton-Watson, Mr. Mijatović, Mr. Vivian, and Miss Durham. But even these have not been able to make their subject really familiar to the English public. The reasons why Serbia has never been able vitally to interest the English are plain enough, and are worth mentioning before going any further into the subject.

The early history of independent Serbia is so remote that it cannot thrill us, and seems almost mythical. Then throughout the Middle Ages right up to our own times, from the end of the fourteenth century to the beginning of the nineteenth, the country was an obscure province of the Ottoman Empire. During the national revivals which characterized the nineteenth century the Serbs fought as bravely for their freedom as any other of the oppressed nationalities ; but their past had not been sufficiently brilliant to provide a Byron, nor their sufferings at the hands of the Turks sufficiently notorious to find a Gladstone to champion their cause in this country ; in this respect they have always been at a disadvantage compared with Greece and Bulgaria,

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

consequently no opportunity of informing themselves accurately, visit, let us say, for instance, Dalmatia; knowing that Dalmatia is an Austrian province, but ignorant of the fact that the population of Dalmatia is purely Serb, they give Austria credit not only for the hotels, roads, and railways, which is quite right, but also for all they see that they admire, which is most unfair. Serbia, within its present political boundaries, has not enough to attract tourists in large and lucrative numbers; it is neither sufficiently civilized nor sufficiently uncivilized to do so. Montenegro is, but then it is tiny, and nobody knows that the Montenegrins are Serbs. The first time I was starting for Montenegro a well-educated English lady said to me, 'I suppose the natives are black?' It thus comes about that though quite a fair number of English people have at one time or another been in Serb lands of some sort, only a few of them realize the fact, while the number who have spent any time in the kingdom of Serbia is extremely small.

The Serbs are one of the Slav family of nations, which occupy the greater part of eastern Europe.

It is customary to divide the Slav nations into three groups, the eastern, western, and the southern. This division is based on differences of language. The eastern group, to take the largest first, consists of the Russians, who in 1900 numbered in Europe and Asia altogether about ninety-five millions.

The large majority of these, about sixty millions, are the Russians properly so called, who inhabit the larger part of European Russia and parts of Siberia. In philological books they are called Great Russians, though they do not know themselves by this name. In the west of European Russia there are five millions

or so of so-called White Russians, whose language differs very slightly from that of the Great Russians.

Then in the south of European Russia are the so-called Little Russians, whose language differs very considerably from that of the Great Russians, so much so that they maintain it is altogether a distinct language, a claim which the Great Russians do not admit. The Little Russians number about thirty millions, twenty-six of which live in southern Russia and four in eastern Galicia.

The Great Russians never call themselves anything but Russians and the Little Russians similarly only speak of themselves as Russians. The terms Great Russia and Little Russia are merely translations of the mediaeval Latin geographical terms *Russia major* and *Russia minor*, and have never been used in the country itself. The Little Russians are sometimes called Little Russians by the Great Russians, but the two peoples usually refer to each other by rather derogatory nicknames and each maintain that they represent the true and original Russian stock. The Little Russians who inhabit Galicia are also sometimes called Ruthenians, because that part of Russia used to be known as Red Russia. Those in South Russia are sometimes called the people of the Ukraine, which merely means the Borderland.

The western group, which is the next largest, includes the Poles, who number about seventeen millions, the Chekhs or Bohemians, and Slovaks, about nine millions, and the dwindling community of Lusatian Wends or Serbs in Saxony and Prussia, who to-day number barely 150,000. Reference to these latter will again be made later.

The southern group includes the Bulgarians, who are

far from being purely Slav in origin or in temperament, but speak a purely Slavonic language, and number about five millions; the Slovenes, in the south-western corner of Austria, about one and a half million in number; and the Serbs or Serbo-Croatians, who total between nine and ten millions.

On looking at an ethnographic map of the Slavonic peoples it will be noticed that while the eastern and western groups are contiguous, these are separated from the southern group by a substantial layer of non-Slavonic nationalities, Roumanians, Hungarians, and Germans.

It is now generally accepted that the original home of the Slavonic peoples, or rather the home which for all practical historical purposes may be considered original, lay to the north of the Carpathians, between the rivers Vistula and Dnieper; probably it included the whole upper basins of these two rivers.

Those Slavonic peoples who are now called the Southern Slavs must gradually have migrated south, first over the Carpathians into the plains of Pannonia and the valley of the Danube, and later across the Danube into the Balkan peninsula. It is perfectly well known that the Balkan peninsula was entered by the Slavs only comparatively lately, towards the end of the sixth century, but when they crossed the Carpathians, and what happened from that time till they crossed the Danube, can only be conjectured.

The reason for their original move southwards is probably to be found in the irruptions of alien hosts to which the whole mass of the Slavonic people were subjected from the fourth century onwards. First the Goths from the west, then the Huns from the east, and finally the Avars, also from Asia, drove great wedges

into their midst. The last named completely overwhelmed and took possession of Pannonia, the modern Hungary, in the second half of the sixth century, at the same time establishing their dominion over the Slavs who were then settled there.

It was during the first half of the seventh century that the Slavs, together with the Avars, began to penetrate from Pannonia across the Danube into the Balkan peninsula. At that time Byzantium was fully occupied with wars against Persia and could spare no energy to withstand the inroads from the north; the Emperor was even compelled to pay the invaders tribute.

In the second half of the seventh century the power of the Avars rapidly declined, and the Slavs, having freed themselves from their domination, began to invade the peninsula on their own account in ever-increasing numbers. They overran the whole peninsula and reached the shores of the Aegean; the Emperor was helpless, and was glad to agree to their possession of the territory they had occupied if they would undertake to prevent further invasions of other barbarians from the north and recognize his suzerainty.

