

VARIOUS

BLACKWOOD'S
EDINBURGH MAGAZINE,
VOLUME 59, NO. 364,
FEBRUARY 1846

Various

**Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine,
Volume 59, No. 364, February 1846**

«Public Domain»

Various

Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, Volume 59, No. 364, February 1846
/ Various — «Public Domain»,

Содержание

SERVIA AND THE "SERVIAN QUESTION."	5
THE STUDENT OF SALAMANCA	23
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	33

Various

Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, Volume 59, No. 364, February 1846

SERVIA AND THE "SERVIAN QUESTION."

The principality of Servia was, a few years since, scarcely known to the English public except as an obscure province of the Ottoman empire, into which few travellers had penetrated; and of the population, internal resources, &c., of which, little information existed, and little curiosity was felt. But the singular political drama of which it has lately been the theatre, and the patriotic resolution by which its people, though deprived of support from their legitimate suzerain, the Sultan, menaced by the power of Russia, and abandoned to their fate by the other great powers of Europe, have yet succeeded in establishing their independence, and maintaining in his place the ruler whom they had chosen, has invested Servia with a degree of interest in the eyes of Europe, which gives value to whatever tends to dispel our ignorance of a country, which, by the new position it has assumed, has shown good title to take rank as "the youngest member of the European family." A work, therefore, which should give the same clear insight, even to a limited extent, into the present condition and future prospects of Servia, as was given some years since in regard to Hungary and Transylvania, by the well-known volumes of Mr Paget, would at this time be a valuable addition to our literature; but we are compelled to say, that this desideratum is far from being adequately supplied by the publication now before us. The author's descriptive powers are by no means of a high order; – mountain and valley, castle and river, pass before us, in his pages, without any definite impression being produced of their features or scenery; and while page after page is filled with criticisms of the accommodations and *cuisine* at his different halting-places, and verbatim reports of dialogues, on trivial subjects, between *Author*, on the one part, and *Renegade*, *Cadi*, *Dervish*, *President*, and other *dramatis personæ*, on the other, we look in vain for that extent and accuracy of information which we might have expected from a traveller who has enjoyed more than ordinary opportunities of mixing familiarly with Servians of all ranks and degrees, from the prince to the peasant and making himself acquainted with their feelings and national character. The deficiency of political information would appear even more remarkable. Though the author was personally acquainted with M. Petronevich, one of the leaders of the National party, whom he visited in his exile at Widdin; and though he was subsequently resident at Belgrade for some time after the restoration of this able minister and his colleague, M. Wucicz, to their country, scarcely an allusion escapes him throughout, to the political movements which led either to their banishment or their recall. As various circumstances and expressions, however, lead us to suppose that Mr Paton's tour may have had reference to objects which do not appear on the surface of the narrative, this mysterious silence may not be without good reasons; and we shall deal with him, accordingly, simply as a traveller in a hitherto untrodden track, which we hope, ere long, to see more fully explored. Mr Paget, we believe, is now a naturalized denizen of Transylvania: cannot he find leisure for an excursion across the Save?

Mr Paton announces himself, in the title-page, as the author of a work entitled "The Modern Syrians," with which it has not been our good fortune to meet; but from the conclusion of which we presume the thread of the present narrative is to be taken up, as he presents himself, *sans ceremonie*, on the pier of Beyrout, preparing to embark on board an Austrian steamer for Constantinople: – "I have been four years in the East, and feel that I have had quite enough of it for the present." On the third day they touched at Rhodes, "a perfectly preserved city and fortress of the middle ages, with every variety of mediæval battlement – so perfect is the illusion, that one wonders the warder's horn

should be mute, and the walls devoid of bowman, knight, and squire." Though these ancient bulwarks of Christendom, within which the White-Cross chivalry, under d'Aubusson and L'Isle-Adam, so long withstood the might of the Osmanli, are thus briefly dismissed, Mr Paton immediately after devotes five pages to some choice flowers of Transatlantic rhetoric, culled from the small-talk of one of his fellow-passengers, whom he calls "an American Presbyterian *clergyman*" – though we grievously suspect him to have been a boatswain, who had jumped from the forecandle to the pulpit by one of those free-and-easy transitions not unusual in the "free and enlightened republic." At Smyrna, he signalized his return to the "land of the Franks," (which we had always imagined to be Europe,) by ordering a beefsteak and a bottle of porter, and bespeaking the paper of a Manchester traveller in drab leggings – and we at last find him safe in Constantinople. For all that concerns the city of the Sultan, he contents himself with referring his readers to the volumes of Mr White – and certainly they could not have been left in better hands; and so, "after a week of delightful repose," during which he was greatly indebted to the hospitality of the embassy, "I embarked on board a steamer, skirted the western coast of the Black Sea, and landed on the following morning in Varna."

We may pass over the "delightfully keen impressions" which Mr Paton records as produced by the contrast between the shores of Bulgaria and the Syrian climes he had lately left; the practical result of which was, that "a rattling blast from the Black Sea, more welcome than all the balmy spices of Arabia," made it advisable to don a pea-jacket! The fortifications of Varna, we are informed, were thoroughly repaired in 1843; "and from Varna to Roustchouk is three days' journey – the latter half of the road being agreeably diversified with wood, corn, and pasture, and many of the fields enclosed." A reference to the map will show that this "agreeably diversified" road passes under the famous lines of Shumla, and through many fields of fierce and stubborn fight between Turk and Russ, in the days before the Sultan was delivered over by his allies to his enemy, on the faith of a *military* report from a man who had never seen a regiment of regular troops under arms!¹ – but Mr Paton appears to consider such matters as exclusively the province of *militaires*, and passes on at once to Roustchouk, which he found "a fortress of vast extent; but, as it is commanded by the heights from which I was descending, it appeared to want strength if approached from the south. The ramparts were built with great solidity; but rusty old dismantled cannon, obliterated embrasures, and palisades rotten from exposure to the weather, showed that to stand a siege it must undergo a considerable repair." Several days were devoted to a general reconnoissance of the place; but the result was not satisfactory – "I must say that Roustchouk pleased me less than any town of its size I had seen in the East. The streets are dirty and badly paved, without a single good bazar or café to kill time in, or a single respectable edifice of any description to look at." A dinner with a Bulgarian family led us to expect some details of domestic economy; but, in place of this, we are regaled with the bad French of a hybrid Frank, who assured *Author* that Bukarest was equal to Paris or London; and when forced to admit that he had never seen either of those capitals, covered his retreat by maintaining that it was at least far superior to Galate and Braila! Hearing, however, that the Defterdar, an Egyptian Turk, had resided many years in England, and spoke English fluently, Mr Paton sought an interview; and after "taking a series of short and rapid whiffs from my pipe," while considering the best way of breaking the ice, opened his battery by telling the Defterdar, "that few Orientals could draw a distinction between politics and geography; but that with a man of his calibre and experience I was safe from misconstruction – that I was collecting materials for a work on the Danubian provinces, and that for any information which he might give me, consistently with his official position, I should feel much indebted, as I thought I was least likely to be misunderstood by stating clearly the object of my journey, while information derived from the fountain-head was most valuable. The Defterdar, after

¹ This was the explanation actually given by Develuz, our consul at Adrianople, of his exaggerated account of the strength of Diebitsch's army, at the moment when Diebitsch's best hope was, that he might effect his retreat across the Balkan with the shattered and debilitated remnant of his troops! Yet on this authority the Sultan was recommended to yield at discretion, and the treaty of Adrianople was signed!

commending my openness, said, 'I suspect that you will find very little to remark in the pashalik of Silistria. It is an agricultural country, and the majority of the inhabitants are Turks. The Rayahs are very peaceable, and pay few taxes, considering the agricultural wealth of the country. You may rest assured that there is not a province of the empire better governed than the pashalik of Silistria. We have no malcontents within the province; but there are a few Heterist scoundrels at Braila, who wish to disturb the tranquillity of Bulgaria; but the Walachian government has taken measures to prevent them from carrying their projects into execution.'"

Having thus put his readers in possession of this full, true, and particular account, derived from exclusive official sources, of all that is to be learned of the pashalik of Silistria, we next find Mr Paton, after two days steaming on the Danube, at Widdin, where the exiled Servian minister, M. Petronovich, was then resident, under the protection of the Pasha, whose name is known to all the world as the destroyer of the Janissaries and the defender of Shumla, the once formidable Hussein. To this redoubted personage, now apparently verging on eighty, Mr Paton was introduced by M. Petronevich at an evening audience, it being contrary to etiquette to receive visits by day during the Ramadan – and found him "sitting in the corner of the divan at his ease, being afflicted with gout, in the old ample Turkish costume. The white beard, the dress of the Pasha, the rich but faded carpet, the roof of elaborate but dingy wooden arabesque, were all in perfect keeping; and the dubious light of two thick wax candles rising two or three feet from the floor, but seemed to bring out the picture, which carried me a generation back to the pashas of the old school." Hussein has since retired from his government, to enjoy the immense fortune which he has accumulated by commercial speculations – the last specimen of the "malignant and turbaned Turk" of former days, whose war shout was heard under the walls of Vienna; and who will now be replaced by a smooth-faced hybrid in fez and frock-coat, waging a paper war with the ambassadors of the *protecting* powers in defence of the few sovereign rights still permitted to the Porte – such is the Pasha of the present day! The town of Widdin found even less favour in our traveller's eyes than Roustchouk. "Lying so nicely on the bank of the Danube, which here makes such beautiful curves, and marked on the map with capital letters, it ought (such was my notion) to be a place having at least one well-built and well-stocked bazar, a handsome seraglio, and some good-looking mosques. Nothing of the sort;" – and thus, sorely disappointed in his reasonable expectations, he proceeded on his way in a car drawn by two horses, which in six hours brought him to the banks of the Timok, the river which separates Servia from Bulgaria. The Servian population, among whom he now first found himself, struck him as a superior race, both physically and morally, compared with those whom he had just left, possessing a manliness of address and demeanour unknown to the serfs of Bulgaria; and, instead of the woolly caps and frieze clothes of the latter, the peasants wore the red fez, and were generally dressed in blue cloth. The plough cultivation of Bulgaria was now exchanged for the innumerable herds of swine, which form the staple commodity of Servia, fed in the immense oak woods which cover the country. "They form" (as Mr Paget informs us in his work on Hungary) "a very important article of trade between Servia and Vienna; and I doubt if Smithfield could show better shapes or better feeding than the market of a Servian village." Continuing his route along the banks of the Danube to New Orsova, where he crossed to the Hungarian bank, he again posted, with "an enormously stout Wallachian matron" for a travelling companion, to Drenkova, whence another steamer conveyed him to Semlin, and half an hour's pull down the Danube and up the Save (the line of the two rivers being distinctly marked at the confluence by the muddy colour of the former, and the clearness of the latter) landed him safe at Belgrade.

We may here mention an amusing anecdote, related in another part of the volume, in connexion with the town of Panczova below Semlin, where "the town-major, after swallowing countless boxes of Morison's pills died in the belief that he had not begun to take them soon enough. The consumption of these drugs at that time almost surpassed belief. There was scarcely a sickly or hypochondriac person, from the Hill of Presburg to the Iron Gates, who had not taken large quantities of them."

