

George M. Towle
Principalities of the Danube, 1877

From: George M. Towle, *The Principalities of the Danube: Servia and Roumania*, Boston: J.R. Osgood & Co., 1877.

The three states which are usually spoken of as the Danubian Principalities are Moldavia, Wallachia, and Servia. The first two were combined under one government in the year 1861, with the common name of Roumania, and the capital of this new principality was fixed at Bucharest, formerly the capital of Wallachia alone.

Of the three countries, Moldavia lies farthest east and north. On the east, its frontiers join those of the Russian province of Bessarabia, the boundary line being the river Pruth; the southern limit of Moldavia lies along the banks of the Danube and the border of Wallachia; the western limit is the picturesque range of the Carpathian Mountains. Wallachia, lying south-westward from Moldavia, stretches some two hundred and seventy miles from east to west, its southern frontier being along the Danube almost throughout its entire length, while to the north it is bounded by Moldavia and a part of Hungary, and on the west by the principality of Servia. Just across the Danube on the south lies the subject Turkish province of Bulgaria.

Servia, the third of the Danubian Principalities, lies a little south-westward from Wallachia. Its northern frontier is skirted by the Upper Danube and the Save, the largest of the Danubian tributaries; on the west, the large province of Bosnia gives Servia its limit; on the South Servia is separated from Albania by the Kaplan range. Thus the Danubian Principalities comprise a long and wide tract, extending almost from the mouths by which the Danube empties itself into the Black Sea, in a south-westerly direction, to within a hundred miles of the Adriatic. Their frontiers touch those of Russia on one side and those of Austria on the other, while at every southern point they are contiguous to still subject Turkish provinces.

Resembling each other in religion, in political institutions, in their relation to their nominal suzerain the Sultan, and in many of their manners and customs, the most striking distinction between the Roumanians and the Servians consists in difference of race.

The Roumanians are one of the most mixed races on earth. They are a sad puzzle to the ethnologists. They are partly Roman, partly Gothic, partly Magyar, partly Sclavic, and partly, though to a small extent, Tartar.

The Servians, on the other hand, are regarded as the most purely Sclavic race on the Continent. They have resisted the admixture of alien blood more obstinately than the Finlander, the Breton, or the Basque. They have preserved, with wonderful uniformity, the physical characteristics, the customs, and the language of a remote and heroic ancestry. While their neighbors of Wallachia have proved easily susceptible to the influences of each of the many successive conquests of their territory, the Servians have preserved a distinct national type from first to last.

SERVIA

The story of this most brave and energetic, as well as purest, of all the Sclavonic races, teems with a varied, turbulent, and romantic interest. Even now, among the Servian peasantry,

who are ignorant in most matters, tales of the early valor of their ancestors, of their Oriental origin, of their long and Titanic struggles, are familiar; while the fact that they still preserve and still sing the patriotic songs which have survived from a period anterior to the invasion of Europe by the Turks, indicates the intense pride of the Servians in their national annals and exploits.

It seems certain that the first distinct appearance in history of the great Slavonic race, which now embraces a large majority of the inhabitants of Eastern Europe, was early in the sixth century, when they appeared on the frontiers of the Roman Empire, defeated the imperial legions in Greece, besieged Byzantium, and, after rather more than a century of conflict, made a league with the emperors of the East. The power of the successors of Constantine was already waning; and this fierce and obstinate race, which was supposed to have had its origin in Scythia and Illyria, compelled the emperors to concede to them a vast tract of country, where they established the kingdom of Servia.

The contact of these Slaves with the civilization of the Eastern Empire, deteriorated as it was, had the surprising effect of converting them to Christianity, and softening their hide and ferocious characters into something like order and subordination. They made from time to time inroads upon the Greek Empire; and on one occasion at least, having routed the Imperial troops, they advanced so near Constantinople that it required all the tact and valor of Belisarius to repel them. The tide of Slavic inroads into Europe must indeed, have been enormous; for they penetrated far north of the Carpathian range; and carried their colonization over Mecklenburg, and as far as Pomerania on the north, through Brandenburg, Saxonia, Bohemia, Moravia, and Poland, and far into the interior of what is now Russia. Southward, the Slavic tribes spread through a greater part of Greece, and only found their limit on the south and west at the shores of the Mediterranean.

There was a time when the Slaves were scattered from the Danube to the Elbe, and from the Adriatic to the Baltic, and perhaps even to the North Sea. These ancient Slaves are thus described, by a Russian writer: "They were tall in stature and strongly built, and with hair of a reddish color. Without shirt or cloak they went into battle, each man clothed with only a pair of short trousers. Armed with bows and spears, they fought on foot, and preferred defiles and difficult passes to combat in the open field."

The same description of physical appearance may be applied to the modern Slave; and it may be added that they retain, amid their division among different rulers, — some of these rulers being of quite different race, — a spirit of nationality is kept alive by song, tradition, and a strong sentiment of brotherhood, and which may sooner or later bring about great results.

In all, there are between ninety and one hundred millions of Slaves in Europe. They comprise nineteen or twenty millions out of the thirty-five millions of Austrian subjects, eight out of the fifteen millions of European subjects of the Sultan, a large majority of the Russian and Polish peoples, and scattered populations, such as the Montenegrins. It is curious that they have no purely Slavic ruler anywhere for the Imperial house of Russia is fully as much German as Slavic. The only reigning family in Europe of Slavic origin is that of Mecklenburg, which reigns over Germany.