Who were the inhabitants of the northern half of the Balkan peninsula whom the Slavonic invaders drove southwards and dispossessed is not definitely known, but they were probably of the same race as the modern Albanians, i.e. Indo-European, but neither Greek nor Slav.

The Slavs who occupied the whole of the northern half of the peninsula were not a united people, but a loosely-knit congeries of tribes, with nothing in common but their language.

These tribes, however, very early began to group themselves into two main divisions, an eastern and a western.

The eastern division consisted of those Slavs who subsequently came to be known as Bulgarians; the western included the Serbs, the Croatians, and the Slovenes.

The tribes of the eastern division were originally without doubt as purely Slavonic as those of the western, but in the second half of the seventh century they were invaded by a comparatively small body of people of Turkish origin, who came from the banks of the Volga and were called *Bolgary*. These subdued the Slavonic peoples settled in the eastern part of the Balkan peninsula and imposed their name on them. Their language, however, they lost; together with it, they themselves rapidly became submerged by the people they had conquered.

Nevertheless, the effect of their presence has been permanent. The Bulgarians, although technically they are Slavs, have very few of the characteristics of the other Slavonic peoples. Besides their Tartar conquerors, they absorbed the remnants of many other races which had from time to time visited that part of the peninsula and left some of their number behind.

The elements which have gone to make up the Bulgarian nation include remains of the original inhabitants of Thrace, a largely preponderating mass of Slavs, and numbers of other races such as Goths, Huns, Avars, Tartars of various kinds, Gipsies, and Turks.

In contrast to this, the Serbs are a far more purely Slavonic people. This is said by no means as a disparagement to the Bulgarians; they are an extremely brave, patriotic, methodical, industrious, and pertinacious people, only, compared with the Serbs, it is generally admitted that they are of very much more mixed racial origin. This fact is illustrated by their language,

amongst other things. Although it is a purely Slavonic language, and contains probably a no larger number of Turkish words than does Serbian, yet in some respects¹ it has lost its typically Slavonic character and assimilated certain peculiarly Balkan characteristics, shared also by the Roumanian and the Albanian, but not by the Serbian language.

Bulgaria, too, was much more completely subjugated by the Turks than the western half of the peninsula. It lies nearer Constantinople, and so it was both more important for the Turks to obliterate all national feeling and at the same time easier for them to do so than in the case of their more outlying provinces. A favourite and effectual means towards this end on the part of the Turks was the planting of numerous Turkish colonies in Bulgaria, especially in the eastern part of the country and in that part between the lower reaches of the Danube and the Black Sea known as the Dobrudsha, which now belongs to Roumania. Though these Turkish colonies have been much reduced in strength since the establishment of Bulgarian independence, in 1878, they played during the several centuries of their existence a considerable part in the formation of the modern Bulgarian nationality.

So much for the Slavs who settled in the eastern part of the Balkan peninsula ; now let us turn to the western part, or rather the western part of the northern half of the peninsula.

The dividing line between the Bulgarians in the east and the Serbs in the west of the Balkan peninsula has from the earliest times been the river Timok, which rises about half-way between Sofia in Bulgaria and Nish in

¹ Notably in the complete loss of the case-endings and in the placing of the definite article after the noun.

Serbia and flows thence northwards into the Danube. This river to-day in its lower reaches forms the political boundary between the two kingdoms.

The whole of the country from the river Timok in the east as far west as Istria, bounded on the north by the Danube and the Drave, and on the south by the Adriatic, is inhabited by the Serb race, which numbers, as has already been mentioned, between nine and ten millions. The fact that this considerable territory is divided into seven different political divisions makes it difficult to remember that, as regards population, it is homogeneous. People look at an ordinary map and see innumerable political boundaries which are difficult to grasp and still more difficult to memorize; they usually never stop to think who the inhabitants of this territory are, but quickly give up the whole thing in despair. But if an ethnographical map, which takes small account of political divisions, is consulted, it can be seen at a glance what a compact mass the Serb race forms.

It has been already remarked that the Slav peoples who occupied the Balkan peninsula were a vast collection of tribes without organization and without cohesion. Their original tribal names have not been preserved. They were generally known as *Slovene*,¹ a word of obscure origin which has provided an inexhaustible feast for philologists. A favourite theory amongst scholars of Slavonic nationality is that the name is connected with a series of words denoting clearness and intelligibility, just as German professors derive the name *deutsch* from an exactly similar source. The idea is, of course, the familiar one of emphasizing your own intelligibility and that of your fellow countrymen at the expense of your less enlightened neighbours.

¹ Singular *Slovenin*, plural *Slovene*.

This name appears in Russia as *Slavyane*,¹ and in our own language as Slav or Slavonic. The group of consonants *sl*, however, was not tolerated either in Greek or in Latin, and so in the former a *k* or a *th* and in the latter a *c* was inserted between the *s* and the *l*, giving the Greek form *Sklavini*² and the Latin *Sclavni*,³ with the Italian equivalent *Schiavoni*. The name has had a curious history and one naturally distasteful to its owners; numerous captives of war from the Balkan peninsula came to be known in Italian as *schiavi*, and the word has passed into French, English, German, and Dutch as *esclave*, *slave*, *Sklave*, &c. That the name *Slovene* was prevalent amongst the Slavs as a whole, and was not merely in local use amongst the Southern Slavs, is proved by the fact that it was used by various branches of the Slavs of themselves not only in the south, but also in the west on the Elbe and in the east on the Dnieper.

It is curious to notice that the Slavs have never been known by this name to their western neighbours of Germanic race. From the earliest times the Germans have called them Winden or Wenden, as they do in Saxony and further south in Styria to this day. This name *Slovene* was used by and was applied to all the Slavonic tribes who entered the Balkan peninsula, and is still used of themselves and by other Slavs of the Slovenes, the westernmost and smallest of the Southern Slav nationalities, who live in Carniola and Istria, in Austria. It has been pointed out how those Slavs who settled in the eastern part of the peninsula gradually became separated from the other Slavs further west and eventually com-

¹ Singular *Slavyanin*, plural *Slavyane*.