Mais voilà le mot d'enigme. "The Anglomania," was the answer to a query of the author, "is nowhere stronger than in this part of the world. Whatever comes from England, be it Congreve rockets or vegetable pills, must needs be perfect. Dr Morison is indebted to his high office (!) for the enormous consumption of his drugs. It is clear that the President of the British College must be a man in the enjoyment of the esteem of the government and the faculty of medicine; and his title is a passport to his pills in foreign countries.' I laughed heartily, and explained that the British College of Health, and the College of Physicians, were not identical." We well remember a statement some years since among the innumerable puffs of the arch-quack, (now gone, we believe, to that bourn whither so many of his patients had preceded him,) that in gratitude for the countless cures of incurable diseases by the "Universal Vegetable Medicine," a statue of the Hygeist had been erected in Bukarest, not in his native brass, but 'in his habit as he lived;' and a woodcut was appended of the *ipsissimus* Morison, with his mustached phiz and tight frock-coat. As Bukarest is a long way off, we held this at the time for a pious fraud; but Mr Paton's anecdote gives it at least probability. *Vive la charlatanerie!*

The hospitality of Mr Consul-general Fonblanque, and the attentions of the numerous friends of M. Petronevich, soon made Mr Paton quite at home at Belgrade, where he remained till the end of the year 1843, having arrived some time in the autumn, since the re-election of Prince Alexander, and the exile of Petronevich, and his colleague Wucziz, took place in July of that year. He found Belgrade much Europeanized since a previous visit which he had paid it in 1839, – "It was then quite an Oriental town; but now the haughty *parvenu* spire of the cathedral, a new and large, but tasteless structure, with a profusely gilt bell-tower in the Russian manner, throws into the shade the minarets of the mosques, graceful even in decay. Many of the bazar shops have been fronted and glazed; the Oriental dress has become much rarer; and houses, several stories high, in the German fashion, are springing up every where." The Turkish governor was at this time Hafiz Pasha, the unsuccessful commander at Nezib, lately appointed in the room of Kiamil, who had been displaced at the mandate of Russia for the share he had taken in the first election of Prince Alexander; but his jurisdiction is now confined to the fortress and the Turkish quarter, which lies along the Danube; the remainder of the town, lying piled street upon street up the steep bank of the Save, being under the Servian authorities. During his stay, Mr Paton paid frequent visits to the Pasha, whom he generally found in an audience room overlooking the precipitous descent to the Danube, "studying *at* the maps: he seemed to think that nothing would be so useful to Turkey as good roads, made to run from the principal ports of Asia Minor, up to the depôts of the interior, so as to connect Sivas, Tokat, Angora, Koniah, Kaiserieh, &c., with Samsoun, Tersoos, and other ports." The ramparts of the fortress are said to be in good condition, though "very unlike the magnificent towers it the last scene of the *Siege of Belgrade* at Drury-Lane," – a piece of useful information for play-going Cockneys – and the *Lange Gasse*, or main street, with the palace of Prince Eugene, built during the Austrian occupation of Servia from 1717 to 1789, is still standing, though half choked up with bazar shops and Turkish houses. The Prince holds no formal levees; but Mr Paton was present at a dinner given to the *corps diplomatique* in the palace, and was received in a saloon "with inlaid and polished parquet; the chairs and sofas covered with crimson and white satin damask, which is an unusual luxury in these regions; the roof admirably painted in subdued colours, in the best Vienna style. High white porcelain urn-like stoves heated the suite of rooms. The Prince, a muscular, middle-sized, dark-complexioned man, with a serious composed air, wore a plain blue military uniform;² the Princess, and her *dames de compagnie*, wore the graceful native Servian costume; the Pasha the Nizam dress, and the *Nishan Ifihar*, (diamond decoration of his rank;) Baron Lieven, the Russian Commissioner, in the uniform of a general, glittered with innumerable orders;³ Colonel Philippovich, a man of distinguished talents,

² The present Prince, on public occasions, always wears the fez with an aigrette of diamonds, as a recognition of the suzerainté of the Porte; his predecessor, Michel Obrenovich, gave great offence by wearing a cocked hat.

³ The old Emperor, Francis of Austria, when a Russian general was to be presented, would say, "Now bring in the northern firmament, and all its stars."

represented Austria; the Archbishop, in his black velvet cap, a large enamelled cross hanging by a massive gold chain from his neck, sat in stately isolation; and the six feet four inches high Garashanin, minister of the interior, conversed with Stojan Simitch, the president of the senate, one of the few Servians in high office who retains his old Turkish costume, and has a frame that reminds one of the Farnese Hercules. Then what a medley of languages – Servian, German, Russian, Turkish, and French, all in full buzz! We proceeded to the dining-room, where the *cuisine* was in every respect in the German manner. When the dessert appeared, the Prince rose with a creaming glass of champagne in his hand, and proposed the health of the Sultan, acknowledged by the Pasha; and then, after a short pause, the health of Czar Nicolay Paulovich, acknowledged by Baron Lieven; then came the health of other crowned heads. Baron Lieven now rose, and proposed the health of the Prince. The Pasha and the Princess were toasted in turn; and then Mr Wastchenko, the Russian Consul-general, rose, and in animated terms drank to the prosperity of Servia. The entertainment, which commenced at one o'clock, was prolonged to an advanced period of the afternoon, and closed with coffee, liqueurs, and chibouques, in the drawing-room: the Princess and the ladies having previously withdrawn to the private apartments."

At the end of the year, Mr Paton returned to England; and after an absence of six months, returned in August 1844 to the banks of the Save, reaching Belgrade at the moment when preparations were being made for the triumphal reception of the patriot ministers Wuczicz and Petronevich, who had at length been restored to their country by the tardy intervention of England. The day of their arrival was celebrated by a universal jubilee. Surrounded by an immense cavalcade, the exiles paraded the streets, amid the rapturous acclamations of the multitude, to the great portal of the cathedral, where they were received by the Archbishop and clergy: – "They kissed the cross and the gospels, which the Archbishop presented to them, and, kneeling down, returned thanks for their safe restoration. The Archbishop then advanced to the edge of the platform and began a discourse, describing the grief the nation had experienced at their departure, the universal joy for their return, and the hope that they would ever keep peace and union in view in all matters of state, and that in their duties to the state they must never forget their responsibility to the Most High. Wuczicz, dressed in the coarse frieze jacket and boots of a Servian peasant, heard, with a reverential inclination of the head, the discourse of the prelate, but nought relaxed one muscle of that adamantine visage: the finer but more luminous features of Petronevich were under the control of a less powerful will. At certain passages his intelligent eye was moistened with tears. Two deacons then prayed successively for the Sultan, the Emperor of Russia, and the Prince, – and now uprose from every tongue, and every heart, a hymn for the longevity of Wuczicz and Petronevich. 'The Solemn Song for Many Days' is the title of this sublime chant, which is so old that its origin is lost in the obscure dawn of Christianity in the East, and so massive, so nobly simple, as to be beyond the ravages of time, and the caprices of convention." The town was illuminated in the evening; and a ball was given at the new Konak or palace, built by the exiled Prince Michael, which was attended "by all the rank and fashion of Belgrade – senators of the old school, in their benishes and shalwars, and senators of the new school, in pantaloons and stiff cravats," which we agree with Mr Paton in considering as no improvement on the graceful costume of the East. The Servian ladies, however, have in general the good taste to retain the old national costume; and "no head-dress that I have seen in the Levant is better calculated to set off beauty. From a small Greek fez they suspend a gold tassel, which contrasts with the black and glossy hair, which is laid smooth and flat down the temple. The sister of the Princess, who was admitted to be the handsomest woman in the room, with her tunic of crimson velvet, embroidered in gold, and faced with sable, would have been, in her strictly indigenous costume, the queen of any fancy ball in old Europe."

While occupied by his preparations for a tour into the interior, Mr Paton one day encountered "a strange figure, with a long white beard, and a Spanish cap, mounted on a sorry horse" – this was no other than Holman, the well-known blind traveller, whom he had last seen at Aleppo, and who, having

passed in safety, under the safeguard of his infirmity, through the most dangerous parts of Bosnia, was now on his way to Walachia. He instantly recognised Mr Paton's voice, and mentioned his name on being told where he had last seen him; and after a walk on the esplanade, in which the objects in view were described to him, while turning his face to the different points of the compass, he appeared to have acquired a tolerably clear idea of Belgrade. Another visitor of Mr Paton, Milutinovich, the best living poet of Servia, on hearing the name of Holman, (of whose wanderings in the four quarters of the globe he had read in the *Augsburg Gazette*,) was so awe-struck at finding himself in the presence of even a greater traveller than Robinson Crusoe, (whose adventures Mr Paton found regarded as an authentic narrative by the monks of Manasia,) that he reverentially kissed his beard, praying aloud that he might return home in safety. When the day of departure approached, "orders were sent by the minister of the interior to all governors and employés, enjoining them to furnish me with every assistance, and with whatever information I might require;" and all preparations being completed, Mr Paton and his man Paul set off horseback, like Dr Syntax and Patrick, for the highlands and woodlands of Servia.

Shabatz (more correctly Czabacz,) a town on the Save, between forty and fifty miles above Belgrade, and one of the few garrisons still retained by the Turks, was the first point of destination; and reaching it on the second day, he was hospitably received by *Gospody* (Monsieur) Ninitch, the government collector, to whom he had an introductory letter from the minister Garashanin. Before the revolution, Shabatz numbered 20,000 Osmanlis, the sites of whose kiosks and gardens are still pointed out on the *Polje*, or open space between the town and the fortress, – at present the only Moslems are the garrison of Bosniak *Redif* or militia, occupying the dilapidated fortifications. It is the episcopal seat of one of the Archbishop's three suffragans; and the author, accompanied by his friend the collector, paid his respects to the Bishop, whom he had previously met at Belgrade. The conversation turned principally on the system of national education, by which, in a few years, reading and writing will be universal among the peasantry, while the sons of the better classes are prepared, by instruction in German, &c., for a further course of study in the Gymnasium of Belgrade, the germ of a future university. A proof of the taste now spreading for general literature was afforded by the library of the Archpriest, "Jowan Paulovich, a self-taught ecclesiastic: the room in which he received us was filled with books, mostly Servian, but among them I perceived German translations of Shakspeare, Young's *Night Thoughts*, and a novel of Bulwer's." The son of this priest was studying mining engineering at the expense of government, at Schemnitz in Hungary, a capacity in which he may one day do good service to his country, as the great mineral riches believed to exist in Servia are hitherto wholly unexplored. Having completed the circuit of all the notables in Shabatz, including Luka Lasaravich, a once redoubted lieutenant of Kara-George, and now an octagenarian merchant, with thirteen wounds on his body, Mr Paton prepared for a fresh start, drinking health and long life to his kind host and hostess in a glass of *slivovitsa*, or plum brandy, the national liqueur. But his good wishes were not destined to be fulfilled; for within a month an abortive attempt at a rising was made by the partisans of the exiled Obrenovich family, a troop of whom, disguised as Austrian hussars, entered Shabatz, and shot the good collector dead as he issued from his house to enquire the cause of the disturbance. The attempt, however, was futile, and the whole party were taken and executed.

The road to Losnitza, whither our traveller was now bending his way, lay through the Banat of Matchva, a rich tract of land, with a "charmingly accidented" chain of mountains, the Gutchevo range, in the distance. "Even the brutes bespoke the harmony of creation; for, singular to say, we saw several crows perched on the backs of swine!" Towards evening we entered a region of cottages among gardens inclosed by bushes, trees, and verdant fences, with the rural quiet and cleanliness of an English village in the last century lighted by an Italian sunset. "In this sylvan paradise he was encountered by a pandour, who conducted him to the house of the *Natchalnik*, or governor of the province, a gaunt, greyheaded follower of Kara-George, who had been selected for this post from his courage and military experience, since the hostile neighbourhood of the Bosniaks, on the other side the Drina,

between whom and the Servians a deadly religious and national hatred exists, rendered it necessary to be always on the alert." But before pursuing his route to Sokol,⁴ a sky-threatening fortress, respecting which his curiosity had been excited by the account given of it by M. Ninitch, he was persuaded by the Natchalnik to attend a peasant festival held at the monastery of Tronosha, to celebrate the anniversary of its consecration. The next day, accordingly, he set off with the Natchalnik and his companions, all gallantly armed and mounted, and in gala dresses covered with gold embroidery; and, dashing up hill and down dale, through the majestic forests which covered the ascent of the mountains, they arrived in due time at Tronosha, "an edifice with strong walls, towers, and posterns, more like a secluded and fortified manor-house in the seventeenth century than a convent; for such establishments, in former times, were often subject to the unwelcome visits of minor marauders." After returning thanks for their safe arrival, according to custom, in a chapel with paintings in the old Byzantine style, "crimson-faced saints looking up to a golden sky," they proceeded to inspect the preparations for the approaching fête, in a green glade running up to the foot of the hill on which stood the monastery, and dined with the Igoumen, (Ἰγουμενος,) or Superior, and the monks, in the refectory. The healths of the Prince, and of Wuczicz and Petronevich, were given after dinner as toasts – a laudable custom, which appears to be in orthodox observance in Servia – after which a song was sung in their honour by one of the monks, to whom Mr Paton (whose special aversion he seems to have incurred, for some reason not exactly apparent) applies the epithet of a "clerical Lumpacivagabundus," which we quote for the benefit of such of our friends as may chance to be skilled in the unknown tongue. Meanwhile the assembled peasantry outside were in the full tide of merriment; and, on the following morning, Mr Paton was roused from slumbers, in which "I dreamed I know not what absurdities," by a chorus of countless voices, and, hurrying out, found the peasants he had seen the evening before, with a large accession to their numbers, on their knees in the avenue leading to the church, and following "the chant of a noble old hymn. The whole pit of this theatre of verdure appeared covered with a carpet of crimson and white; for such were the prevailing colours of the costumes. The upper tunic of the women was a species of surtout of undyed cloth, bordered with a design of red cloth of a finer description. The stockings, in colour and texture, resembled those of Persia (?), but were generally embroidered at the ankle with gold and silver thread. When I thought of the trackless solitude of the sylvan ridges around me, I seemed to witness one of the early communions of Christianity, in those ages when incense ascended to the Olympic deities in gorgeous temples, while praise to the true God rose from the haunts of the wolf, the lonely cavern, or the subterranean vault."