In Northern Europe the Slavic element has, in process of time, been almost entirely absorbed by the Teutonic; and the same is true of the Slaves who settled in Greece, and are scarcely if at all distinguishable from the descendants of the most classic of races.

The name "Slave," which is variously written Slav, Slave, Sclave and Schlave is said to be derived from a word signifying "fame," or "glory;" and so long has this once heroic and conquering race been in subjection to rulers of stranger blood, that their name has given to the human chattel his appellation of "slave." The language of the ancient Slaves has been preserved, especially among the Servians with a considerable degree of purity; but, as was inevitable, has branched in various localities into a number of dialects, the chief of which are the Bohemian, the Polish, the Wend, Russian, Bulgarian, Illyrian, Croatian, and Carinthian; and there are sub-dialects of these.

The ancient Servian dominions comprised the colonies of Slavonia, Croatia, Servia, Bosnia, and Dalmatia. After entirely throwing off the Byzantine yoke, the Servians grew rapidly in power and culture. At last there arose a great "Kral," or king, Stephen Douschan, who extended the Servian dominions over Bulgaria, Dalmatia, and Macedonia, and who held sway from the shores of the Black Sea to those of the Adriatic. He was by far the greatest and most warlike of the early Servian monarchs. He erected his kingdom into an empire; now for the first time the imperial double eagle was emblazoned upon Servian banners; and he even proposed to raise an army of eighty thousand men, and, marching upon Constantinople, to put an end to the fast-crumbling empire of the East.

Under Stephen the Servians had evidently reached a high degree of civilization; the beautiful churches and ruins of stately castles and towns of that period which are still extant are striking evidences of their taste and spirit. In the two centuries during which Servia continued an independent and prosperous realm, its progress as a nationality and as a people was pretty steadily onward. The emperors married princesses of Byzantium, France, and Venice; law and the arts ripened under the civilizing influences which penetrated the wild slopes of the Kaplan through the free cities of the Adriatic; bridges and roads were built; the Servian monarchs were recognized by the popes; and a great and comparatively enlightened feudal nobility grew up in their dominions.

It was in the latter part of the fourteenth century that the Sultan Amurath, the son of the famous Othman, who was the first of the Turkish "Grand Seigneurs," succeeded in conquering Servia, and reducing its gallant people to subjection. At the battle of Cassova, in 1389, Lazar, the last of the Servian emperors, was killed; a Servian chieftain, Milosch Obilitesh, penetrating the Sultan's tent, stabbed him to the heart; and this act was fatal to the independence of his defeated countrymen. The Sultan Bajazet established his rule over the nation; but, despite the assassination of Amurath, that rule was far from being harsh or despotic. Two sons of the last Servian monarch were made governors over the country; and, far from imposing Mohammedanism upon the conquered race, Bajazet declared, that, for every new mosque built in his European realms, a Christian church should be erected.

The Servians continued subject to the Turks for more than four centuries. Throughout this period their condition was in many respects a happy one. The rule of the Turkish pashas was less oppressive upon the peasantry than that of their own feudal lords had been; their taxes were not heavy; they were permitted freedom of worship.

At last, however, the old proud spirit of the Servian race revived. The plundering corruption of the pashas, and the inability of the well-disposed sultans to protect them from the exactions and capricious tyranny of their own officials, roused its long-dormant but, as it appeared, not extinct energies. In 1804 the Servians rose in general insurrection. They found a

rude but heroic leader in Kara George, a sort of marauder, of a stature and impetuous courage; and after a struggle of eight years they achieved their independence. Kara George assumed the power, and ruled despotically; but he preserved order, and for a while sustained himself against the attempts of the Turks at reconquest. A sudden attack, however, was made by the Sultan in 1813 and so unprepared was Kara George, that the Turkish troops occupied Serbia without a battle, and the upstart sovereign was forced to fly for his life.

But the Servian spirit of independence was not crushed by this disaster. Once more the people rose in arms, this time under Milosch Oberonovitch, the son of a swine-herd. The Sultan, finding himself powerless to keep the country in subjection, made terms with Milosch; and in 1829 he was recognized as Prince of Serbia, and the virtual independence of the principality was acknowledged by an imperial firman. With the exception of an annual tribute to the Turkish treasury, and the nominal right of the Sultan to call upon Serbia for a contingent of 12,050 men in case of war, and to represent Serbia at foreign courts by his envoys, the principality then became entirely free from the Sultan's control.

Milosch although he had secured the practical liberty of his countrymen, did not long remain popular. He became arbitrary in his government, and relied too much on his deeds and his fame to secure him an indemnity from liberal measures. In 1839 he was forced to abdicate the throne, and retire from public affairs altogether; and was succeeded by his son Milan, a feeble and sickly prince, who died soon after coming into the principality. The next ruler of Serbia was Prince Michael, who was as little successful in pleasing his subjects as his father had been, and who in 1842 found himself obliged to quit the principality.