² *Σκλαβηνοί*, *Σκλάβοι*, and *Σθλάβοι*.

³ Or *Sclavini*, *Sclavi*.

bined to form the Bulgarian nationality. The reasons were partly political and partly ethnographical ; in the process they lost completely their Slavonic names and changed their Slavonic character. They were originally known as Slovene, and came to be called only Bulgarians. This loss of the original national name is analogous to that which took place in Russia, where the Slavs abandoned their own name and adopted that of their foreign invaders.

The Slavs in the western part of the peninsula were also originally known only as *Slovene*, and until the ninth century they were never mentioned by any other name ; no doubt they had tribal names, but these have not survived. Gradually, however, these tribes would seem to have become consolidated into two main groups, identical in kind, but different in name ; these two groups are known as the Serbs and the Croatians, who together form the Serbo-Croatian nationality, the people that is usually implied when the Southern Slavs are spoken of.

The names of these two groups of the same people first appear in the ninth century, until which time they had been known only as Slovene, in Greek *Sklaviní*, and their country only as *Sklavinía* in Greek and as *Selavenia* or *Selavonia* in Latin. The names Croatian and Serb themselves are probably those of two out of the many other tribes which either by reason of their size or their power attracted into their orbit and overshadowed their neighbours of kindred race. The one fact about their origin which is clear is that the Serbs composed the eastern and the Croatians the western half of this nationality, and that this distinction existed from the very beginning.

Before going any further it is necessary to study for a moment the history of these names. The Serbs are

first mentioned by the name Sorabi by a French chronicler in the year 822. From that time onwards they are spoken of by the Byzantine historians as Serbs. The name itself is not without interest, because it is also the name of a Slavonic people, now rapidly dwindling in numbers, who live in the north of Saxony and in the south of the Prussian province of Brandenburg. This people, which was once of considerable size and covered most of eastern Germany, is known in the mediaeval chronicles as Sorabi. They still call themselves Serb and their language *serbski* or *serski*, in German *Sorbisch*, though their country is generally called *Lužyce*, in German Lausitz; in English these Slavs are generally referred to, if at all, as Lusatian Wends.

The Serbs of the Balkan peninsula call themselves *Srbi*¹; in the Middle Ages an *l* was often inserted between the *b* and *i*—*Srbli*; in Byzantine Greek the name appears as *Servoi*², their country as *Servia*.³ The β of mediaeval and modern Greek is pronounced as *v* and presumably the forms *Servia* and *Servian*, which have always been used until now in this country, were introduced from a Greek or Latin source in the Middle Ages. The Dutch are the only people besides the Greeks and ourselves who call the country *Servia* and not *Serbia*. The Serbs themselves have always resented our calling them *Servians*, fearing that popular imagination might connect the name with the Latin word *servus* and its derivatives; this childish etymology was actually adopted by mediaeval Latin writers, but needless to say is absolutely false. The real derivation of the name, as of so many other tribal names, remains obscure. It

¹ Singular *Srbin*, plural *Srbi*, the *-r* vowel is a strongly rolled *ur*-sound, as in the Scots pronunciation of e. g. Burns.

² Σέρβοι, Σέρβιοι or Σέρβλοι.

³ Σερβία, Σερβική or Σερβλία.

seemed almost unnecessary to change the name which had become established in English usage merely to make it conform to that generally used on the Continent and by the Serbs themselves, but at the beginning of the war the press was officially requested by the Serbian Legation to do so, and it has now become the generally accepted spelling.