After witnessing this interesting reunion of a regenerated and Christian nation, Mr Paton took leave of the Superior, who parted from him with the words – "God be praised that Servia has at length seen the day when strangers come from afar to see and know the people!" and, passing through the double ranks of the peasantry, who took leave of him with the valediction of *Srentnj poot!* (a good journey,) repeated by a thousand voices, he rode on through the never-ceasing oak-forests, broken here and there by plantations of every variety of tree, to Krupena. Here he was received by the captain of the district at the head of a small troop of irregular cavalry, and hospitably entertained for the night. On the following day he started, "toiling upwards through woods and wilds of a more rocky character than on the previous day," to the ridge of the Gutchevo range, whence he looked down on Sokol, a fortress still held by the Turks, and which, on its inaccessible position, "built" (as described by M. Ninitch) "on the capital of a column of rock," was the only one never taken by the Servians; while the background was formed by the mountains of Bosnia, rising range over range in the distance. They reached the valley by a narrow winding path on the face of a precipitous descent, and entered the town; but their visit was ill-timed. It was Ramadan; the Disdar Aga was, or was said to be, asleep, and

⁴ Sokol must here be a slip of the pen for Szoko. Sokol, the birth-place of the famous Mohammed Sokolli, vizier of Soliman the Magnificent and his two successors, is in the heart of Bosnia, near Gradachatz.

the castle could not be seen in his absence; and Mr Paton's enquiries from the Mutsellim, who acted as their cicerone, as to the height of the rock on which the citadel was built above the valley, only made him suspected of being an engineer surveying the stronghold with a view to its capture. After climbing up a pinnacle of rock which overlooked the abyss, he was compelled to return *re infectâ*; "and when we got a little way along the valley, I looked back; Sokol looked like a little castle of Edinburgh placed in the clouds; and a precipice on the other side of the valley presented a perpendicular stature of not less than five hundred feet."

A few hours travelling from Sokol brought Mr Paton to Liuhovia on the Drina, the precipitous banks of which, covered with wood, present numerous points of picturesque beauty; but at a short distance above this town, which is the quarantine station on the road between Belgrade and Seraievo it ceases to form the boundary of Servia and Bosnia, being entirely within the latter frontier. Thence ascending the valley of the Rogaschitza, a small stream tributary to the Drina, and crossing a ridge which parts the waters flowing into the Drina and into the Morava, he descended into the tract watered by the Morava, the national river of Servia; the first town in which was Ushitza, one of the fortresses still garrisoned by the Turks, and the scene of desperate conflicts during the war of independence. In past times it was a place of great importance, and contained sixty thousand inhabitants, being the entrepôt of the trade between Servia and Bosnia; but this commerce has been almost ruined by the establishment of the quarantine; and most of the Servian inhabitants, in consequence of a bloody affray with the Turks, have transferred themselves to Poshega, a town at two hours' distance, and formerly a Roman colony, of which Mr. Paton found a relic in a fragment of a Latin inscription built into the wall of the church. From Poshega Mr P. continued his route down the rich valley of the Morava, here several miles wide, to Csatsak, the residence of a bishop and a *Natchalnik*; where the old Turkish town is in process of being superseded by a new foundation, which, "like Poshega and all these new places, consists of a circular or square market-place, with bazar shops in the Turkish manner, and straight streets diverging from it." Mr Paton waited on the bishop, "a fine specimen of the church-militant; a stout fiery man of sixty, in full furred robes, and black velvet cap," who had been, during the rule of Milosh, an energetic denouncer of his extortions and monopolies, and was consequently in high favour since the change of dynasty. The cathedral (we are informed) was "a most ancient edifice of Byzantine architecture," of which we should have been glad to have had some particulars; but Mr Paton's remarks are confined to complaints of the wearisome length of the mass, at which the bishop presided, "dressed in crimson velvet and white satin, embroidered with gold, which had cost £300 at Vienna; and as he sat in his chair, with mitre on head and crosier in hand, looked, with his bushy white beard, an imposing representative of spiritual authority." Taking leave of this formidable prelate, Mr Paton proceeded to Karanovatz, in the rich plain round which, surrounded by hills which are compared to the last picturesque undulations of the Alps near Vicenz or Verona, the river Ybar falls into the Morava, not far from the ancient convent of Zhitchka Jicha, where seven Servian kings of the Neman dynasty were crowned, a door being broken in the wall for the entrance of each monarch, and built up again on his departure: and here our traveller, turning to the right, and ascending the course of the Ybar, struck southwards into the highlands

The character of the mountains among which he now found himself, was widely different from the picturesque oak forests of the Gutchevo range, which he had traversed in the early part of his tour. "Tall cedars replaced the oak and beech; the scanty herbage was covered with hoar-frost; the clear brooks murmured chillingly down the unshaded gullies; and a grand line of sterile peaks to the south showed me that I was approaching the backbone of the Balkan. There is a total want of arable land in this part of Servia, and the pasture is neither good nor abundant; but the Ybar is the most celebrated stream in Servia for large quantities of trout." Still ascending the steep mountain-paths, while the scenery became wilder and wilder, they at length reached the convent of Studenitza, one of the most ancient foundations in Servia, having been built by Neman, the first monarch of the dynasty bearing his name, who died in 1195. Like most monastic edifices in Servia, it is a castellated building,

with walls whose massive strength is well calculated to resist an attack not supported by artillery; and, on entering the wicket, Mr Paton was received "by a fat, feeble-voiced, lymphatic-faced superior, leaning on a long staff" – from whom he could get no other reply to all his inquiries than "*Blagodarim*, (I thank you.)" The magnificent church of white marble, one of the finest specimens now existing of Byzantine architecture, was built in 1314 (as an inscription imports) by Stephen Vrosh; but it had suffered severely at different times from the bigotry of the Turks. "The curiously twisted pillars of the outer door were sadly chipped, while noseless angels, and fearfully mutilated lions, guarded the inner portal. Passing through a vestibule, we saw the remains of the font, which must have been magnificent; and, covered with a cupola, the stumps of the white marble columns which support it are still visible. Entering the church, I saw on the right the tomb of St Simeon, the sainted king of Servia; beside it hung his banner with the half-moon on it, the insignium(!) of the South Slavonic nation from the dawn of heraldry; and near the altar was the body of his son, St Stephen, the patron saint of Servia." Another day's journey through the same rugged and sterile scenery, in a direction due south, during which they passed the Demir-kapu, on Iron Gate, on the bank of the Ybar, where there is only room for a single led horse in a passage cut through the rock, brought them to the quarantine station on the river Raska, two hours' distance from Novibazar in Bosnia, which it was Mr Paton's intention to visit, attended by a Servian quarantine officer.

The conversion of the Bosniaks to Islam was effected by force, on the conquest of the country in 1463, by Mohammed II., the only instance in the career of Turkish conquest in which the injunction of the Prophet against compulsory proselytism has been violated; but they have always held the faith, thus forced on them, with the zeal of renegades, and are now the most fanatic and bigoted Moslems in the empire. The Christians resident in their territory are subject to every species of tyranny and maltreatment, several instances of which, related by refugees in Servia, are given in the work before us. A Frank traveller is a sight scarcely known; and Mr Paton soon had abundant evidence, on his approach to Novibazar, which lies in a fertile plain about a mile and a half in diameter, surrounded by low hills, that his visit here would be even less favourably received than at Sokol. The gipsies, whose tents covered the plain, and who here profess Islamism, cried furiously after them, "See, how the Royal Servians now-a-days have the audacity to enter Novibazar on horseback!" Youssouf Bey, the governor, was said to be asleep in his harem, (the usual Not-at-home of an Oriental,) but, as they afterwards ascertained, was actually afraid to receive them; and while they were sauntering round the town, a savage-looking Bosniak starting up, exclaimed, "Giaours, kafirs, spies! I know what you come for! – Do you expect to see your cross one day planted on the castle?" The threat of a complaint to the Bey only provoked fresh insolence; and, warned by a Christian bystander that the whole town would soon be in commotion, they prudently beat a retreat, and reached the Servian frontier in safety.

After this narrow escape from Bosniak hospitality, Mr Paton's next object was the Kopaunik mountain, lying a little to the south, and from the top of which (as he had been informed at Csatsak) a panoramic view of all Servia might be obtained; and having prevailed on the captain of the district to accompany him, they crossed the Ybar, and reached the summit with little difficulty, if (as seems to be implied) the whole ascent was accomplished on horseback. "The Kopaunik is not much above 6000 English feet above the level of the sea. But it is so placed in the Servian basin, that the eye embraces the whole breadth from Bosnia to Bulgaria, and very nearly the whole length from Macedonia to Hungary. When at length I stood on the highest peak, the prospect was literally gorgeous. Servia lay rolled out at my feet. There lay the field of Kossovo, where Amurath defeated Lasar, and entombed the ancient empire of Servia. I mused an instant on this great landmark of European history, and following the finger of an old peasant who accompanied us, I looked eastwards, and saw Deligrad, the scene of one of the bloodiest fights that preceded the resurrection of Servia as a principality. The Morava glistened in its wide valley like a silver thread in a carpet of green, beyond which the dark mountains of Rudnik rose to the north; while the frontiers of Bosnia, Albania, Macedonia, and Bulgaria, walled in the prospect."

After luxuriating to his heart's content in the contemplation of this magnificent panorama, and taking leave of his companion, Mr Paton descended the north-eastern slope of the mountain; and lodging for the night in a shepherd's hut, where he found an officer sent by the Natchalnik of Krushevatz to meet him, arrived next day at Zhupa. "Here the aspect of the country changed – the verdant hills became chalky, and covered with vineyards, which, before the fall of the empire, were celebrated;" and after partaking of a repast, in which choice grapes and clotted cream (a national dish in Turkey) formed the dessert, they pushed on in all haste, and reached Krushevatz (often marked in the maps by its Turkish name of Aladja-Hissar) late at night. He was hospitably received by the Natchalnik, whose wife kissed the visitor's hand on his arrival, in compliance with the old Servian customs, now fast wearing out, which assign to woman a social position intermediate between the seclusion of eastern manners and the graceful precedence which she enjoys in the west. The next morning, they walked out to inspect the town, which was the metropolis of the Servian kingdom immediately before its overthrow by the Turks; and which, lying as it does in the midst of the rich vale of the Morava, which here expands into a wide and fertile plain, extending from the foot of the mountains by which it is flanked to the river, occupies a site well adapted for all inland capital. The author here introduces a dissertation on the history, laws, and customs of the ancient monarchy; but as our own business is rather with Servia as it is, than Servia as it was, we shall pass unnoticed the glories of the house of Neman – the warlike trophies of Stephan Dushan the Powerful, at whose approach the Greek Emperor trembled within the walls of Constantinople – and the tragical fate of Knes Lasar, with whom Servian independence fell on the fatal plain of Kossovo, June 15, 1389. Of the palace of Lasar in Krushevatz, only the gateway and the ruined walls are now remaining; but the chapel, having been converted by the Turks into an arsenal, is still in perfect preservation. "It is a curious monument of the period, in a Byzantine sort of style, but not for a moment to be compared in beauty to the church of Studenitza. Above one of the doors is carved the double eagle, the insignium (!) of empire; but instead of having body to body, and wings and beaks pointed outwards, as in the arms of Austria and Russia, the bodies are separated, and beak looks inward to beak. The late governor had the Vandalism to whitewash the exterior; but the Natchalnik told me, that under the whitewash fine bricks were disposed in diamond figures between the stones. This antique principle of tessellation, applied by the Byzantines to perpendicular walls, and occasionally adopted and varied *ad infinitum* by the Saracens, is magnificently illustrated in the upper exterior of the ducal palace of Venice."

A grand field-day against the bears and boars in the forest, with a couple of hundred peasants as beaters, had been arranged by the Natchalnik for his guest's amusement; but their plans were frustrated by the unpropitious state of the weather; and as soon as it became favourable, we find Mr Paton again in motion, ascending the eastern branch of the Morava to Alexinate, the quarantine station on the Bulgarian frontier, where the British government has established a *konak* or residence for the Queen's messengers, who here await, on the extreme verge of the sanatory system, the return of the Tartars with despatches from Constantinople. He found it tenanted by Captain W – , whose guest he became for several days, to his infinite satisfaction: – "It seemed so odd, and yet was so very comfortable, to have roast-beef, plum-pudding, sherry, brown stout, Stilton cheese, and other insular groceries, at the foot of the Balkan. There was, moreover, a small library, with which the temporary occupants of the *konak* killed the month's interval between arrival and departure." He was compelled, however, to tear himself from the delights of an English cuisine; and on arriving at Tiupria, (more properly Kiupri-Ravenatz,) where he first heard tidings of the emeute at Shabatza, and the murder of his friend the collector Ninitch, he diverged from his route to visit the monasteries of Ravanitza and Manasia, the former of which was the burial-place of Lasar. But as his reminiscences of these saintly retreats are rather convivial than antiquarian, we shall pass on at once to Svilainitza, (the place of silk,) where he was entertained in the chateau of M. Ressavatz, the richest man in Servia; the only chateau-residence as he tells us, which he saw in the country. This part of Servia appears indeed to be, as Mr Paton says – "Ressavatz quà, Ressavatz là" – since to the patriotism and command of capital of

this enlightened family, it owes not only the introduction of the growth of silk as above-mentioned, but the construction of an excellent macadamized road, by which Mr Paton travelled on the following day, through a country richly cultivated and interspersed with lofty oaks, to Posharevatz, (commonly written Passarowitz,) where he was welcomed on his arrival by another of the name of Ressavatz, the Natchalnik of the place. Posharevatz is celebrated in history for the treaty there concluded in 1718, by which, in consequence of the victories of Prince Eugene, Bosnia and Servia passed under the dominion of Austria for twenty years, till restored to the Porte at the peace of Belgrade in 1739: in the present day it is a place of considerable importance, both as the capital of a province of ninety thousand inhabitants, and the seat of a court of judicial appeal for Eastern Servia. By the president of this court Mr Paton was entertained at dinner, where he met all the élite of Posharevatz; "and the president having made some punch, which showed profound acquaintance eith the jurisprudence of conviviality, the best amateurs of Posharevatz sung their best songs, which pleased me somewhat, for my ears had gradually been broken into the habits of the Servian muse. Being pressed myself to sing an English national song, I gratified their curiosity with 'God save the Queen,' and 'Rule Britannia,' explaining that these two songs contained the essence of English nationality; the one expressive of our unbounded loyalty, the other of our equally unbounded dominion." And now having extracted, to the best of our ability, the plums from the pudding of Mr Paton's *gastronomic* circuit of Servia, in which, (as he cordially admits,) "by inter-*larding* my discourse with sundry apophthegms of *Bacon*, and stale paradoxes of Rochefaucalt, I passed current considerably above my real value," we shall here leave him to find his way by the beaten track through Semendria, Belgrade, and Vienna, to England. But before proceeding to the consideration of the "Servian Question," a point scarcely touched on in the volume before us, it will not be amiss to give a brief summary of the social condition and internal organization of the Servian nation, on which Mr Paton gives some valuable information in his concluding chapters.