It was now the turn of the son of the liberator Kara George to try his hand at reigning. Alexander, the son of the bandit hero, was elected prince by the Skoupschina; and for some time he ruled in peace, and Serbia made marked progress. For years Alexander contented his restless subjects; then came a great popular agitation, which ended by driving him, too, from the throne. Old Milosch was summoned from his long retirement to resume the reins of power, but died in about a year, in 1860. Prince Michael was in his turn recalled, and for the second time was proclaimed prince.

“During his exile,” says an historian, “Michael had travelled much in Europe, and become a thorough European. He possessed enlightened views as a ruler; and, bending his whole energies to give his country a new and really independent life, he organized the militia so that Serbia could summon to her standard, in time of need, a force of one hundred thousand trained men. Roads also were formed, bridges built, schools established, and agriculture and commerce encouraged. The popularity of the prince was greatly increased in 1862, by his obtaining the removal of the Turkish garrisons from Belgrade and all other fortresses of Serbia. The education of Prince Michael led him to introduce European refinement among his court and people. One of his tastes was for parks and gardens. The garden attached to his town residence was choice and elegant. He converted a picturesque district lying along the chain of hills to the west of Belgrade into a deer-park, named the Topshidere. When walking in the Topshidere one day, in June, 1868, Prince Michael was assassinated.”

He was succeeded by a youth of fourteen, named Milan, grandson of Jephrem, a brother of old Milosch, and second cousin to the murdered prince; and this Milan is the present ruler of Serbia. He was born at Jassy in 1854, and he is therefore twenty-three years of age. His mother was a Moldavian. Prince Michael sent Milan, when very young, to be educated at Paris; and he

was there when the tragedy occurred which called him to the throne. A regency was formed; and Prince Milan only assumed the personal charge of his government on arriving at his eighteenth year, when, under the Servian law, he came of age. In October, 1875, he was married to the Princess Nathalie Petrovna, daughter of a very wealthy Russian officer, Col. Keschko, and his wife, the Princess Stordza; and the offspring of this union is a son, Nicholas, who was born on the 4 of August, 1876. The Princess Nathalie is only eighteen years of age; but such are her grace, beauty, and unpretentious kindliness of disposition, that she is enthusiastically liked by the Servians, and is personally far more popular than her husband. She has much tact, and takes a keen interest in events, and in the details of government; and several ministerial crises have been attributed to her influence.

Prince Milan, though courageous, intelligent, and sensible, and inclined to rule in a liberal spirit, has not displayed many marked executive qualities, and has committed many errors, which may be attributed partly to his youth. It requires traits of a high political order to deal with the perplexities with which events have burdened him. He has been compelled to use every prudence in restraining the restless impetuosity of his subjects, and imperilled his throne when he yielded, to their clamor for war with Turkey in 1876; a war which resulted most disastrously to Servian arms, though they were aided by the military genius of Tcherniaieff, and by over two hundred Russian, Austrian, and German officers. He is in perpetual peril, for Karageorgeowitch, the son of Alexander, still has pretensions to the throne of his fathers, and lies perpetually in wait for some blunder on the part of Milan which will cost him his popularity and his throne.

A correspondent, during the late war, spoke thus of Prince Milan and his situation: "Natural ability is not wanting to him; but at twenty-two years of age, without fortune, with a rival just over the frontier, his highness has to discriminate between the good and evil counsel of a ministry standing on the shoulders of an unscrupulous opposition, whose only principle is war. Victory may bring about a change of suzerains; but would it give Servia independence? When the prince is disposed to obey the dictates of reason, he is told, 'Abdication, monseigneur, is the only alternative.'"

The political form of the principality of Servia is that of a constitutional monarchy. By the treaty of Paris, signed in 1856, as a settlement of the results of the Crimean War, its political status in relation to the Ottoman Empire was defined in the following article:--

"The principality of Servia shall continue to hold of the Sublime Porte, in conformity with the imperial decrees which fix and determine its rights and immunities, placed henceforward under the collective guaranty of the contracting powers. In consequence, the said principality shall preserve its independent and national administration, as well as full liberty of worship, of legislation of commerce, and of navigation."

The princes of Servia are elected by the nation; and, although the Sultan has the nominal right to confirm its choice, as a fact he does not venture to exercise it. The Prince is assisted in the administration by a council of five ministers, who are responsible to the Parliament.

This Parliament comprises a Senate, numbering seventeen members, one for each department into which the principality is divided, who are named by the Prince, and a Chamber of Deputies called the Skoupschina. The Senate sits in perpetual session, and vacancies in it are filled by the Prince's nomination.

The Skoupschina is chosen by the suffrages of the people. Every male Servian of twenty-one years of age, who pays direct taxes, and is not a servant or a gypsy, can vote for deputies; the electoral districts include each two thousand voters. Government officials and clergymen are the only classes excluded from the right to sit as deputies. The Skoupschina used to meet triennially; but in these troublous times it meets every year. On unusual occasions, such as a change in the ruler, a body called "the grand Skoupschina," comprising four times the number of deputies contained in the ordinary body, is summoned to meet at Belgrade. The lower House, as in England, has the exclusive right of originate money bills; and this is not the only respect in which the Servian constitution has been evidently modelled upon that of the English.

The area of the Servian principality is something over sixteen thousand square miles; and its population, by the most recent census, reaches over 1,300,000 souls, nearly equally divided between males and females. Of her population, 130,000 are Roumanians, 25,000 gypsies, 2,600 Germans, and about 3,000 foreigners of other races.