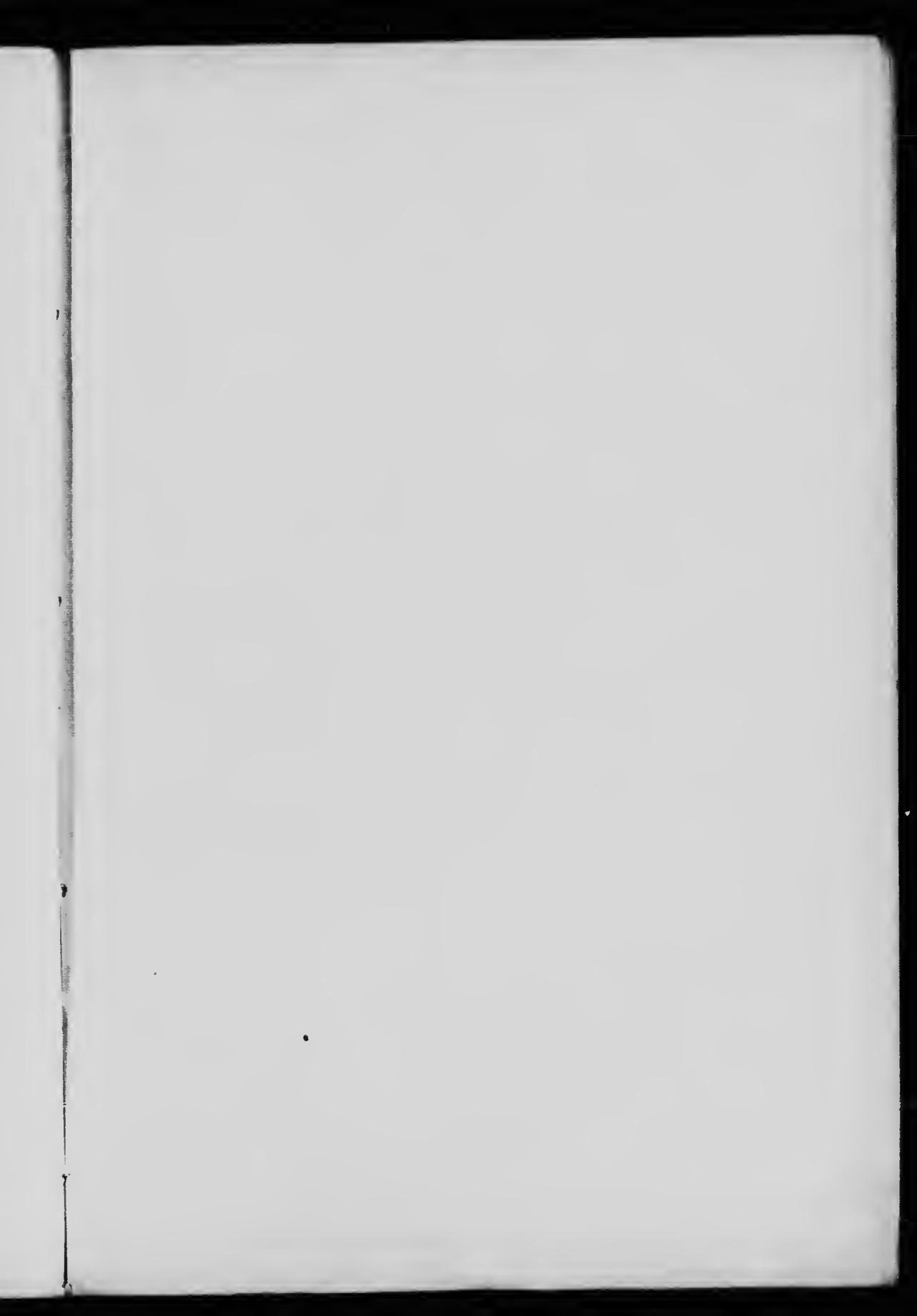
The Croatians are mentioned by name somewhat earlier than the Serbs, soon after 800. The Greeks called them *Khrovatoi* and their country *Khrovatia*¹; the Croatians call themselves *Hrvati*,² and their country *Hrvatsko*. The derivation of this name too is obscure, but in contrast to that of the Serbs it is to be noticed that the name *Hrvat*, short form *Hrvoje*, occurs fairly frequently in the early history of the people as a personal name of princes and others mentioned in Greek chronicles; it also occurs as a tribal name both in Bohemia and in Galicia.

Such is briefly the history of the names of the two halves of that nationality which as a whole, for want of anything better, is still called Serbo-Croatian. From the ethnographical and linguistic point of view this is one people, and this point cannot be too strongly emphasized. To the Byzantine historians they were one,³ and yet to-day it would be impossible to call a man of this nationality 'a Serb or Croatian'; the terms are not interchangeable. Still less would it be possible to call him a Serbo-Croatian. What is it that makes the vital distinction between the two terms, if it is not language?

¹ *Χρωβάτοι, Χρωβατία.*

² Singular *Hrvat* plural *Hrvati*.

³ Witness passages such as *Τὸ τῶν Χρωβάτων ἔθνος, οὓς δὴ καὶ Σέρβους τινὲς καλοῦσι* = the Croatians, whom some also call Serbs, and *τὸ τῶν Σέρβων ἔθνος, οὓς δὴ καὶ Χρωβάτας καλοῦσι* = the Serbs, who are also called Croatians.