The Servian territory extends about one hundred and seventy miles from east to west, along the Danube and Save, the boundaries being the rivers Timok and Drina; and one hundred miles in extreme breadth from Belgrade to the frontier of Albania. The population, after the expulsion of the Turks, was roughly estimated, under Milosh, as somewhat exceeding half a million; but, from the internal peace which the country has since enjoyed, and the plenty and prosperity which prevails among the peasantry, there can be little doubt that it has since greatly increased. As not more than one-sixth of the soil is supposed to be in cultivation, there is abundance of excellent land undisposed of; as every man, therefore, with ordinary industry can support himself and his family, abject want and pauperism are almost unknown. The innumerable herds of swine, which form the staple commodity of the country, both for home consumption and export, rove freely through the oak and beech forests which cover great part of Servia, and in which every one is at liberty to cut as much timber as he pleases, only an inconsiderable portion being reserved as state property for the public service. There are no indirect taxes; and as the *poresa*, or capitation tax, paid by each head of a family, the maximum of which is six dollars a-year, is the only impost (except a trifling quit-rent for the land) levied by the government, "it must be admitted," (as Mr Paton observes,) "that the peasantry of Servia have drawn a high prize in the lottery of existence." The harvest is a period of general festivity; all labour in common in getting in the corn, the proprietor providing entertainment for his industrious guests; "but in the vale of the lower Morava, where there is less pasture and more corn, this is not sufficient, and hired Bulgarians assist." Though in a comparatively southern latitude, the vegetable productions are those of a more northern climate; Mr Paton never saw an olive-tree, and the grapes and melons, though abundant, are inferior to those of Hungary; but the plum, from which the national liqueur, *slivovitsa*, is made, every where abounds, almost every village having its plum-orchard. With all these means and appliances for good living close at hand, it is evident that there is not much prospect of a famine in Servia, till the productions of the soil fall short of the demands of the population – a consummation which cannot happen for many generations to come.

The national character of the Servian is compared by Mr Paton to that of the Scotch Highlander; and it is not without strong points of resemblance. "He is brave in battle, highly hospitable; delights in simple and plaintive music and poetry, his favourite instruments being the bagpipe and fiddle; unlike the Greek, he shows little aptitude for trade; and, unlike the Bulgarian, he is very lazy in agricultural pursuits."

In the cleanliness of their persons and houses, they present a favourable contrast to most of the other Slavic populations; and their personal appearance is also advantageous. "They are a remarkably tall and robust race of men; in form and feature they bespeak strength of body and energy of mind; but one seldom sees that thoroughbred look, so frequently found in the poorest peasants of Italy and Greece. The women I think very pretty. They are not so well-shaped as the Greeks; but their complexions are fine, their hair generally black and glossy, and their head-dress particularly graceful; and not being addicted to the bath, like other eastern women, they prolong their beauty beyond the average period." The spirit of nationality, and zeal for national improvement, which pervades the population almost as one man, is strongly marked by many incidents related in Mr Paton's pages, and one is so remarkable that we cannot forbear quoting it. An idiot boy, to whom he had given a glass of *slivovitz*, "taking off his greasy fez, said, 'I drink to our prince Kara-Georgovich, and the progress and enlightenment of the nation.' He was too stupid to entertain these sentiments himself; but if the determination to rise were not in the minds of the people, it would not be on the lips of an oaf in an insignificant hamlet." Nor is the progress of intellectual development behind this patriotic zeal for national independence in the march of regeneration. "In the whole range of the Slavic family, no nation possesses so extensive a collection of excellent popular poetry," with which the British public has been in some measure made acquainted by the translations of Dr Bowring. "The romantic beauty of their country – the relics of a wild mythology, which has some resemblance to that of Greece and Scandinavia – the adventurous character of the population – the vicissitudes of guerilla warfare – are all given in a dialect which for musical sweetness is to other Slavonic tongues what the Italian is to the languages of Western Europe." The Servian Anthology has been collected by Dr Wuk Stephanovich, the author of several works on national topics; and there are several living poets, among whom, Milutinovich, already mentioned, is reputed *facile princeps*. The only newspaper now printed at Belgrade is the *State Gazette*, which prudently avoids all remarks on Austrian or Russian policy; and the only annual is the *Golubitza*, (Dove,) a miscellany in prose and verse, neatly got up in imitation of the German Taschenbücher, and edited by M. Hadschitch, the framer of the code of laws. In the Lyceum, lectures on law are delivered by M. Simonovich, bred an Hungarian advocate, and formerly editor of the *Courier*, a newspaper now discontinued; but the study of law, as well as its practitioners, is said to be unpopular in Servia at present; and Professor John Shafarik is an able and popular lecturer on Slavic history, literature, and antiquities; of the latter, there is a collection in the museum of the institution, as well as a rich mineralogical cabinet collected by Baron Herder, and including specimens of silver, lead, and copper ore, as well as marble, white as that of Carrara. A Literary Society has also been formed for the encouragement of popular literature, and the formation of a complete dictionary of the language – the seal of which represents an uncultivated field, with the rising sun shining on a monument bearing the arms of Servia.

The administrative senate consists of twenty-one members, named by the Prince for life; four of whom are ministers. Stojan Simitch, who has been before mentioned, the present vice-president (the presidency being an imaginary office,) is a Servian of the old school, in whom talent and shrewdness have supplied the place of education; but the most remarkable member of the cabinet is M. Petronevich, now minister for foreign affairs. He was at one time in a commercial house at Trieste, and subsequently for nine years a hostage for Servia at Constantinople – "he is astute by nature and education, but has a good heart and a capacious intellect; and, in the course of a very tortuous political career, has kept the advancement of Servia constantly in view. He is one of the very few public men in Servia, in whom the Christian and Western love of *community* has triumphed over

the Oriental allegiance to *self*; and this disinterestedness, in spite of his defects, is the secret of his popularity." His partner in exile, M. Wuczicz, is now commander of the military force and minister of the interior, in which latter office he succeeded Garashanin; the standing army is a mere skeleton force; but every Servian is a soldier, and bound to provide himself with arms, thus forming a national militia, of which the effective strength is estimated at little less than 100,000 men. The military command of each of the seventeen provinces is vested in the Natchalnik, under whom are the captains of the several cantons, usually three in each province; these officers superintend the police, and report to the minister at war. As minister of the interior, he is charged also with the superintendence of ecclesiastical affairs, the spiritual head of which, the Archbishop of Belgrade, though acknowledging the supremacy of the Greek Patriarch, is virtually independent within the province; his salary, as well as that of the three bishops and the inferior clergy, is paid by the state, that of the primate being about £800 a-year, and of his suffragans half as much. The administration of justice (as settled by the Sultan's *hatti shereef* of 1838, which may be regarded as the Servian constitution) is vested in local courts in each province, consisting of a president and three members, from which an appeal lies to the supreme courts of Belgrade and Posharevatz; but reference is always made in the first instance, in minor cases, to the *Courts of Peace* (as they are called,) consisting of the village magnates, with whose patriarchal arbitration the litigants are usually satisfied, law and lawyers not being held in high estimation. "The courts of law have something of the promptitude of Oriental justice, without its flagrant venality;" but the salaries of the judges are small, that of the president of the appeal court at Belgrade not exceeding £300 a-year. But it is the financial department that presents the most striking contrast to other European states, in the unheard-of phenomenon of a national debt due not *from* but *to* the government; the revenue so much exceeding the expenditure, that a sum of a hundred thousand ducats has been lent to the people at six per cent, and forms an item on the credit side of the budget! The total annual outlay, according to the financial returns, including the tribute to the Porte and the civil list of the Prince, (the latter equivalent to about £20,000 English,) is 830,000 dollars; while the income reaches 887,000, principally derived from the *poresa*, or capitation-tax paid by heads of families, a separate tax being levied on bachelors. Such is at present the flourishing state of the principality of Servia, "the youngest member of the European family," the views of Russia on which, somewhat prematurely developed by the famous "Servian question," will be more clearly understood by a preliminary sketch of its previous history.

The political existence of modern Servia may be considered to date from 1804, in February of which year a general rising took place of the Christian population against the Moslems, provoked by the massacres and atrocities committed by the spahis, who held lands in the province by military tenure, and whose chiefs had thrown off the authority of the Pasha of Belgrade, and embraced the party of the famous Paswan-Oghlu, Pasha of Widdin, who was then in open revolt against Selim III., as the champion of the janissaries and the *ancien regime*, against the civil and military reforms which the Sultan was striving to introduce. The principal leaders of the Servians were Slavatz, (or as Mr Paton calls him, if the same person is intended, Glavash,) and George Petrovich, surnamed *Kara* or *Czerni*, (black,) the son of a peasant in the district of Kragejewatz, who afterwards migrated to Topola, which has therefore been held by the Servians as the place whence sprung their liberator,⁵ and where an annual festival is held in his honour. He was in his youth a *Hayduk* or klepht; and having been forced to fly from Servia for taking part in an unsuccessful insurrection, had served several years in the Austrian army. His successes were at first viewed with satisfaction by the Porte; and the obnoxious chiefs, driven to take refuge in Belgrade, were there seized and put to death by the Pasha; but it soon became evident that the Servians, once in arms and victorious, would not be satisfied without complete independence. Semendria and other fortresses fell into their hands; and

⁵ In the supplement to the *Biographie Universelle*, vol. lxi., a strange tale is told, that Czerni George was a native of Nanci, who fled in his youth to Servia – but this is a mere romance.

Kara George, by the unanimous voice of his countrymen, was declared *hospodar* or prince. The Porte now directed an invasion of Servia by a mingled force of forty thousand Turks and Bosniaks; but the Moslem army was totally overthrown near Shabatz, Aug. 8, 1806, by seven thousand foot and two thousand horse under Kara George, and driven across the Drina with the loss of their commander and many other chiefs. It was now apparent that Servia was not to be reduced by force of arms; and conferences were opened, by which the Sultan engaged to grant them a local and national government, with free exercise of their religion. But the negotiation failed, from the demands of the Porte that they should surrender their arms, and leave the fortresses in the hands of the Turks; and while it was yet pending, Kara George carried Belgrade with great slaughter, by a *coup-de-main*, on the night of Dec. 13, 1806, thus completing the expulsion of the Turks from Servia, with the exception of Szoko, (Mr Paton's Sokol,) and a few other strongholds which still remained in their hands.

The war which broke out in the following year between Russia and the Porte, secured Servia against any further attacks from the Turks; and Kara George, thus freed from apprehensions of invasion, endeavoured to introduce some degree of order and civil organization into the country. A sort of federal senate, to which each of the twelve districts into which the principality was then divided sent a member, met annually at Belgrade to regulate the finances and internal affairs of the country; and though the freedom of their deliberations was impeded by the presence of the *wayvodes* or military governors, at the head of their armed retainers, whom even the authority of Kara George was unable to coerce, the success of their efforts to establish schools and promote the interests of civilization, indicated a degree of enlightened policy little to have been expected from a people but half emancipated from Turkish bondage. Kara George, meanwhile, who had received from the Emperor Alexander the rank of lieutenant-general, did good service to his Russian allies; and though signally defeated in an invasion of Bosnia, repulsed with triumphant success every attempt of the Turks to enter Servia. But his energies were paralysed by the disaffection of the subordinate chiefs; and when Russia, pressed by the advance of Napoleon, concluded in 1812 the peace of Bukarest, there was only a nugatory stipulation, in the eighth clause of the treaty, that the internal administration should be left with the Servians, "as to the subjects of the Sublime Porte in the islands of the Archipelago;" the fortresses to remain in the hands of the Turks. But no sooner was the Porte relieved from the presence of the enemy, than an overwhelming force was poured into Servia; and Kara George, unable to resist, fled into Hungary, and afterwards took refuge in Russia.