As in Turkey proper and in Roumania, the government of Servia derives the larger part of its revenue from a capitation tax, which "is minutely classified as to rank, occupation, and income of each individual, a distinction being also made between married and unmarried persons; and is assessed, in the first instance, on the different communes or parishes, which have to distribute it among the heads of families." The receipts from this tax are not far from \$1,500,000. Servia's total revenue for the last fiscal year amounted to \$3,500,000 in round numbers, while her expenditure reached the figure of \$3,450,000. The principal commerce of Servia is that with Austria, Roumania, and Turkey.

Her imports from the two empires amount to \$4,500,000 a year, and her exports exceed this figure by \$1,000,000. The serious want of roads interferes seriously with the development of the resources of her rich and fruitful country.

Servia, considering her population, can, in case of necessity, bring a large force into the field. A warlike race by tradition and custom, she is able to arm a very considerable proportion of her male inhabitants; although in this respect she cannot compete with her sister Slavonic state, stalwart little Montenegro. The standing army numbers five thousand men, mainly infantry, there being only two hundred cavalry and a small artillery corps. Her militia comprises at least seventy-five thousand men, of whom a small number are artillerymen. There is besides a volunteer service; and the entire possible war strength of Servia may be put at between 130,000 and 150,000 men, at least ten per cent of the total population. The regular troops are for the most part supplied with the Peabody rifle.

One of the chief defects of the Servian army is its lack of skilled officers; a majority of the officers have been hastily promoted within the past few years, from the non-commissioned ranks. The militia is very scantily supplied with inferior arms, and has but poor discipline and field organization; while their resources for transportation consist, in the words of an English officer, of "a few-score bullocks and crazy wagons, in a depopulated hilly country without railroads."

Several of the Servian army officers, however, have distinguished themselves on various fields of action. Gen. Francis Zach, the chief of staff, a Croatian by birth, is an officer of some note. He commanded the Slovacs in Hungary in 1848, at the time of their revolt against the Magyars. He organized an artillery school at Belgrade, has written several important military works, and, though his exploits during the war of 1876 were not brilliantly successful, he is

regarded as a fine strategist. Col. Nikolitch, the minister of war, is not only a good officer, but a man very popular with the army. He is a relation of the Prince by marriage. Col. Milankovitch is another Servian officer who has made himself favorably known by good service.

There are only five places in Servia which deserve to be called towns. These are, Belgrade, its romantic and picturesque capital; Semandria, a few miles southeast of Belgrade, on a bend of the Danube; Schabatz, west of Belgrade, also on the Danube; Ushitza, near the southwestern frontier, on a branch of the Ibar; and Kragujewatz, in the interior, almost directly south of Belgrade, and not far westward from the Morava valley.

Belgrade is by far the most interesting of Servian towns. It is a city of nearly sixty thousand inhabitants, and stands at the junction of the Danube and the Save. Its lofty fortress has been again and again captured by the Turks, and recaptured by the Servians; and it has many a time been a bone of contention in the fierce conflicts between the Turks and the Austrians and Hungarians. It occupies a strong position above the Danube, the passage of which it completely commands. The cathedral is the most notable building after the citadel; it has but little architecture merit, however, being an unwieldy edifice, with a gilded bell-tower, and containing within many pictures of little value or attractiveness. The Danube makes a sharp curve at Belgrade, opposite to which is Semlin, one of the most picturesque of Danubian villages.

At a little distance, Belgra presents a romantic, almost Oriental aspect. "Its white minarets and trim little houses," says a recent traveller, "each seemingly placed in a trim little garden, stand out picturesquely against the richly clad hills of the neighborhood. On landing, however, all the beauty is tempered by the dirt and disagreeable odors so characteristic of all Eastern cities. Opposite Belgrade, in the midst of the river, is the isle Zingaris, so called from its being the abode of gypsies; while near the water's edge is the Kalameidan, or public garden, which separates the fortress from the town, from which a splendid view is had."

The other towns which we have mentioned are not especially remarkable. Schabatz is a busy trading town, and is the seat of a bishopric. Semandria has a lovely site, being encompassed by hills, the slopes of which are thickly clad with vineyards. Ushitza has its castle fortress, and stands amid blooming orchards. Kragujewatz, in Central Servia, is the seat of the government powder-mills and arsenal, where they cast rifled cannon, and convert old muskets into breech-loaders.

The character, habits, and customs of the Servians are not less peculiar and interesting than their history. The country, while not precisely what would be called mountainous, is picturesquely varied and wild of aspect. It contains rather a series of isolated hills than continuous chains. These hills, rising from the fertile plains where the villages are scattered, are covered with dense forests of pine and oak, where the lynx, the bear, the chamois, and the wolf roam almost at will. On the lower slopes the forests are replaced by prolific vineyards, which are said to have been first planted in Servia in the time of the Roman Empire.

"The scenery of Servia," says a recent tourist, "is exceedingly beautiful, the mountains being for the most part covered with forests of oak and other trees. The valleys and rivers form an endless and agreeable diversity." The romantic beauty of the country is described by Mr. Paton, in his account of the highlands and woodlands of Servia, with enthusiastic admiration. He says, "Nothing like enclosures or fields, farms, laborers, gardens, or gardeners; and yet it is and looks like a garden in one place, a trim English lawn and park in another. You almost say to yourself, 'The man or house cannot be far off. What lovely and extensive grounds! Where can the

hall or castle be hid?" Mr. Paton also describes the noble view which he had from the summit of Mt. Kopaunik, which stands in such a position that wide vistas stretch out before the eye from its top.