THE SERBO-C

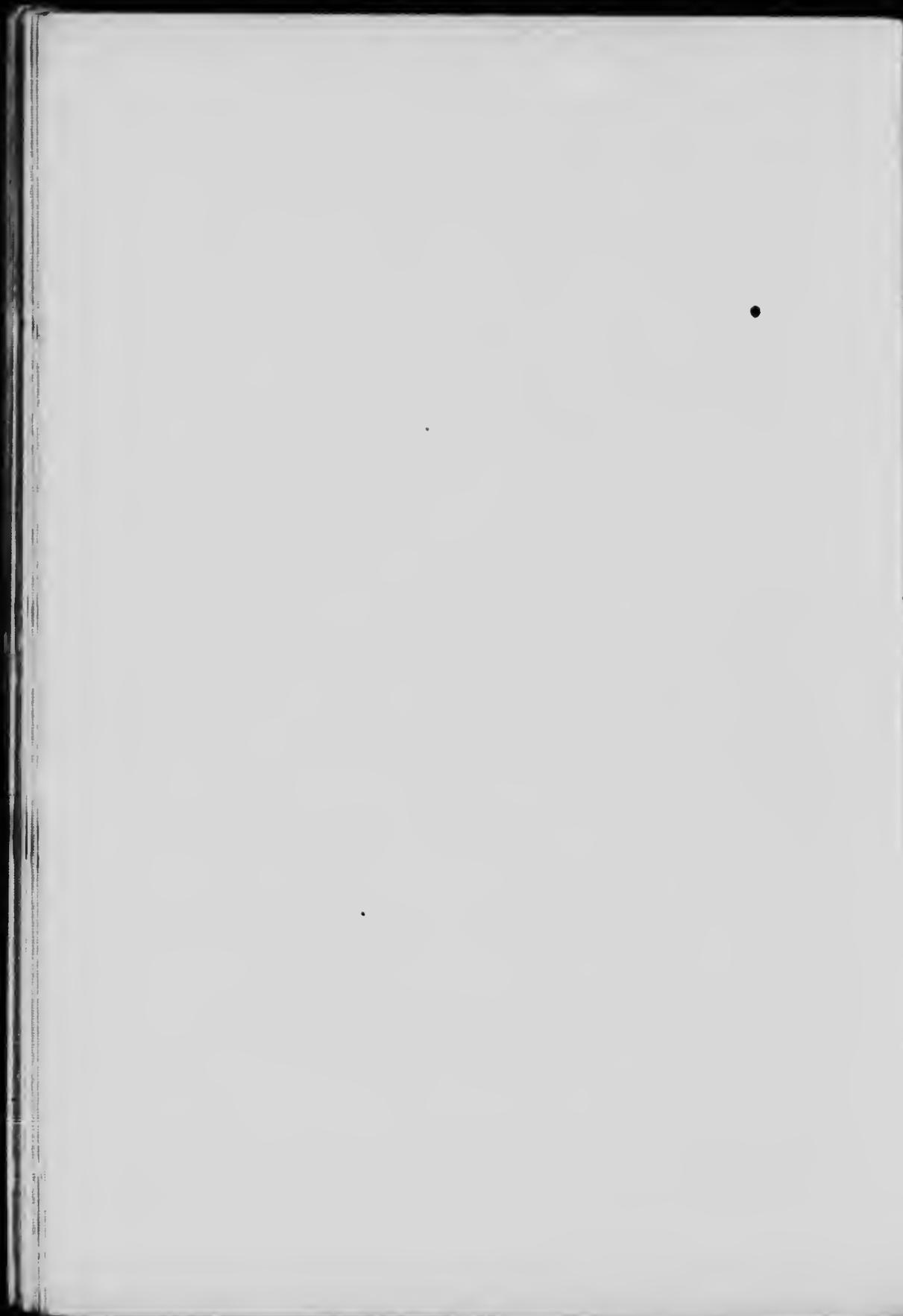


D = Dalmatia

H = Herzegovina

D-D-OATIAN RACE





The Croatians admit that the Serbs are of the same race as themselves and speak, with only slight dialectic differences, the same language, and yet they insist that they are different and maintain their individuality with the utmost desperation. The Serbs, on the other hand, argue that the Croatians are really not Croatians at all; they say that there are no such people as Croatians, and that those who call themselves by that name only do so out of perversity, and are degenerate Serbs. Both these contentions are exaggerated, although there is a certain amount of truth in each. There must have been some fundamental difference in the early tribal days, otherwise the two names would hardly have survived. As the Croatians and Serbs in those early times each attracted to themselves the surrounding kindred tribes and assimilated them, the difference between the two doubtless grew more marked and was still further accentuated by the difficult nature of the country in which they had made their home, which militated against fusion. The mountains and forests impeded communication between the various parts of the country and favoured the continuance of tribal and dialectic differences and even the formation of fresh ones. But even this fact would not have sufficed to keep apart the two halves of this people and cause the perplexing division which we see to-day. The reasons lie far deeper; they are to be found in differences of politics and of religion.

Already at the end of the fourth century, long before the arrival of the Slavs, the boundary between the eastern and the western Roman Empire, and between the dioceses of Dacia and Italia, ran from north to south, from the Danube to the Adriatic, approximately where the political boundary between Serbia and Bosnia and between Montenegro and Herzegovina runs to-day.

Later, when Byzantium and Rome strove against each other for the conversion of souls and for the acquisition of power, the mountainous land of the Croatians and the Serbs became the battle-field of the rival missionaries. Eventually the two peoples, as far as spiritual matters went, turned their backs on each other, the Serbs looking eastwards to Constantinople, the Croatians westwards to Rome, for salvation.

This is the main fact to remember in any consideration of the Southern Slav problem, by which is usually meant the future of the Serbo-Croatian race. It is this difference of religion that has kept the two halves of this nation apart. It has indeed done far more than that, it has made them hostile to each other; and while it has in this way prevented them from developing into a powerful nation, it has at the same time always made it easy for their enemies to the north and south of them to become strong at their expense. It is no exaggeration to say that the power of the Ottoman Empire in Europe and the power of Hungary were only made possible by the religious division of the Serbo-Croatian race and by the weakness of the Serbo-Croatian nationality which this division implied.

The history of this people from the very beginning, however, even before the difference in religion made itself felt, has had a sort of double character; the nation started life, as it were, on parallel lines, and it yet remains to be seen whether the impossible will be achieved and the lines made to converge.

The Croatians occupied the territory between the Drave and the Adriatic, stretching to Istria in the west and eastwards about half way down the Dalmatian coast; the Serbs held all the country to the east of this as far as the lake of Scutari in the south and the Danube

in the north, their eastern neighbours were the Bulgarians and their southern the Greeks and the Albanians.

As regards the geography of this very considerable territory several of its features have had immense influence on the history of its inhabitants. The first is the mountains. Almost the whole of the territory is mountainous, and the mountains grow higher and more inhospitable as they approach the coast ; but generally speaking they are not so formidable in the north as in the south.

As a result of this the Croatians in the north-west were earlier able to profit by the possession of the sea coast than the Serbs in the south-east.

The mountains run from north-west to south-east generally parallel to the coast ; they are of limestone, rocky, barren, and highly impracticable, though to modern eyes very magnificent.

The other most important feature of the geography is the rivers. Between the mountains and the sea there are scarcely any rivers of any size and none of any commercial importance. This fact, combined with the character of the mountains, has always made communication between the interior and the coast extremely difficult, but again this applies more to the south than the north, where the mountains are less forbidding. Practically the whole of the territory inhabited by the Serbs and a good deal of that inhabited by the Croatians is watered by streams running from these mountains northwards, then verging eastwards and eventually falling into the Danube. An exception is the Vardar, which rises in the heart of Serbia, flows southwards through Macedonia, and into the Aegean at Salonika. The general effect of the geographical conditions on the Croatians and the Serbs during the early period of their

history was to emphasize the ethnographical difference between the two peoples, which originally was infinitesimal; and this was still further emphasized by the difference of religion, which was vital. The Croatians, situated in less mountainous country, with easy access to the sea, early came into contact with the Italians, especially the Venetians, on the one hand and with the Hungarians or Magyars on the other. The Croatians occupied a territory far smaller in extent than the Serbs and developed their political life much earlier. The Serbs occupied a very much greater extent of territory, but they were cut off from the sea by the mountains and from intercourse with their neighbours by their generally unfavourable geographical situation. When they did begin to extend their influence and come into contact with the neighbouring peoples it was towards the north-east and south-east that expansion took place. It was especially with Constantinople that they came into contact, and for this of course religion was largely responsible.