The character of this remarkable man is well portrayed in a despatch, quoted by Mr Paton, of the afterwards well-known Diebitsch, who was the confidential agent of Russia in Servia, in 1810-11: – "His countenance shows a greatness of mind not to be mistaken; and when we consider times and circumstances, and his want of education, we must admit that his mind is of a masculine and commanding order. The imputation of cruelty appears to be unjust. When the country was without the shadow of a constitution, and when he commanded an unorganized and uncultivated nation, he was compelled to be severe; he dared not relax his discipline; but now that there are courts of law and legal forms, he hands every thing over to the tribunals. He has very little to say for himself, and is rude in his manners; but his judgments in civil affairs are promptly and soundly formed, and to great talents he joins unwearied industry. As a soldier, there is but one opinion of his talents, bravery, and enduring firmness." The portrait prefixed to the present volume, from a painting in the possession of the reigning Prince, the duplicate of one executed for the Emperor Alexander, bears out the character thus given of the Servian hero: – "The countenance expressed not only intelligence, but a certain refinement, which one would scarcely expect in a warrior peasant; but all his contemporaries agree in representing him to have possessed an inherent superiority and nobility of nature, which, in any station, would have raised him above his equals."

At this juncture, when Servia lay at the mercy of the Turks, Milosh Obrenovich appeared on the scene. He had originally been a swineherd, and afterwards an officer of Kara George; but he now sided with the Turks, to whom he rendered efficient aid in cutting off the other popular leaders

who still continued in arms. But the execution of Slavatz, and other chiefs who had also made their submission, by order of Soliman Pasha of Belgrade, showed him that his own fate was only deferred; and, escaping into his native district of Rudnik, he once more raised the standard of freedom. The peasantry rose *en masse*, and the campaign was generally to the advantage of Milosh, who displayed great bravery and military skill; but Soliman Pasha was at length recalled, and an accommodation effected, by which Milosh became hospodar, under the suzerainté of the Sultan, Belgrade and a few fortresses only remaining in the hands of the Turks. As the resident Turkish population had almost wholly disappeared during the war, Milosh was now absolute master of the country, and was delivered from all fears of a rival, by the death of Kara George, who, in 1817, misled by false representations, had returned from Petersburg to Servia; but was betrayed by Milosh, and put to death by the Turks.⁶ Though unable to read or write, his rule was marked by ability and vigour. He repressed robberies and offences against property with merciless severity, frequently causing malefactors to be hung to the next tree, without form of trial; – and improved the internal communications by the formation of an excellent road through the forests, from the Turkish frontier at Nissa to Belgrade. In his political relations with Russia and the Porte, he steered a middle course with consummate dexterity, constantly maintaining a good understanding with the cabinet of St Petersburg; while, in 1830, he succeeded in obtaining from the Sultan a firman, by which the dignity of prince was declared hereditary in his family; and it was further provided, that such Turks as still retained land in Servia should dispose of their estates within a limited period, and quit the province. Another firman, in 1833, released the Servians from the payment of *kharaj* (the capitation tax paid by rayahs) and all other dues and imposts, in consideration of an annual tribute of 2,300,000 piastres (£23,000) to be paid to the Porte; the right of levying taxes was conceded to the Servian government, and all fortresses erected by the Turks, since the commencement of the war in 1804, were to be rased.⁷ These concessions, which rendered the dependence of Servia on the Porte little more than nominal, were doubtless granted through the secret influence of Russia, whose obvious interest it was to weaken the connexion between her destined prey and its titular suzerain; but the despotic power thus placed in the hands of Milosh, was exercised with a degree of arrogance and contempt of vested rights, which soon rendered him highly unpopular. No carriage but his was allowed to appear in the streets of Belgrade; and, while all political rights were withheld from the people, he amassed immense wealth by arbitrary confiscations, by levying heavy taxes and import duties, and by establishing oppressive monopolies of articles of necessary consumption, particularly salt, veins of which, discovered by Baron Herder near the Kopaunik mountain, he forbade to be worked under severe penalties, in order to keep in his own hands the importation from Walachia. The discontent of the national party, headed by the *primates* (as they are called) of the municipalities, at length broke out into flame – fomented (as it was then believed) by Russia, who was jealous of the influence acquired over Milosh by Colonel Hodges, appointed in 1836 consul-general for England, and with whom he was on the point of concluding a commercial treaty. A *hatti-shereef* at this juncture (December 1838) arrived from the Porte, obtained (as it is said) through the advice of Colonel Hodges, and containing a form of constitution for Servia, regulating the legal tribunals, the functions of the ministry, &c., and ordaining the formation of a legislative council of seventeen members, as a check on the despotism of the Prince. But the crisis had already arrived. The senate took the initiative, by charging Milosh with embezzlement of the public property, and calling him to account; and, after a vain attempt to make a stand against the popular indignation, he fled with his treasures into Hungary. An attempt to recover his power having proved ineffectual, he at length abdicated in favour of his son, Milan; who, dying soon after, was succeeded by his brother, Michael, under the guardianship of his mother, Liubitza. But the same system still

⁶ Lamartine (*Voyage en Orient*) and other writers represent Kara George as having died in confinement in an Austrian fortress, soon after his flight in 1813—an error which has probably arisen from a confusion between his fate and that of Alexander Hyspilotis, who headed the insurrection in Walachia in 1821, and died in Mongatz, after three years' imprisonment.

⁷ These firmans, with the *hatti-shereef* of 1838, &c., were printed and laid before the House of Commons in May 1843.

continued; and all efforts to procure any redress of grievances proving fruitless, a general outbreak took place in September 1842, the prime movers in which were Wucicz and Petronevich, who for several years had been the recognised heads of the popular party. As it was found that the few troops round the Prince were not to be depended upon, he quitted Belgrade, accompanied by his mother and the French and English consuls, and repaired to Semlin; and after some fruitless negotiation, the sovereignty was declared vacant by the representatives of the nation, with the concurrence of the Turkish governor, Kiamil Pasha.

As it was well known that the Obrenovich family had been for some time in bad odour at Petersburg, this movement was at first universally attributed to Russian influence; but it soon became apparent that its only motive was the spontaneous assertion by the Servians of the rights and liberties withheld from them; and the steps for a fresh election, in pursuance of the provisions of the *hatti-shereefs* were taken with perfect order and unanimity. A firman was issued by the Sultan, in right of his suzerainté; and the unanimous and enthusiastic choice of the nation fell on Alexander, son of the well-remembered Kara George, who was forthwith inaugurated in the cathedral of Belgrade, by the Archbishop, and received from the Porte the *berat* or patent, necessary for his confirmation in his new dignity. His accession was officially notified by the Ottoman ministers, to the Russian envoy at Constantinople but this evidence of good understanding and unity of interest between the Porte and her vassal, was a formidable and unexpected obstacle to the sinister designs of Russia which was to be counteracted at all hazards; and the course adopted for this purpose, unparalleled perhaps in the annals of diplomacy, cannot be better understood than from the able and lucid statement of Lord Beaumont in his place in parliament, on the 5th of May following. [It must first be well remembered that neither in the treaty of Bukarest, nor in any subsequent convention, was a shadow of a right of *veto*, or interference in any way in the election of a prince of Servia, conveyed to Russia, (as in the joint nomination with the Porte of the hospodars of the Trans-Danubian principalities,) and the only ground on which such interference could rest, was that enunciated by Baron Lieven, with somewhat remarkable frankness in a Russ diplomatist, to Mr Paton, that "Servia owed her political existence solely to Russia, which gave the latter a moral right of intervention over and above the stipulations of treaties, to which no other power could pretend" – a statement false both in fact and inference, since it was by their own good swords, unaided by Russia or any other European power with either men or money,⁸ that the Servians won their freedom; and the nugatory stipulation in the treaty of Bukarest, had been all along left a dead letter.] "Russia, neglecting all international law, sent an agent of her own into Servia, to investigate the internal proceedings of an independent state, and, on receiving his report, directed that agent to state his complaints, without consulting any other power, to the Divan. Now, he would venture to say, that a greater or more direct insult than this, was never offered to an independent state, and he could not conceive any act that could be a more gross and positive violation of the treaties of Bukarest, Akerman, and Adrianople, under which alone she could set up a right to be informed of what passed in Servia. Though Georgevich was elected by the people, according to the constitution of the province, and though the validity of his election was acknowledged by the Divan, and confirmed by the Porte, Russia demanded that the election should be set aside; and this demand was made by that power in such an overbearing manner, as to show to the world that Turkey was under the control of Russia, and must act in conformity with the dictates of the Czar."

In this extremity, the Porte appealed for support to Great Britain and Austria, two of the powers who were parties to the quintuple treaty signed at London, July 15, 1840, for the express object of ensuring the integrity and independence of the Ottoman Empire; and the appeal was backed by strong representations from Sir Stratford Canning, the British ambassador at Constantinople, to his home

⁸ The contrast in this respect, between the progress and results of the Servian and Greek revolutions, is forcibly stated in an extract from a MS. document by Wuk Stephanovich, author of the Servian Anthology, in Parish's *Diplomatic History of the Monarchy of Greece*. – Pp. 387-90.

government. But the British government was (as Lord Palmerston observed, with much sarcastic truth, in the House of Commons on August 15) "in the same condition in which they had too often of late been found in foreign affairs, without any opinion of their own on the subject, (hear;) and determined to act with Austria, thereby risking the sacrifice of our own interests for a remote Austrian interest in which we had no concern. Austria at first determined to support Servia; but there came an *urgent appeal* from Russia; and Austria recommended Servia to yield." The nature of this "urgent appeal" will be well understood by those who are aware of the morbid fear entertained by Austria of Russian extension among the Slavic populations in Hungary; and of which Russia availing herself, (as remarked by Mr Paget,) "by exerting the influence which similarity of language, and, in some parts, of religion, gives her over them, has hitherto frightened Austria into doing almost any thing she likes." "The Sultan" (continued Lord Palmerston) "was now forced to submit. He annulled the election of Prince Georgevich; he consented to a popular election; he recalled the two popular leaders, Wucicz and Petronevich, to Constantinople; and even appointed a Russian general, Baron Lieven, his commissioner, in conjunction with a Turkish officer, to go into Servia to see his orders carried into execution."

So far Lord Palmerston; and the accuracy of the information possessed by the British Cabinet to combat these strong facts, may be estimated, from Sir Robert Peel's calling Prince Alexander, a man of thirty-five, and the worthy inheritor of his father's great qualities, "an infatuated youth" – on the authority (it is said) of a letter from Mr Fonblanque! But we must return from the English debates to the progress of the drama in Servia, where the commissioners found the Servians, in defiance of the great powers, and in spite of the hopelessness of aid from Constantinople, preparing for national resistance. The Prince refused to abdicate, alleging that the firman by which he had been appointed had never been revoked, and that universal anarchy would result from his resigning the reins of government, since no *kaimakams*, or regents *pro tempore*, had been named by the Porte – an omission which is supposed not to have been altogether unintentional; and the whole nation rose in commotion at the bare mention of the recall of Wucicz and Petronevich; the crowd exclaiming, when Wucicz told them that 'the Servian forests would not be less green were two old trees cut down, "No! a thousand times no!" and rushing with arms in their hands to the presence of Hafiz-Pasha, (who had been appointed on Kiamil's recall on the mandate of Russia for his share in the revolution,) announced their determination to maintain their prince and his counsellors; to which Hafiz assented, no doubt, with secret gratification. While the proceedings were thus stayed by the unexpected resolution shown by the Servians, Russian emissaries were traversing the country in all directions, striving in vain to stir up a revolt in favour of the Obrenovich family, whose former partisans, it was found, were now their strongest opponents; and inciting the Christians in Bosnia and Bulgaria to rise against the Moslems, by the hope of obtaining independent governments under hospodars of their own, like the other principalities. On the other hand, the Servian population was ready to rise *en masse* in defence of its liberties, and was further cheered by the report that thirty thousand of the Slavic races under Austrian dominion were ready to join them in the struggle for national freedom; while the Porte, roused to unexpected energy by the accumulation of wrong heaped upon it, reinforced the garrison of Belgrade with three thousand fresh troops, and formed encampments to the amount of near one hundred thousand men at Constantinople and Adrianople, for the ostensible purpose of overawing the spirit of revolt among the Bulgarians. The National Assembly, which had in the mean time met at Belgrade, declared the election of Prince Alexander legal and valid, and refused to abrogate it; and as the agents of Russia found that their original object could only be effected by an invasion, an act which (even had the season left time to march an army to the Danube) might have exceeded even the long-suffering of the other powers who were parties to the treaty of 1840, it was resolved, for the sake of appearances, to repair the false step as far as possible by a show of moderation. It was accordingly announced that the principal objections of Russia to the late election arose from the informality with which the proceedings had been conducted; that Prince Alexander would be admitted as a candidate,

(a concession very distasteful to Austria, who apprehended that the talent and popularity of the prince might attract her own Slavic subjects under his rule;) and that the late prince, Michael, should be excluded from competition. This could only lead to one result; and Alexander, having *pro formâ* resigned his authority, a *hatti-shereef* was sent from the Porte, and he was again elected with even greater enthusiasm than before.