"A gentle wind," he says, "skimmed the white straggling clouds from the blue sky. Warmer arid warmer grew the sunlit valleys; wider and wider grew the prospect as we ascended. Balkin after balkin rose on the distant horizon. When at length I stood on the highest peak, the prospect was literally gorgeous. Servia lay rolled out at my feet. There was the field of Cassova, where Amurath defeated Lazar, 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 eastward, 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. From the top of Kopaunik the view embraces memorials of the glory, fall, and rise of Servia: there may be at once seen the seat of the Servian Empire in old Servia, the field of its overthrow, and the scenes where freedom was again won by the sword of the Serbs."

Only from an eighth to a sixth of the soil of Servia is under cultivation. A very large portion is devoted to pasturage and the rearing of swine—the latter the most valuable animal product of the country. In the charming valleys of the Save and the Morava and their tributaries, wheat, millet, and maize are plentifully raised. This is due, however, rather to the fruitful nature of the soil than to the skill of the Servian cultivators.

The Servians are but indifferent farmers. The land is still tilled in a primitive fashion, improvements of modern invention finding no favor there. It is singular that in a latitude so low olives are unknown; the fig and the mulberry, on the other hand, are plentiful. The flora of Servia bears a striking resemblance to that of the British Isles. It is remarkable that in this almost tropical section of Europe are found wild strawberries, raspberries, and whortleberries, violets, daisies, and saffron, honeysuckle, clematis, and the white and black thorn. The cup of a certain acorn is gathered and used for tanning.

The wine of Servia is often excellent, especially that called "Turk's blood." There is a curious custom connected with, this beverage. "Whenever a bottle of it is opened," says a recent traveller, "the first person who tastes it affects surprise, and asks, 'What is this?' A second, having likewise tasted it, replies solemnly, 'Turk's blood.' Whereupon the first rejoins, 'Then let it flow freely!'"

Servia holds no mean rank as a country of industrial resources. Its iron is pronounced the best in the world. In ancient times gold and silver mines were worked within its territory; and, indeed, they still exist, though they are no longer profitable. Coal, sulphur, and saltpetre are among its most lucrative productions. Experiments are even now being made to ascertain whether the Servian soil is not favorable to hemp and tobacco.

It is an excellent indication of the present prosperity of the Principality, that its exports considerably exceed its imports. As evidence of the primitive condition of Servia may be found in the fact that a separation of employments scarcely exists there. The people are supplied by "jacks-at-all-trades." As in our own villages, the same shopkeeper supplies his customers with groceries and household ware, hats and farming implements — indeed, whatever they find serviceable in the house or on the farm.

In many respects the Servians are a people much to be envied. Primitive in ideas and habits, patriarchal in their manner of life, intensely devoted to their country and jealous of its institutions, their lot is almost universally a comfortable if not a prosperous one.

A strong and stalwart race, much above the average of Europeans and even of Sc in height and physical strength, they are contented with little, and existence runs smoothly with them. Pauperism is unknown among them. There is no country in the world where life and property are more secure. Foreign tourists find their roads as safe as the streets of a populous city. "The peasants of no part of Europe," says a tourist, "can compare with those of Servia for that truest of all courtesies which is based upon a spirit of independence, and springs from true gentleness of character. The salutations of the peasants to the traveller have trace of servility. They are universal, but they are the natural homage which one freeman renders to another."

The Servians, well-to-do and humble, are noted for their free hospitality and welcome to all who come. In hut and country house the stranger is always sure of a social glass, a hearty meal, and a comfortable bedroom. The Servians are at once shrewd and imaginative, at once brave and industrious, sincere and simple in conduct as in faith.

A singular feature of the social state of the Servians is seen in the character of their villages. These are always stretched over a large tract, and do not nestle close, as do the villages in every other part of Europe. Hamlets comprising not more than forty or fifty cottages are spread over a space as large as that occupied by Vienna. The houses are built square, the walls being of clay, and the central apartment being covered with a thatching of hay. In the middle of this room are the hearth and fire. Around it are the chambers, often decorated with polished panels.

It is in this curiously constructed homestead that the whole Servian family is collected after the patriarchal fashion, the old man and his good wife, the sons and daughters, and the grand children. They work and take their meals in common, and in the evening gather in a group around the hearth. The houses, and even the furniture are constructed by the owners themselves. These also make their own wagons and their own ploughs, carve the yokes of the oxen, shoe the horses, hoop the barrels, and make the shoes for the family. Meanwhile the women of the household weave and spin the clothing for themselves, their children, and the men.

Very few Servian women are there who cannot spin flax and wool, and weave and dye the heavier cloths.

When the patriarch of the family dies, his sons choose one of themselves to take his place, and the family remains together until it becomes too large for a single household. Then other houses are built near by, and so it is stated that "a single household often forms a whole street." Thus the family tie is a remarkably strong one in Servia; and especially strong is the bond uniting brothers and sisters to each other. It is customary for the mother and sisters of a dead Servian, and not his wife, to mourn and keep watch at his grave.