The centre from which the Serbs started to develop their state, the political centre of the Serb nation, was the district called Rashka, situated where the boundaries of Serbia and Montenegro now join, i.e. in the upper valleys of the rivers Ibar and Lim; these two rivers are tributaries of the Morava and the Drina respectively, and eventually empty their waters into the Danube. The town of Ras, in this district, is better known under its later name of Novi Bazar (Yeni Pazar, in Turkish, which corresponds to the English name Newmarket), and the district of Rashka originally corresponded approximately to the Turkish Sandjak of that name. To the Serbs this has always been known as Old Serbia, as they regarded it rightly as the cradle of their state.

It would be tedious to go closely into the history of

these early centuries and it would take very long. But there are certain important facts which are easily remembered.

The boundary between the Serbs and the Croats, always a fluctuating one, started about half way down the Dalmatian coast and went up through the westernmost part of the country known to us as Bosnia, between the rivers Una and Vrbas, which are both tributaries of the Save.

The Croats, very early in their career, took a step which was of the greatest moment for their future history and separated them politically from the Serbs more effectually than anything else could have done. In the year 1102, following on the extinction of their own national line of rulers, they allowed their country to be annexed by Hungary and accepted the rule, with the retention of certain national privileges, of the king of that country. As a result of this, ever since that date Croatia and parts of Dalmatia have formed part of Hungary, and in 1526 passed under the rule of the House of Hapsburg. The Serbs meanwhile had extended their influence westwards to the coast and northwards to the Save. The coastal region, roughly the southern part of Dalmatia, they called *Pomorje*, the northern part of the territory was called *Bosna*, and centred round the valley of the river of that name, stretching eastwards as far as the Drina, while Rashka included approximately the western half of the modern kingdom of Serbia. But it must not be thought that at this time the country was united. It was a perfect welter of small principalities, all more or less chronically at war with their neighbours and with each other. What with the Hungarians to the north, the Bulgarians on the east, the Greeks to the south and the Venetians

on the coast, and what with the religious as well as the political hatred and jealousy with which all these enemies entered the fray, there were very few peaceful moments for the Serbs. It was not till the reign of Stephen Nemanya, the first ruler who was able to establish any semblance of unity amongst them, that the Serbs attained political stability; this was during the second half of the twelfth century.

In 1219 one of his sons, Sava, arranged with the authorities on Mount Athos and in Constantinople for the establishment of the self-governing Serbian church, which has maintained its independence ever since, in spite of all the vicissitudes through which the Serbs have passed, and has done much to preserve the spirit of nationality through the centuries of Turkish oppression.

In 1220 Saint Sava, who has become the patron saint of the Serb people, crowned his brother Stephen, also with the concurrence of Constantinople, as first king of Serbia. The history of the rest of this century has little of interest to western peoples, but it was marked by the gradual growth of the political power of the Serbs and by their gradual unification.

The most remarkable of the kings of Serbia was Stephen Dushan, who reigned from 1331-55. He took advantage of the anarchy which crippled Constantinople, and of the eclipse of the Bulgarian empire to consolidate his dominions. He extended their boundaries considerably to the south, and in 1346 was crowned Tsar of the Serbs and of the Greeks. This moment, when Serbia stretched from the Adriatic to the Aegean, and from Bosnia to Thessaly, may be said to be the zenith of its power, though it is to be noted that even at this moment Bosnia, Croatia, and the northern half of Dalmatia were not included within the frontiers of Serbia.

In western Europe this ruler is best known for the Code of Laws which he promulgated in 1349, to which his name has remained attached. After his death, in 1355, the country again relapsed into anarchy, and in 1389 fell a prey to the Turks, who had by that time already devoured a considerable portion of south-eastern Europe. This famous battle, known in Serbian as *Kosovo polje*, in German as *das Amselfeld*, the battle of the Field of Blackbirds, is the turning-point in Serbian history. Although they fought with extraordinary valour, the Serbs were completely overcome by the invaders, and from thenceforth for four centuries Serbia was a province of the Ottoman Empire.

Bosnia, which had for a short time passed under Hungarian rule, like Croatia, but had managed to free itself, maintained its independence for another century, but in 1463 that country, and in 1482 Herzegovina, were also conquered by the Turks and became part of their empire. After that date the only scrap of independent Serb territory left was the rocky and inhospitable mountain fastness of Montenegro, since Dalmatia had passed completely under Venetian control. Montenegro, which is the translation in the Venetian dialect of the Serb name *Crna Gora*, or the Black Mountain, managed to preserve a precarious though at the same time quite fruitless independence throughout the centuries, never falling completely under Venetian or under Turkish dominion. Needless to say, the population of Montenegro is purely Serb and speaks exactly the same language as the Serbs of the kingdom of Serbia.

A few words must be said about Bosnia, the Alsace-Lorraine of the Balkans. This most beautiful country has always been a bone of contention amongst all its

neighbours and the cause of ceaseless agitation, which has culminated in the present European cataclysm.