But Russia, though foiled in her main object, had still another move in reserve. The *berat*, or letter-patent of the Sultan, was still necessary for the confirmation of the new prince; and July 27, M. Titoff (who had succeeded M. Boutenieff as Russian envoy to the Porte) announced to the Divan the will of his master, that this important document should be withheld till Wucicz and Petronevich, "the authors of the late disturbances," had left the country. The ministers of the Porte, unsupported by the ambassadors of France and England, who remained passive, had no alternative but to yield to this audacious act of intervention, which was communicated by Baron Lieven to the Servian kaimakams appointed during the interregnum. "As soon as the intelligence was spread among the people, the universal exclamation was – 'We will not suffer them to be taken from us – they are our protectors, our benefactors;" but submission was inevitable, and, in the middle of August, the two ministers repaired to Widdin, where they were received with high distinction by Hussein Pasha. They remained in exile a year, when the interdict was withdrawn by Russia, as it is said in consequence of British intervention, but more probably from finding, that, notwithstanding their absence, it was impossible to stir up faction against Prince Alexander. The circumstances of their return have been already given from Mr Paton's account; and we can little doubt, that on his next interview with the Prince, after his faithful counsellors had been restored to him, "he showed no trace of that reserve and timidity which foreigners had remarked in him a year before."

Such is the plain unvarnished account of the late transactions in Servia, in which the true character of Russian policy, and the means by which it is carried out, have been unveiled before the eyes of Europe in a manner sufficient to enlighten those which are not closed in wilful blindness. "Europe has been apprised, if she wishes to be so," (says the *Journal des Debats*,) "that there is in the East, independent of Turkey, a point of resistance against the encroachments of Russia;" and this *great fact* derives double value from that point being found in one of those Slavic populations which it is the grand object and aim of Russia to unite under her iron sceptre. But (in the eloquent language of Mr Paget) "we knew that if Europe did awake, the progress of Russia was stopped; we knew that her gigantic power would crumble away, and nothing remain but the hatred of the world, of the injustice and cruelty by which it had been raised."

F. H.

Servia, the Youngest Member of the European Family; or, a Residence in Belgrade, and Travels in the Highlands and Woodlands of the Interior, during the Years 1843 and 1844. By Andrew Archibald Paton, Esq., Author of the "Modern Syrians."

THE STUDENT OF SALAMANCA

Part IV

"Y así entre otras razones le dije que no tuviese pena del suceso de Camila, porque sin duda la herida era ligera." – Cervantes. *El Curioso Impertinente*.

The unexpected and opportune appearance of Mariano Torres, at the moment of Herrera's escape, requires a few words of explanation. When Rodil, on the morrow of the skirmish with Zumalacarregui in the Lower Amezcoa, evacuated that valley, he proceeded to distribute a portion of his army amongst various garrisons; and then, with the remainder, marched to Biscay in pursuit of Don Carlos, who, having as yet no place of security from his enemies, was wandering about attended by a handful of followers. Amongst the troops left in Navarre by the Christino general, was the cavalry regiment to which Herrera and Torres belonged, and this was ordered to the plains of the Ebro. The day after its arrival at the town of Viana, a battalion marched in from Pampeluna, and with it came Sergeant Velasquez, who, after his escape from the Carlists, had taken refuge in that fortress. Great was the consternation of Torres on learning the surprise of the escort and capture of his friend, and his grief was warmly sympathized in by the other officers of the regiment, with whom Herrera was a universal favourite. But Torres was not the man to content himself with idle regrets and unavailing lamentations, and he resolved to rescue Herrera, if it were possible, even at the hazard of his own life. He confided his project to the colonel of his regiment, who, with some difficulty, was induced to acquiesce in it, and to grant him leave of absence. This obtained, he disguised himself as a private soldier, and boldly plunged into the centre of Navarre in quest of Zumalacarregui and his army. He had little difficulty in finding them: he announced himself as a deserter from the Christinos, and, without attracting unusual notice or suspicion, was enrolled in a Navarrese battalione, which, a day or two afterwards, marched to the village where Herrera was kept prisoner. Although by the interference of Count Villabuena, and the dexterity of Paco and the gipsy, Mariano's daring self-devotion was rendered superfluous, it had its uses, inasmuch as his disappearance with Herrera prevented the slightest suspicion from falling upon those who had really contrived and effected the escape. The gipsy, after guiding the two friends to Salvatierra, and receiving an ample reward from Herrera, performed the secret service with which Zumalacarregui had charged him, returned to that general with a ready framed excuse for the slight delay in its execution, and pocketed the ten additional onzas promised him by Paco. The muleteer, still weak from his wound, was the last man to be suspected; and of the Count's participation in the affair, no one, excepting Major Villabuena, for a moment dreamed. Don Baltasar, remembering his cousin's anxiety concerning Herrera, certainly entertained a notion that he had in some way or other facilitated his escape; but of this he could obtain no proof, nor, had he been able to do so, would it have been for his own interest to expose the Count, whom he was desirous, on the contrary, to conciliate. It was a vague and undefined apprehension of some attempt at a rescue, that had led him, at so late an hour on the night of the escape, to prowl in the vicinity of Herrera's prison.

The autumn and winter of 1834 passed away without any material change in the position of the personages of our narrative. The war continued with constantly increasing spirit and ferocity, and each month was marked by new and important successes on the part of the Carlists. The plains of Vittoria, the banks of the Ebro, the mountains of central and northern Navarre, were alternately the scene of encounters, in which the skill of Zumalacarregui, and the zeal and intrepidity of his troops, proved an overmatch for the superior numbers of the Christinos. In vain did the government of the Queen Regent, persevering in spite of its many reverses, send its best troops and most experienced

generals to that corner of the peninsula where civil strife raged: it was only that the troops might be decimated, and the generals forfeit their former reputation in repeated and disastrous defeats. Although the country and climate were such as to render temporary repose in winter quarters most desirable for the contending armies, the idea of such an indulgence was scarcely for a moment entertained, and the winter campaign proved as active as the summer one. The arrival of Mina to take the chief command of the Queen's forces, and the severity of the measures he adopted, rendered the character of the war more sanguinary and cruel than it had been since its commencement; and although, in numerous instances, the nearest relatives and dearest friends were fighting on contrary sides, it became impossible for them to obtain intelligence of each other's welfare. It was by no means surprising, therefore, that eight months elapsed, and the spring arrived, without Herrera hearing any thing of Count Villabuena or his daughter; and that the Count, on the other hand, remained ignorant of the proceedings of the young man whose life he had saved, and in whose fate he could not but feel interested, save through the occasional rumour of some dashing exploit, by which Herrera maintained and increased the high reputation he had early acquired in the ranks of the Christinos. His gallantry did not go unrewarded, and the opening of the spring campaign found him in command of a squadron, and on the high-road to further promotion.

Whilst Herrera was thus gaining fame and honour, his rival, Major Villabuena, had no reason to complain of his services being overlooked. His courage was undoubted, his military skill by no means contemptible, and these qualities had procured him a colonel's commission and a staff appointment. But, in spite of these advantages, Don Baltasar was dissatisfied and unhappy. His object in joining the Carlists had not been promotion, still less a zeal for the cause, but the appropriation to himself of the fair hand and broad lands of Rita de Villabuena. His prospect of obtaining these, however, seemed each day to diminish. The favour with which the Count regarded him had lasted but during the first days of their acquaintance, and had since been materially impaired by the discovery of various unpleasing traits in Don Baltasar's character, and particularly by his endeavours to urge the death of Herrera in opposition to the wishes of his kinsman. Moreover, there could be little sympathy or durable friendship between men of such opposite qualities and dispositions. Count Villabuena had the feelings and instincts of a nobleman, in the real, not the conventional sense of the term: he was proud to a fault, stern, and unyielding, but frank, generous, and upright. Don Baltasar was treacherous, selfish, and unscrupulous. He felt himself cowed and humbled by the superiority of the Count, whom he began secretly to detest; and who, whilst still keeping on good, or at least courteous, terms with his cousin, became daily more averse to his alliance, and more decided to support Rita in her rejection of his suit.

As a natural consequence of Zumalacarregui's successes, they of the absolutist party in Spain who had openly declared for Don Carlos, and who, during the first year of the war, had been hunted from post to pillar, and frequently compelled to seek concealment in caves and forests from the pursuit of the foe, found themselves, in the spring of 1835, in possession of a considerable tract of country, including a few fortified places. *El Lobo Caño*, the Grey-haired Wolf, as his followers had styled Don Carlos, in allusion to his hair having become bleached on the mountain and in the bivouac, began to collect around him the semblance of a court; and various ladies, the wives and daughters of his partisans, who had been in temporary exile in France, recrossed the frontier and hazarded themselves in the immediate vicinity of the scene of war. Amongst others, Rita de Villabuena, who had been residing with some friends at the French town of Pau, implored, and with difficulty obtained, her father's permission to rejoin him. A house was prepared for her reception in the small town of Segura in Guipuzcoa, whence, in case of need, a speedy retreat might be made to the adjacent sierras of Mutiloa and Aralar, and here she arrived, under her father's escort, towards the commencement of the month of May.

One of the first who hastened to pay court to the young and beautiful heiress, was, as might be expected, Colonel Baltasar de Villabuena. But his reception was in the highest degree discouraging,

and he was able to assure himself, that if any variation had taken place in Rita's sentiments, it was by no means in his favour. His only remaining hope, therefore, was in an appeal to the Count, whom he still believed to be, for the family reasons already adverted to, desirous of a union between Rita and himself. This appeal he resolved to take an early opportunity of making. A valuable estate, which Rita had inherited from her mother, lay within the tract of country already conquered by the Carlists; and although the revenue it yielded was greatly diminished by the disturbed state of Navarre, and the contributions levied for the carrying on of the war, it was still sufficiently important to excite the cupidity of Don Baltasar, and to render him doubly anxious to obtain, on any terms, the hand of his cousin.

It was on a bright May morning, three days subsequently to Rita's arrival at Segura, that a small train of horsemen was seen winding along the declivitous paths that lead across the sierra of Elgua, a part of the northern boundary of the province of Alava. The snows with which, during the long winter, the upper portion of these mountains had been covered, had disappeared in the warm rays of the spring sun, and disclosed peaks of grey rock, and patches of table-land strewn with flints, producing little besides a few Alpine plants, which, in defiance of the scanty nourishment they found, and of the keen air that blew over those elevated summits, boldly expanded their blossoms in the pleasant sunshine. Lower down, and on that part of the southern side of the mountain over which the cavalcade now proceeded, masses of forest-trees sprang out of the more plentiful soil, and overshadowed the rocky path that rang under the horses' feet; the dusky foliage of the fir-tree, the brighter green of the oak, and the broad angular leaves of the sycamore, mingling in rich variety. Now the path lay through some dried-up water-course, half filled with loose stones, whose elevated sides, over the edges of which the tendrils of innumerable creeping plants dangled and swung, bounded the view on either hand; whilst overhead the interwoven branches afforded, through their thick leafage, but scanty glimpses of the bright blue sky. Presently, emerging from the ravine, the road, if such it might be called, ran along the shelf of a precipice, below which successive ranges of luxuriant foliage, varied here and there by a projecting crag, or enlivened by the dash and sparkle of a waterfall, continued to the level below. From the foot of the mountains, an extensive plain stretched out to a distance of several leagues, its smiling and fertile fields thickly sprinkled with villages and farm-houses. To the left front rose the old Moorish castle of Guevara; and at a greater distance, more to the westward, and near the centre of the plain, were seen the imperfect fortifications and lofty church-towers of the city of Vittoria.