A singular custom which exists in some parts of Servia is thus described by Herr Ranke: "When one of two brothers whose birthdays fall in the same month dies, the survivor is chained to the deceased until he causes some strange youth to be called to him, whom he chooses in his brother's stead, and is liberated by him." The Servians never celebrate their birthdays. Each house has its patron saint, and that saint's day is the occasion of the chief family festival.

The costumes of the Servians, of the men and of the women, are among the most picturesque in Europe. The men wear drab-colored short jackets lined with red, caps sashes of red, and their belts are provided with pistols and poniards. Their legs are covered with baggy trousers to the knee, below which point they fit close to the calves and ankles. The dress some what resembles that of the provincial Greeks.

The Servian women dress with conspicuous ostentation. They wear skirts of silk of a bright color, magenta being a favorite tint; ample crinoline supports this dress. The robe is trimmed at the wrists with rich and deep silver embroidery, and there is gold lace embroidery around the neck. A wide sash is worn about the waist, with long fringed ends hanging down in front the whole length of the dress. The women's heads are adorned with red leather caps worked with silver or gold lace. The hair is braided around the cap in a deep band, so as to conceal all of the cap except the top. They wear gold ear-rings, almost without exception.

From their heads, too, one often sees a long wide chain of gold or silver coins hanging down over their backs. These coins are of all dates, some of them being very ancient; and these peculiar head-dresses, as well as bracelets and necklaces made in the same way, are generally heirlooms, and descend from mother to daughter. One of the most interesting incidents of Servian life is their songs minstrelsy. The poetry of this romantic people long since attracted the attention of Goethe, Lockhart, Bowring, and Owen Meredith, the present Lord Lytton. The songs which are still sung in the Servian valleys are so ancient that their authors have sunk into oblivion. They are fervidly patriotic.

“Inspired by the grand scenery of the country,” says a writer on them, “by the patriarchal life of its people, and by the incidents of their eventful history, they are considered the finest of all the Sclavonian songs.”

Many of them celebrate the heroic deeds of Nemanja and Stephen Douschan, and the era before the Turkish conquest; others echo the patriotic refrains of the wars of independence yet others reflect the long era of tranquility under the mild rule of the sultans. Minstrelsy, which has faded out of France and Germany with the extinction of the troubadour and the minnesinger, still survives in Servia in all its medieval vigor. In every Servian household is to be found the “gusl” a musical instrument peculiar to the country, by which the national songs are always accompanied.

In the long winter evenings, when work is over, and the family is gathered about the roaring fire of oak, one of the men sings stirring melodies to the gusl, while the women spin and weave. Even the superiors of the monasteries sing to the gusl. Song is an invariable incident of public meetings, and probably there is not an inn in Servia where there is not singing every night.

“On the mountain where boys tend the flocks, in the valley where the reapers gather in the corn, in the depth of the forest, the traveller hears alike the echo of these songs, ever the solace of the men in all their varying occupations.” There are many wandering minstrels in Servia, who tramp about the country with their gusls, and who never fail to receive a welcome, food, and a lodging, wherever they go.

Even those Servians who are Mohammedans are too patriotic not to join their Christian countrymen in the songs which recount the deeds of a common though Christian ancestry. The old songs are both lyrical and historic, and an English critic declares that the best of them are in no wise inferior to those of Béranger.

The overwhelming majority of the Servian people are attached to the Greek Church. The Church is, however, a national one, not subject to the control of foreign spiritual potentates, but choosing its own metropolitan and bishops. The services in the churches are conducted in the Slavonic tongue; the rites performed therein are ancient and imposing, and, are said to resemble in some respects those of the Jewish Church.

Mr. Denton, in his work on "Servia and the Servians," says, "The whole ceremonial, not only in its broader features, but down to its minuter details, appeared to me essentially Jewish. It was as though the unvarying East had retained so much of the services of the elder church as could be made applicable to Christian worship, and had thus restored to them their full and spiritual meaning. This was so much the case that as I stood in the cathedral at Belgrade, with the myriad lights blazing around, and listened to the full choirs chanting while the people answered in responsive chorus, using the self-same music which may still be heard in the Jewish synagogue; and whilst with the voices of the people, clouds of incense, symbolizing the prayers of the saints, rose within and without the doors of the sanctuary, with its veil of scarlet covering the way to the holy of the holies, — I seemed to be standing within that older temple at Jerusalem, and listening to the music which, at least from the time of David, has been the sacred heritage of God's church. This illusion was completed when I saw before me the tall forms of the priests clothed in flowing Oriental garments, full bearded, and with heads as guilt less of the razor as the Nazarites of old."