Bosnia is inhabited by Serbs, but its population has always included a strong Roman Catholic element, and since Roman Catholic is synonymous with Croatian, and Serb with Orthodox, the Serbs of the kingdom of Serbia and the Croatians each claim the inhabitants as belonging to their nationality. As a matter of fact Bosnia has always, both in spiritual and political affairs, exhibited a tendency to independence. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries the Manichæan heresy spread from Constantinople through Bulgaria into Serbia and found a very warm welcome in Bosnia. In that country it was looked on as the only true form of Christianity, and the firm hold it took of the population naturally involved the rulers of the country in difficulties with the spiritual authorities both of the western and of the eastern Church, who did not favour the reintroduction of primitive Christianity. This heresy, which was in the Balkan peninsula known as the Bogumil heresy, hypothetically after the name of an itinerant priest who preached it, was never eradicated in Bosnia, in spite of all the wars waged against it, until the arrival of the Turks. The Mohammedan religion appealed to the peoples of Bosnia as strongly as the Manichæan heresy had done, and they became converts by the thousand to Islam, a faith to which they have adhered with the greatest devotion ever since, and which still claims the worship of half a million pure-blooded Serbs. Naturally enough this religious independence, or rather religious attachment to an alien religion, has militated against the growth of that spirit of nationality which was cultivated on the one hand by the Roman Catholic Croatians and on the other by the Orthodox Serbs,

Of the Christian population of Bosnia at the present day by far the larger part is Orthodox and is therefore counted Serb. The language spoken throughout Bosnia by the members of all three confessions is, with only the slightest dialectic variations, the same Serbian as is spoken in the kingdom of Serbia. As regards political feeling at the present time it may be said that the Orthodox favour the Serbs, the Roman Catholics lean towards the Croatians, while the Mussulmans remain neutral.

What is true of Bosnia is equally true of Herzegovina, which lies between Bosnia and Dalmatia. The same conditions apply here, but with this difference, that the Serbs of Herzegovina are more keen about their Church and their politics than are those of Bosnia. It is from the mountains of Herzegovina that originated the risings against Ottoman oppression which ultimately liberated the Serb lands from the Turks.

This country was originally called by the Serbs *Hum* or *Zahlumie*, the Hills, or the Country beyond the Hills, and only acquired its name of Herzegovina in 1448 when a local prince took to himself the German title of Herzog, or Duke, of Saint Sava in honour of the national saint and hero whose remains were buried in the monastery of Mileshevo in Old Serbia.

From the end of the fourteenth century to the end of the nineteenth century the whole of the Serb people, with inconsiderable exceptions, was under Turkish domination. When the Turks conquered, they conquered, and did their best to extinguish the nationality of the peoples they vanquished. Everybody was robbed of his property unless he became a convert to Mohammedanism, and all class distinctions were swept away. The Serbs were allowed to retain their national Church, it is true,

and this organization was one of the factors which throughout these dreary centuries helped to keep the flame of nationality alive. At the same time the importance of the Serbian Church must not be exaggerated. The Eastern is the most conservative and the most passive of the Churches. It has never done anything to educate or improve the lot of its fold. The Southern Slavs are not naturally an intensely religious people, and from the point of view of their own interest the Turks were quite wise to abolish the political organizations of the Serbs and their private property, and allow them to keep their Church. In later years the Church has doubtless played a political part in the Balkans, but it is rather the people that wishes to use the Church for its own ends, than the Church that wishes to do anything for the people.

The results of the Turkish conquest for the Serb race may be briefly summed up as follows. Those who preferred their wealth and their social status to their religion and their nationality became Mohammedans, which in effect meant that they became more Turkish than the Turks. This was especially the case in Bosnia, the people of which had always shown a somewhat eccentric spirit. Those Serbs who could not acquiesce in Turkish domination migrated in vast numbers to southern Hungary. Here they founded colonies, and to this day there is a considerable Serb population in Hungary, which has its centre in Novi Sad, on the Danube, known in German as Neusatz and in Magyar as Uj-Vidék. Of the Serbs who did not emigrate and did not go over to Islam, the young and more promising males were annually swept off to Constantinople to swell the numbers of the New Army, the *Yeri Cheri*, known to us as the Janissaries. The more adventurous among those who escaped this fate betook themselves to the forests and mountains; here

they established a robber organization which both harassed the Turks, enabled its members to enjoy an exciting and not unprofitable liberty, and also helped to keep the spirit of nationality alive. Another factor which contributed to the same end was the rise, after the catastrophic battle on *Kosovo polje* in 1389, of a whole cycle of epic poems which celebrated the deeds of the national heroes in the wars against the Turks which had preceded this battle, the episodes of the battle itself, and the bravery of those who, as outlaws and adventurers, maintained the national reputation for bravery even after the wreck of the ship of state. These folk-poems are of extraordinary beauty and simplicity, and constitute the chief glory of Serbian literature. In the absence of all education and the complete stagnation of the intellectual life of the people, this immense oral literature became for successive generations of Serbs a regular school of history.

Looking back over the first centuries of the history of the Serbs and the Croatians, from the end of the ninth to the end of the eighteenth century, it is easy to see how it was that this race was so little known in western Europe. From the very first, the difference in religion between the Roman Catholic Croatians in the west and the Orthodox Serbs in the east militated against their uniting to form a single and compact nation able to command the respect of their nearer neighbours and attract the attention of those more remote. Both Croatians and Serbs, unable to combine together politically, fell all the more easily victims to the aggressions of the surrounding countries. Croatia in 1102 was absorbed by Hungary and the Croatians have ever since been completely overshadowed by the Magyars. Very few people outside Austria-Hungary realize that the Croatians are Slavs

and speak the same language as the Serbs. Dalmatia was, until Napoleonic times, under the control of Venice, and though in the Middle Ages the republic of Ragusa made good its independence and asserted its Slavonic character, the civilization of Dalmatia was until the Slav revival of the nineteenth century essentially Italian in character.

Serbia Proper and Old Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Macedonia, were one after the other submerged in the Turkish flood and for four centuries were virtually unheard of in western Europe.