The foremost of the horsemen, who, on the day referred to, were thus scrambling, to the great discomfort of their steeds, down the steep and rugged sides of the sierra, avoiding, for reasons of safety, the high-road from Salinas to Vittoria, which lay at a league or two on their right, was a man of middle age and tawny complexion, mounted on a lean and uncomely, but surefooted horse, whose long tail, which, if allowed to flow at will, would have swept the ground, was doubled up into a sort of club, about a foot long, and tightly bound with worsted ribands of bright and varied colours. The thick and abundant mane had been carefully plaited, with the exception of the foremost tuft, left hanging down between the ears, and from beneath which the wild eyes of the animal glanced shyly at the different objects he passed, pretty much as did those of the rider from under his bushy and projecting eye-brows. The horseman was dressed in a loose jacket of black sheep-skin, the wool rubbed off in many places, fastened down the front by copper clasps and chains that had once boasted a gilding, and bound at edges with coarse crimson velvet, which, from time and dirt, had become as dark as the principal material of the garment. Between the loose short trousers and the clumsy half-boots, replacing the sandals that were the customary wear of the person described, several inches of lean and sinewy leg were visible. A coloured handkerchief, tied round the head, and from beneath which a quantity of shaggy black hair escaped, rusty iron spurs, with huge jingling rowels, and a well-stuffed leathern wallet slung across his body, completed the equipment of the horseman, in whom the reader will perhaps already have recognised Jaime, the gipsy esquilador, now acting as guide to the persons

who followed. These consisted of Count Villabuena and his cousin, Don Baltasar, both well mounted on powerful chargers, and cloaked from chin to heel; for they had been early in the saddle, and, although now in the month of May, the morning air upon the mountains was keen and searching. They were followed, at a short distance, by an escort of forty Carlist cavalry, strange, wild-looking figures, whose scanty equipment, and the little uniformity of their clothing, might have excited the derision of better provided troops; but whose muscular forms and hardy aspect, as well as the serviceable state of their carbines and lances, gave promise of their proving efficient defenders and formidable foes.

Not having been bred to the profession of arms, Count Villabuena was, in a strictly military point of view, of little use to his party; but his intimate acquaintance with Navarre and the Basque provinces, with the customs, feelings, and prejudices of their inhabitants, rendered him invaluable in all administrative arrangements and combinations, and in these he cheerfully and actively exerted himself. It was on a mission of this nature that he was now proceeding, having left Oñate early that morning, to attend a meeting of influential Alavese Carlists, which was to take place at the village of Gamboa, on the north side of the plain of Vittoria. Although the country he had to pass through was not then occupied, and only occasionally visited, by the Christinos, an escort was necessary; and, besides this escort, Colonel Villabuena had volunteered to accompany his cousin. His object in so doing was to obtain an opportunity for an uninterrupted conversation with the Count, on the subject of his pretensions to the hand of Rita.

This conversation had taken place, and its result had been most unsatisfactory to Don Baltasar. The Count plainly told him that it was not his intention to force the inclinations of his daughter; and that, as she was averse to the proposed alliance, he himself had abandoned the idea of its taking place. A long and stormy discussion ensued, and Baltasar accused the Count of having deceived him, and induced him to join a cause, the ultimate triumph of which was impossible, by holding out hopes that he never intended to realize. The Count replied by reminding Don Baltasar, that when he had urged him to serve his rightful monarch, and not under the banner of a usurper, the only arguments he had used were those of loyalty and duty; and that the proposed marriage was a private arrangement entirely contingent upon his daughter's acquiescence. Sharp retorts and angry words followed, until the conversation was brought to a close by the Count's checking his horse, and allowing the escort, which had previously been at some distance behind, to come up with them. The cousins then rode on, still side by side, but silent, and as far apart as the narrow path would allow, the Count haughty and indignant, Don Baltasar sullen and dogged.

Whilst this occurred in the mountains, the persons whom Count Villabuena came to meet were assembling at the place of rendezvous in the village of Gamboa. From various country lanes and roads, substantial-looking men, wrapped in heavy brown cloaks, and riding punchy mountain horses, were seen to emerge, for the most part singly, and at the careless, deliberate pace least calculated to excite suspicion of their going to other than their ordinary avocations. Some of these were alcaldes and regidores from the neighbouring villages, others landed proprietors in the vicinity. Now and then a lean, anxious priest, perched upon a high saddle, his feet encased in clumsy wooden stirrups, his head covered with an enormous hat, of which the brim, curled up at the sides over the crown, projected half a yard before and behind him, came ambling into the village, distributing his *benedicites* amongst the peasant women and children, who stood at the doors of the houses bowing reverently to the *padre cura*. One man, dressed in the coarsest and commonest garb of a labourer, came up upon an ill-looking mule, and received a loud and joyful welcome from the persons already assembled. He was a wealthy proprietor, whose estates lay within the Christino lines, and had been compelled to adopt this disguise to avoid notice. The arrival of another person, to all appearance a charcoal-burner, with grimy face and hands, riding a ragged pony, across which a couple of sacks, black from the charcoal they had contained, were thrown by way of saddle, was hailed with similar demonstrations of joy. He was a rich merchant and national guardsman from Vittoria, secretly well affected to Don Carlos.

The place where the Carlists first assembled was not in a house, but on a paved platform, extending along one side of the large church, by which it was masked from the view of persons approaching from the direction of Vittoria. A sort of cloister, with stone benches beneath it, ran along the wall of the church, and in front of the platform was a broad greensward, used as a playground by the village children. Whilst the Carlists grouped themselves in the cloisters, talking eagerly together, and waiting the coming of Count Villabuena, their horses and ponies stood saddled and bridled upon the green, held by peasant boys, and in readiness for their owners to mount and ride away at a moment's notice, or on the first signal of alarm. Of the mountain path by which the Count was expected to arrive, only about a mile was visible from the platform, after which it disappeared over the brow of a low wood-crowned eminence that rose to the north, partially intercepting the view of the sierra. On this eminence a peasant was stationed to watch for the Count; whilst on the other side of the village, at a short distance upon the road to Vittoria, another vedette was posted, to give notice of the appearance of any of the foraging or reconnoitring parties which the Christinos not unfrequently sent out in this direction.

It was considerably past noon, and the members of the Junta, for such did the assembly style itself, were beginning to wax impatient for the arrival of the Count, without whom the business for which they had met could not be proceeded with, when the watcher upon the hill gave the concerted signal by waving his cap in the air, uttering at the same time one of those far-sounding cries, peculiar to the inhabitants of mountainous regions. Upon this announcement, the Carlists descended from the platform into the road that ran past one of its extremities, and took their way, with grave and dignified demeanour, to the dwelling of the priest, in which the meeting was to be held. This house, according to custom one of the most spacious and comfortable in the village, was situated at about musket-shot from the church, and a little detached from the other buildings. Annexed to it was a long garden, bordering the road, and divided from it by a low hedge; beyond the garden was a vast and level field, and, on the eastern side of that, a tract of marshy ground, thickly covered with a lofty growth of willow and alder trees, extended to a considerable distance. The Carlists had traversed nearly the whole length of the garden hedge, and the foremost of them were close to the door of the house, when they were startled by the loud blast of a horn, with which the peasant sentry upon the Vittoria road had been furnished, to give the alarm if needful. They simultaneously paused, and anxiously listened for a repetition of the sound. It came; a third and a fourth blast were sounded, and with such hurried vehemence of tone as denoted pressing danger. Yet the peril could scarcely be so imminent as the quick repetition of the signal would seem to denote; for, from the place where the vedette was posted, he would command a view of any advancing troops nearly half an hour before they could reach the village, and those who had aught to fear from them would have ample time to effect their escape. But the horn continued sounding, ever louder and louder, – the Carlists gazed at each other in dismay, and some few made a movement towards their horses, as if to mount and fly. Suddenly a fat and joyous-looking alcalde, whose protuberant paunch and ruby nose were evidence of his love for the wine-skin, although the chalky tint that had overspread his features at the first sound of alarm, did not say much for his intrepidity, burst out into a loud laugh, which caused his companions to stare at him in some wonder and displeasure.

"By the blessed St. Jago!" exclaimed he, "the idiot has mistaken our friends for our enemies. He has been looking over his shoulder instead of before him, and has caught a sight of the Señor Conde and his escort. See yonder."

The Carlists looked in the direction pointed out, and on the top of the hill over which Count Villabuena was expected to approach, they saw three horsemen standing, one of whom was sweeping the village and the adjacent country with a field-glass, apparently seeking the cause and meaning of the violent fanfare that had so much alarmed the respectable Junta. Behind these three men, who were no others than the Count, his cousin, and their guide, the lance-flags of the escort were visible, although the soldiers themselves were still out of sight, having halted just here arriving on the crest

of the hill. The countenances of the Carlists, which for a moment had contracted with alarm, were beginning again to expand, as the plausibility of their companion's explanation occurred to them, when suddenly they saw the Count and his companions turn their horses in all haste, and disappear behind the hill. At the same moment, and before they could guess at the meaning of this manoeuvre, a shout was heard, a troop of Christino dragoons debouched from behind the willow wood, deployed upon the field, and charged across it in open order, their lances levelled,⁹ and the pennons fluttering above their horses' ears. In less time than it takes to write it, they had crossed the field, dashed into the garden, and, breaking through the hedge, clattered over the rough streets of the village in pursuit, of the unfortunate priests and alcaldes, who, taken entirely by surprise, knew not which way to run to avoid the danger that menaced them. Some few who had time to get on horseback, scampered off, but were pursued and overtaken by the better-mounted dragoons; others crept into houses and stables, or flung themselves into ditches; and the majority, seeing no possibility of escape, threw themselves on their knees, and, in piteous accents, implored mercy. This was not refused.

"Give quarter, and make prisoners," was the command uttered in the clear, sonorous tones of Luis Herrera, who led the party; "they are unarmed – spare their lives."

The order was obeyed, and only one or two of the more desperate, who produced concealed weapons, and endeavoured to defend themselves, received trifling sabre-cuts from the exasperated dragoons.

But although Don Baltasar, on first obtaining a view of the Queen's cavalry, and before he knew what force was approaching the village, had retired behind the brow of the hill. It was by no means his intention to make a precipitate retreat without ascertaining the strength of the enemy, and endeavouring, if possible, to rescue the captive Junta. Whilst the Count and the escort retraced their steps down the hill, and halted in the fields upon its north side, whence they had the option of returning to the mountains by the way they had come, or of striking off into the high-road to Salinas and Oñate, which ran at a short distance to their right, Colonel Villabuena and the gipsy, concealed amongst the trees that clothed the summit of the eminence, noted what passed in the village. They at once saw how the surprise had occurred. The Junta had not expected an enemy to approach by any other road than that from Vittoria, and had consequently stationed sentries in no other direction. That such would be the case, had been foreseen by the Christinos, who having received, through their spies, information of the intended meeting had sent out troops upon the Pampeluna road, with orders, after proceeding a certain distance, to strike off to the left, and, availing themselves of the cover afforded by a large tract of wood and swamp, to take Gamboa in rear or flank. The manoeuvre had been rapidly and skilfully executed; and Luis Herrera, who, with his squadron, had been sent upon this duty, arrived with one half of his men within a few hundred yards of the village before he was perceived by the Carlist vedette. His other troop he had detached to his right, in order that, by making a wider sweep, they might get in rear of Gamboa, and prevent the possible escape of any of the rebels. This detachment, ignorant of the country, and puzzled by the numerous lanes and paths which crossed each other in every direction, had lost its way, and was still at some distance from the village when Herrera charged into it.

When Colonel Villabuena had made his observations, and ascertained that the number of the enemy but little exceeded that of his own men, he rode out of the wood and rejoined the escort, resolved to take advantage of the Christinos being dispersed, and, unexpectant of an attack, to make a dash at them, which, he doubted not, would be fully successful. Previously, however, and although the Count had no military rank, it was a matter of common courtesy, not to say of duty, to communicate with him, and ask his consent to dispose of an escort which had been sent for his protection. But here the sullen temper of Don Baltasar, and the rankling irritation left by his recent altercation with

⁹ From an early period of the war, the Spanish dragoon regiments, both light and heavy, were armed with the lance, that weapon being considered the most efficient for the mountain warfare in which they were frequently engaged.

his kinsman, showed themselves. Followed by the gipsy, he rode to the front of the lancers, who were drawn up in line, and, without addressing a syllable to the Count, or appearing to notice his presence, gave, in a sharp abrupt tone, the necessary words of command. The men moved off to the left. The Count, highly sensitive on matters of etiquette, and indignant at being treated by Don Baltasar as a person of no importance, unworthy of being consulted, allowed the troop to march away without giving any indication of an intention to follow or accompany it. Don Baltasar looked round, hesitated for a moment, and then seeing that the Count remained motionless, and took no notice of the departure of his escort, he rode back to him.

"The enemy are few," said he, abruptly; "I shall attack them."

Count Villabuena bowed his head coldly.

"Scant measure of courtesy, colonel," said he. "Angry feelings should not make you forget the conduct of a *caballero*."

On hearing himself thus rebuked, an expression of anger and deadly hate overspread the sombre countenance of Don Baltasar, and he scowled at the Count as though about to deal him a stab. But his eye sank beneath the calm, cold, contemptuous gaze of Count Villabuena. He said nothing: and again wheeling his charger, galloped furiously back to the head of his men, followed, at a more deliberate pace, by his cousin. Passing swiftly over a few fields, the little troop swept round the base of the hill, dashed across the level, and appeared upon the road at half a mile from the village. On obtaining a view of the latter, Don Baltasar at once saw that he was not likely to have so cheap a bargain of the Christinos as he had anticipated. Herrera had too much experience in this description of warfare to be easily caught; and although, upon first entering Gamboa, the dragoons had unavoidably dispersed in pursuit of the fugitives, he had lost no time in reassembling them; and, whilst a few men kept the prisoners already made, and searched the houses for others, he himself had formed upon the road a party fully equal in number to that commanded by Don Baltasar. Nothing daunted, however, at finding the enemy on his guard, the Carlist colonel drew his sabre and turned to his men.