In the same work we find the following graphic account of the administration of the holy sacrament, as it is imposingly performed in the Servian church: "The richly robed priest, with flowing beard, stood at the central or holy door of the iconostasis, the gates of which are at this time open, and the curtains withdrawn. In his left hand he bore the chalice, in his right the spoon; for with the spoon the sacrament is given, the contents of the disc or paten having, after consecration, been carefully swept into the chalice. At the presbyter's left hand stood the longhaired ascetic-looking deacon, also in beautiful array. About five feet westward of the priest and deacon, facing them, stood two officials of the church, to prevent the danger consequent upon the pressure of the crowd. In front of these two men passed the communicants from south to north, as in turn came up. These communicants were of both sexes and all ages. They stood before the chalice-bearing priest with reverent, upturned faces, and beneath the mouth of each the deacon held his houselling cloth of violet-colored silk, embroidered in the centre with a cross of gold, whilst into it was placed the holy sacrament of love. After each had communicated, his lips were carefully wiped by the deacon"

The inroads of the Turks at intervals during so long a period have left but few of the ancient religious edifices standing. Nearly all the churches are modern and very simple in style; but here and there may be found churches which have survived Moslem devastation, and these are of an imposing Byzantine style. This is the case with the cathedrals of Studenica, Ravanica, and Manasca. They date from the period included in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and bear evidence of the influence of Venetian as well as old English art.

The parish priests of the Servian Church are obliged to be married by inflexible law; and, as the canons also forbid them to marry a second time, when a priest's wife dies he ceases to preside over a parish, and retires to a monastery. There is little preaching done in the Servian sanctuaries, as may be judged by the fact that a recent English traveller visited forty of them, and only found a pulpit in one.

The traditional customs of the Servians are very numerous, and some of them are very quaint and poetic. Many of them of a religious nature. When, for instance, thanksgiving is had for the vintage, large clusters of grapes are carried in metal basins into the churches by the brilliantly arrayed peasantry; and, when the services are over, these clusters are passed about among the people. The corn harvest is attended by a somewhat similar custom. Ornamented plates containing baked corn are brought into church during the holy communion, in the centre of each of which a lighted candle is fixed, and these are placed below the altar. They are blessed by the bishop, and carried home and eaten in the evening.

It would appear that the Servians are not fond of going to law; for they have a custom of choosing a village elder, to whom disputants resort, and who settles their difficulties.

Among the most curious customs are those relating to marriage. The Servian marriages are usually arranged by the parents, with little regard to the preferences of the young couple. It is matter of commercial contract, as it is to a great extent in France. Before the bride can enter into the house of her new husband, whither she is led by her eldest brother, she must go through certain symbolic ceremonies. She must dress an infant, touch the walls of the house with a distaff in token that she is to work with it under their protection, and stand upon a table with bread, water, and wine in her hands, as a sign that she is to have these in her care, and with a piece of sugar in her mouth, to admonish her that she should speak little, and that little sweetly.

Another singular custom is the forming of what is called "the tie of adoptive brotherhood." Two men make a vow of eternal friendship, brotherhood, and fidelity to each other, in the name of St. John. This tie is recognized by the community, and the two are called "brothers in God."

Many other quaint and ancient customs still survive among this patriotic and imaginative people, but there is not space to relate them. Suffice it to say that these customs bear testimony to their undiminished attachment to their proud history and heroic traditions. If, in the course of events, the aspirations of the Slaves for a restored unity and a revived empire should be fulfilled, it is not unlikely that the Servians, who achieved unity and empire centuries ago, may again control the destinies of their race.

ROUMANIA.

The Moldavians and Wallachians, now united as the principality of Roumania, are essentially the same people, with a common history, language, religion, code, and character. Originally they were a single nation; but for many centuries they were separate states, having at a certain period separated, though not as enemies.

There is little doubt that the Moldo-Wallachians were the ancient Dacians spoken of by Herodotus. In the days of the Roman Empire they were a sturdy and warlike race, like their neighbors the Servians. Their fate was, however, a very different one from that of Servia. While the latter nation was not conquered by the Romans, but on the other hand pursued an aggressive warfare against the empire of the East, and remained to be subjugated by the Turks, the Moldo-Wallachians were conquered in the second century A. D. by the enterprising Emperor Trajan.

Trajan found them more civilized than most of the rude tribes with whom he came in contact along the Danube; and so proficient, especially, in the art of war, that they could only be

subdued with great difficulty. The people of that country. still preserve the traditions of the heroic exploits of Decebalus, their last native king, who long held the Romans at bay.

On completing their conquests the Romans carried into Moldo-Wallachia the civilization and arts which they planted wherever they went. More than this: many Roman colonies, some of them comprising the soldiers of the empire, settled below the spurs of the Carpathians, and in the fertile and well-watered valleys of Moldavia.

Soon the whole country bore the aspect of enterprise and improvement. Cities were founded, roads built, bridges stretched across the picturesque rivers; swamps were drained, and converted into lovely gardens; a fine and noble architecture replaced the miserable buildings of the earlier race. We find the Roman historians speaking of this province as “the most flourishing and commercial in the Roman Empire.”

So Roman civilization succeeded the Dacian; and the admixture of Roman blood in course of time made a hybrid race, with Roman traits dominant, of the Moldo-Wallachians. The present Rouman language is so evidently a corruption of the Latin that we can scarcely doubt that the Roman character mingled with and in some sort superseded that of the Dacian. As time went on, Moldo-Wallachia presented an almost constant scene of war and confusion. It lay directly between the empire and its northern foes, and was too often their battle-ground.

With the decline of Rome, it became once more an independent state, and had its native princes, who extended their dominion over Transylvania, Bukowina, and Bessarabia. Then it came their turn to be subdued by the fierce Magyars of the west, who remained their masters until the great chief Wallah arose to throw off the hateful yoke.