The Serb colonies in Hungary could not abuse the hospitality shown them in their new home by emphasizing their nationality, while Montenegro, the only place where the flag of Slav nationality was kept flying, was so insignificant that everybody forgot about it except Russia, and indeed all its energies were required in the mere effort not to succumb. The history of the Serbs during the nineteenth century is one continuous struggle against Turkey in the south and Austria-Hungary in the north for the liberation of the people and for the re-establishment of some sort of independent national life. When we take everything into account it is surprising, not that the Serbs have done so little, but that they have done so much. Completely isolated from the coast, impoverished by centuries of Turkish extortion, with only occasional help from Russia, the renaissance of Serbia, which culminated in the reconquest of Old Serbia and the joining up of the frontiers of Serbia and Montenegro as a result of the two Balkan wars of 1912 and 1913, is really a remarkable achievement.

Until last year the Serbs and Croatians were living in four different states, namely Serbia, Montenegro, Turkey, and Austria-Hungary, and were split up into no less than

seven political divisions, namely, the kingdom of Serbia ; the kingdom (formerly the principality) of Montenegro ; Macedonia, and the Sandjak of Novi Bazar in Turkey ; Dalmatia, which is a province of the Austrian Crown ; Croatia and Srem, or Slavonia, provinces of the Hungarian Crown ; Banat and Bachka, which are those southern portions of Hungary Proper inhabited by the Serbs ; and Bosnia and Herzegovina, anomalous provinces which since their annexation by Austria-Hungary six years ago have stood to the Dual Monarchy politically in the same relation as Alsace and Lorraine stand to the German Empire.

Since then, one of these, the Turkish empire, has been eliminated ; Kosovo Polje was avenged, after 523 years, at Kumanovo, the northern part of Macedonia has been added to the kingdom of Serbia and the Sandjak of Novi Bazar or Old Serbia, the real Balkan home of the Serb race, has been divided between Serbia and Montenegro.

Even thus the Serbs have still to send their parliamentary representatives to five different legislatures, namely, Belgrade, Cetinje, Vienna, Buda-Pesth and Sarajevo ; and so it is not surprising that the consummation of national unity is a slow and arduous process. Needless to say the Austrians and the Hungarians have done all they possibly could to make the most of the accidental political barriers which have split up the Serbs. They have also done their best to foment the discord between Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Mohammedan, which in itself was quite enough to prevent co-operation between the different factions of the Serb people. As long as Serbia, both in political and in economic matters, submitted to Austrian dictation and was useful to Austria in the process of pushing Turkey out of Europe, she was flattered ; as soon as Serbia began to grow strong and

become a focus which could ultimately attract and concentrate the scattered elements of the race into one powerful whole, she was attacked.

The principal thing that makes a Serb different from a Croatian is, as has been said, religion ; but religion in this case connotes politics. The Southern Slavs are far keener about politics than they are about religion ; and thus it comes about that Serb means one who looks to Belgrade as the ultimate political and intellectual centre of the nation, while Croatian means one whose ideal is the absorption of the whole Serb race, together with the Croatians, in the Roman Catholic Austro-Hungarian monarchy. As a rule Serb means Orthodox and Croatian means Roman Catholic, but this is not always the case ; in Dalmatia there are a large number of Roman Catholics who call themselves Serbs, and are therefore anti-Austrian. But in general the rule holds good that the difference between Croatians and Serbs is not ethnographic nor linguistic but religious and political ; they are of the same race and speak the same language, the only difference being that the Croatians use the Latin alphabet and the Serbs the Cyrillic, which is very much like the Russian and is founded on Greek ; in course of time, owing to various external influences, the vocabulary of the one language has come to be slightly different from that of the other, and there have always been slight dialectic differences in pronunciation. As regards the ultimate solution of the Southern Slav problem, it is safe to say that federation in some form or other is the only possible one. There is a strong party in Serbia which wishes to force all Bosnians, Croatians, and Dalmatians, &c., to call themselves Serbs and to bring them directly under the political control of Belgrade, and there is an equally obstinate section of opinion in Agram, the capital

of Croatia, which would never consent to such a course. Bosnia, always an apple of discord, is divided between the two camps. The Orthodox Serbs in Bosnia it is true far outnumber the Roman Catholics, but the latter have up till now had the advantage of the protection of Vienna. The large Mohammedan element in Bosnia makes the problem still more difficult. They are probably the only Slavs who regret the gradual retreat of the Turks from Europe, and though they are purely Serb in origin and in language, neither the Orthodox Serbs nor the Roman Catholic Croatians have as yet been able to culist their political sympathies. On the other hand there has been a small but steadily growing number of people during the last ten years both in Serbia and in the Serb lands of the Austro-Hungarian empire who saw that the progress of the whole Serb race could only be attained by some sort of agreement between the Croatians and the Serbs. This agreement it was foreseen would entail sacrifices on both sides, it would have to be a compromise. But the sacrifices would be those rather of national vanity than of essential principles. The people who arrived at these reasonable and desirable views came to be known as the Serbo-Croatian coalition and their activity was displayed principally in Croatia, where a large number of the most prominent professional men joined the party. The aim of the coalition was to establish the unity of the Serb race, including the Croatians, either outside the Austro-Hungarian empire or inside it, if no opposition were offered by Vienna and Buda-Pesth. Needless to say in both these capitals, not to mention the Vatican, the project was looked on with the utmost alarm, and steps were immediately taken to prevent its realization. Parliamentary government in Croatia was suspended and the activities of the coalition party

automatically ceased. A dictatorship was established in Agram, and for the last few years all the Serb lands of Austria - Hungary have been virtually under martial law.

The alarm of Vienna was naturally increased when Serbia and Montenegro emerged from the two successive Balkan wars of 1912 and 1913 with an accession instead of a diminution both of territory and of power. It was understood that Serbia, by doubling as she did both her size and population, would so increase in material prosperity as to become a dangerously attractive magnet to the Serb elements in the Dual Monarchy. The prospective union of the different parts of the Serb race was one of the causes of the present war, and it is to be hoped that it will be one of the first things that will be consummated when it is over.