"*A ellos!*" he cried. "At them, boys, for Spain and the King!"

The lancers replied to his words by a loud hurra, and the little party advanced, at first at a moderate pace, in order not to blow the horses before the decisive moment should arrive. The Count, forgetting private animosity in the excitement and exhilaration of the moment, rode cheerfully at the side of his cousin, and drew the sword which, although a civilian, the perilous and adventurous life he led induced him invariably to carry. At the same moment Herrera's trumpeter sounded the assembly, and those of the dragoons who had dismounted hurried to their horses. Before, however, the distance between the opposite parties had been diminished by many yards, the blast of the Christino trumpets was replied to by another, and, upon looking back, Don Baltasar saw a fresh party of dragoons just appearing upon the road, about a mile in his rear. It was the second troop of Herrera's squadron coming to the support of their leader.

"Curse and confound them!" cried Baltasar, his face darkening with rage and disappointment. "Halt – files about! And now, boys, legs must do it, for they are three to one."

And he led the way back into the fields, followed by his men at a rapid pace, but in good order.

Without a moment's delay, Herrera, leaving a few dragoons to guard the prisoners, dashed across the country in pursuit of the Carlists. His example was followed by Torres, who commanded the other detachment. The fugitives had a good start, and were soon behind the hill; but the Christino horses were fresher, and although less accustomed to climb the mountains, in the plain they were swifter of foot. Don Baltasar, now riding in rear of his men, cast a glance over his shoulder.

"They gain on us," said he, in a low tone, and as if to himself. "It is impossible to reach the sierra. If we could, we should be safe. There are positions that we could hold on foot with our carbines, where they would not dare attack us."

"We shall never reach them," said the Count. "Let us turn and fight whilst yet there is time."

"The bridge! the bridge!" cried the gipsy, who, notwithstanding the gaunt appearance of his steed, had kept well up with the soldiers. "If we gain that, we are safe. A child could pull it down."

"Right, by God!" cried Baltasar glancing in some surprise at the adviser of an expedient which he had himself overlooked. "Spur, men, spur; but keep together."

Every rowel was struck into the flanks of the straining, panting horses and the Carlists rapidly neared a small river, which, rising in some of the adjacent mountains, flowed in rear of the little hill already referred to, and parallel to the sierra whence Count Villabuena and his companions had recently descended. The land, for some distance on either side of the stream, was uncultivated, covered with furze and yellow broom, and sprinkled with trees and clumps of high bushes. Across the river, only a few months previously, a rude but solid stone bridge had afforded a passage; but the bridge had been broken down soon after the commencement of the war, and the stream, which, although not more than seven or eight yards broad, was deep, and had steep high banks was now traversed by means of four planks, laid side by side, but not fastened together, and barely wide enough to give passage to a bullock cart. Over this imperfect and rickety causeway, the retreating Carlists galloped, the boards bending and creaking beneath their horses' feet. When all had passed, Don Baltasar flung himself from his saddle, and aided by the gipsy and by several of his men who had also dismounted, seized the planks, and strove, by main strength, to tear their extremities from the clay in which they were embedded. The Christinos, who were within a couple of hundred yards of the river, set up a shout of fury when they perceived the intention of their enemies. By the sinewy hands of Baltasar and his soldiers, three of the boards were torn from the earth and flung into the stream. The fourth gave way as Herrera came up, the first man of his party, and, regardless of the narrow footing it afforded, was about to risk the perilous voyage. Violently curbing his horse, he but just escaped falling headlong into the stream. A shout of exultation from the Carlists, and the discharge of several carbines greeted the disappointed Christinos, who promptly returned the fire; whilst, as was usual when they came within earshot, the complimentary epithets of "Sons of Priests," and "*Soldados de la Puta*," accompanied by volleys of imprecations, were bandied between the soldiers on either side of the stream.

"Is there any bridge or ford at hand?" said Baltasar hastily to the gipsy.

"None within a quarter of a league," was the reply.

"Then we will have a shot at them."

Herrera and Count Villabuena were again opposed to each other, and each acknowledged the other's presence by a brief smile of recognition.

A smart skirmish now began. All was smoke, noise, and confusion. The Count rode up to his cousin, who was on the right of his men.

"Let us retire," said he. "No advantage is to be gained by this idle skirmishing. Infantry may be at hand, and delay will endanger our retreat."

"Not so fast," replied Baltasar; "we will empty a few saddles before we go."

"The escort was sent for my safety," said the Count, haughtily. "You are not doing your duty in thus risking it."

"I have not been twenty years a soldier to learn my duty from you, sir," said Baltasar, fiercely. "Aim at the officers, men. A doubloon for him who picks off the captain."

Stimulated by the promised reward, several of the Carlists directed their fire at Herrera, who was on the left of the dragoons, exactly opposite to, and within sixty paces of, Don Baltasar. The bullets flew thick around Luis, but none touched him, and Baltasar himself drew a pistol from his holster to take aim at his opponent. Disgusted at his cousin's intemperate speech and imprudent conduct, the Count contemptuously turned his back upon him and approached the stream, regardless that by so doing he brought himself into a cross fire of friends and foes.

"This is useless, Herrera," said he, "draw off your men."

The words had scarcely left his lips, when his hand relinquished its hold of the bridle, by a convulsive movement he threw himself back in the saddle, and fell heavily to the ground, struck by a ball. A cry of horror from Luis was echoed by one of consternation from the Carlists, on witnessing the fall of a man whom they all loved and respected.

"Where can we cross the stream?" demanded Herrera of one of his men, who knew the country.

"To our left there is a ford, but at some distance."

"Cease firing," cried Herrera. The trumpet sounded the necessary call, the Christinos hastily formed up and started at a gallop in the direction of the ford. Don Baltasar advanced to the spot where his cousin lay prostrate. Count Villabuena was lying on his back, his teeth set, his eyes wide open and fixed, his clenched hands full of earth and grass. Baltasar turned away with a slight shudder.

"He is dead," said he to the subaltern of the escort. "To take the body with us would but impede our retreat, already difficult enough. The living must not be endangered for the sake of the dead. Forward, men!"

And, without further delay, the Carlists set off at a brisk pace towards the mountains, which they reached before the Christinos had found and passed the distant ford. When the dragoons arrived at the foot of the sierra, Don Baltasar and his men were already out of sight amongst its steep and dangerous paths; and Herrera, compelled to abandon the pursuit, returned mournfully to the river bank, to seek, and, if it could be found, to convey to Vittoria the body of Count Villabuena.

Leaving Herrera to his mournful duty, let us conduct our readers to an apartment in a house on the outskirts of the town of Segura. The interior, which was plainly but commodiously furnished, indicated feminine tastes and occupations, breathing that perfume of elegance which the presence of woman ever communicates. Vases of flowers decked the sideboards; a few books, the works of the best Spanish poets, lay upon the table; and a guitar, unstrung, it is true, was suspended against the wall. Two persons occupied the apartment. One of them, who was seated on a low stool at its inner extremity, near to the folding doors that separated it from an antichamber, was a robust, ruddy-cheeked Navarrese girl, whose abundant hair, of which the jet blackness atoned for the coarse texture, hung in a thick plait down her back, and whose large red fingers were busily engaged in knitting. At the other end of the apartment, close to the open window, through which she intently gazed, was a being of very different mould. On a high-backed elbow-chair of ancient oak sat Rita de Villabuena, pensive and anxious, her fair face and golden tresses seeming fairer and brighter from the contrast with the dark quaint carving against which they reposed. Her cheek was perhaps paler than when first we made her acquaintance; anxiety for her lover, and, latterly, for her father, was the cause; but her beauty had lost nothing by the change, for the shade of melancholy upon her features seemed, by adding to the interest her expressive countenance inspired, rather to enhance than diminish its charm. She was now watching for her father, who had led her to expect his return at about this time. Over the stone balustrade of her balcony, she commanded a view of the road along which he was to approach; and upon the farthest visible point of it, where a bend round a group of trees concealed its continuation, her gaze was riveted. Although the Count had assured her, before his departure, that his journey was unattended with risk, Rita's arrival upon the scene of war was too recent for her to escape uneasiness during his absence. Some hours before the time at which his return could reasonably be looked for, she had taken her post at the window, and although, at the persuasion of her attendant, a simple country girl, recently installed as her *donçella*, she had more than once endeavoured to fix her attention on a book, or to distract it by some of her usual occupations, the effort had each time been made in vain, and she had again resumed her anxious watch. In every horseman, or muleteer, who turned the angle of the road, she thought she recognised the guide, who, two days previously, had accompanied her father from Segura, and her heart throbbed with a feeling of joyful relief till a nearer approach convinced her of her error.

Could the vision of Rita de Villabuena have penetrated the copse that bounded her view in that direction, she would have perceived, towards four of the afternoon, not her father, alas! but another

horseman, attended by the gipsy guide, riding at a rapid pace along the road. On reaching the trees aforesaid, however, they deviated from the track into a lane inclosed between hedges, which led round the town, and again joined the road on its further side. To explain this manoeuvre, it is necessary to retrace our steps, and to follow the movements of Colonel Villabuena after his return to Oñate on the preceding evening.

When the first excitement of the skirmish and subsequent flight had subsided, and the detachment of Carlists, after giving their horses a moment's breathing-time upon one of the higher levels of the sierra, resumed their march at a more leisurely pace, the thoughts of Don Baltasar became concentrated on the one grand object of deriving the utmost possible advantage from the death of his cousin. By that event the estates of the Villabuena family were now his own, those, at least, that lay within the Carlist territory. These, however, were comparatively of little value; and although the far more extensive ones, that had been confiscated by the Queen's government, might possibly be redeemed by a prompt abjuration of the cause of Don Carlos, a measure at the adoption of which Don Baltasar was by no means so scrupulous as to hesitate, yet even that would not fully satisfy him. He had other views and wishes. As far as his selfish nature would admit of the existence of such a feeling, he was deeply in love with Rita; the coldness with which she treated him had only served to stimulate his passion; and he was bent upon making her his at any price, and by any means. He was sufficiently acquainted with her character to be convinced that his prospect of obtaining her hand was any thing but improved by her father's death and that to her the wealthy possessor of her family's estates would be as unwelcome a wooer as the needy soldier of fortune. He did not doubt that, after the first violence of her grief should subside, she would return to France, where some of her mother's relatives were resident; and that, when next he heard of her, it would be as the bride of his fortunate rival. The picture thus conjured up caused him to grind his teeth with fury; and he swore to himself a deep oath that she should be his at any risk, and if, by the boldest and most unscrupulous measures, that consummation could be brought about. A plan occurred to him which he thought could not fail of success, and by which the obstinacy of the self-willed girl must, he believed, be overcome. It was a hazardous scheme, even in that unsettled and war-ridden country, where men were too much occupied in party strife to attend to the strict administration of justice; but Baltasar did not lack resolution, and the prize was worth the peril. One thing he wanted; a bold and quick-witted confederate, and him it was not so easy to find. No man had fewer friends in his own class than Don Baltasar, and by his inferiors he was generally detested on account of his harsh and overbearing demeanour. Of this he was aware; and he vainly racked his brain to find a man in whom he could confide. The details of his nefarious project were already arranged in his mind, and only this one difficulty had yet to be overcome; when, at two hours after dark, he entered the streets of Oñate. Hopeless of being served for affection's sake, he was meditating whom he could make his own by bribery, when a light from an open window flashed across the street, and illuminated the unprepossessing profile of Jaime the gipsy, who, in his capacity of guide, was riding in front, and a little on one side of Colonel Villabuena. The sight of those sinister features, on which rapacity and cunning had set their stamp, was as a sudden revelation to Don Baltasar, to whom it instantly occurred that the gitano was the very man he sought. The circumstance of his belonging to a race despised, and almost persecuted, by the people amongst whom they dwelt, was an additional guarantee against any compunctious scruples on his part; his occupation of a spy bespoke him at once daring and venal, and Colonel Villabuena doubted not that he should find him a willing and useful instrument.

The soldiers filed off to their quarters; and Baltasar, after desiring the gipsy to come to him in an hour's time, betook himself to the posada. When Jaime had given his horse an ample feed, and groomed him with a care that showed the value he set upon his services, he made a hasty meal in a neighbouring taberna, and repaired to the Colonel's quarters. His stealthy tap at the door was replied to by an impatient "*adelante*

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

Текст предоставлен ООО «ЛитРес».

Прочитайте эту книгу целиком, [купив полную легальную версию](#) на ЛитРес.

Безопасно оплатить книгу можно банковской картой Visa, MasterCard, Maestro, со счета мобильного телефона, с платежного терминала, в салоне МТС или Связной, через PayPal, WebMoney, Яндекс.Деньги, QIWI Кошелек, бонусными картами или другим удобным Вам способом.