The Moldo-Wallachians were destined to submit to continual conquests; for not very long after Wallah had re-asserted their independence, the martial Sultan Bajazet, having subjugated Servia and Bulgaria, crossed the Danube, and engaged them in a long, bitter, and sanguinary war. This conflict brought into bold relief the indomitable courage and persistency of the assaulted people; they resisted until their cities and villages were burned, and their fields and valleys were desolate.

It was not until the time of Solyman the Magnificent that they at last submitted to become tributaries of the Ottoman throne, retaining the right to elect their own sovereign and to enact their own local laws. Under Ottoman rule the Moldo-Wallachians enjoyed a long period of peace and comparative prosperity. As in Servia, the Turks governed mildly and wisely. But early in the eighteenth century the Sultan Achmed inaugurated a new and harsher policy toward his Christian subjects.

The native princes of Moldo-Wallachia were deposed, and Mohammedan pashas put in their places. The country was oppressed by grievous tyrannies, by the extortion of rapacious officials, and the imposition of exorbitant taxes. Then the sultans began to sell the sovereignty of Moldo-Wallachia to the highest bidder, who ruled with the title of Hospodar. Of course these mercenary princes made the most out of their period of power in squeezing riches from the oppressed people.

Peter the Great, influenced quite as much, no doubt, by his ambition as by pity for the Moldo-Wallachians, had at one time the design of annexing them to Russia; but, seeing that the time was not ripe for it, he contented himself with engaging in secret intrigues with the Hospodars. The successors of Peter did more for the subject race.

Moldo-Wallachia was placed under the Russian protectorate; the Porte was obliged to obtain the consent of Russia to its appointments of the Hospodars, and it was forced to agree by treaty not to march a Turkish army into the Moldo-Wallachian territory.

From this time the relations between Moldo-Wallachia and Russia became closer. The Czar Nicholas drew up a liberal constitution for the principalities, which provided for the election of the Hospodars by a native Senate, freedom of commerce and of conscience, a responsible ministry, quarantine, the organization of an army upon a European footing, and the erection of civil and criminal courts of justice.

The Sultan had now ceased to have more than a minimal control over the principalities the influence of St. Petersburg was paramount at Bucharest.

This change was most favorable to the material prosperity of the country. Commerce began to flourish, and the fine resources of the fruitful and central provinces to be developed. But, on the other hand, the frequent wars between Russia and Turkey, of which the principalities were too often the battle-ground, did much to check their material progress.

The almost complete independence now enjoyed by Moldo-Wallachia, or, as it is now called, Roumania, was a consequence of the Crimean war. That war was waged on behalf of Turkey by the two Christian powers of England and France against Russia. Russia was decisively beaten, and with her defeat ceased to a large degree her direct influence in Roumania. The allies could not consent to permit that influence to remain; yet, on the other hand, they could not deliver Roumania over, bound hand and foot again, to the tender mercies of the Turk. Roumania was therefore insured in her independence by the European powers under their guaranty of protection from Russians on one side and Turks on the other. It was still regarded as tributary to the Sultan; but the only mark of its vassalage which yet remains is its obligation to pay a yearly tribute of \$100,000 into the Ottoman treasury.

It was in 1861 that the union of Moldavia and of Wallachia was decreed by a firman of the Sultan. The first ruler of the united provinces was Prince Alexander John Couza, a native chief who had distinguished himself as a patriot. His reign was, however, of brief duration. He became very unpopular and arbitrary and in the early part of 1866 an insurrection broke out, which soon became so formidable as to compel Prince Alexander John to abdicate.

The legislative bodies assembled in the May of that year, and proceeded to choose his successor. Their choice, dictated no doubt by the combined recommendations of Russia and Prussia, fell upon Prince Karl of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, a relative of the Prussian king. Prince Karl took the ancient Wallachian title of "Domnu." He was soon after recognized by the Sultan and other European sovereigns.

Karl of Hohenzollern, the reigning prince or Domnu of Roumania, the son of Prince Karl of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, was born on the 29th of April, 1839, and is, therefore now in the thirty-ninth year of his age. Before assuming the sovereignty of his present dominions, Prince Karl was a lieutenant of dragoons in the Prussian army. He was educated at Dresden. When chosen prince, he found it necessary to go to Bucharest in disguise, to avoid trouble with Austria, that empire being then upon the point of war with Prussia, and having made its protest against his election. Elected on May 10, 1866, he reached Bucharest on the 21st, but was not recognized by his suzerain, the sultan, until the following July. On the 15th of November, 1869, he married Elizabeth von Neuwied, daughter of the Fürst Hermann von Neuweid. Prince Karl is described as

an enlightened man, liberal and industrious as a ruler, and endowed with excellent personal qualities.

His career as Domnitor has, however, been from the first a troublesome one. He has had to contend with factious opposition, especially from that party of irreconcilable "Reds" who have grown to such influence within the past ten years in Roumania; and six years ago, so much was his patience tried by political wranglings, that he avowed his purpose to abdicate, and return to Germany. He was with difficulty persuaded to change his mind; and since then has been less harassed by internal disorders.

Prince Karl has been active in promoting railroad and commercial enterprises in his states; and Roumania has made marked material progress within the past five years. There is no doubt that Prince Karl aspires to the diadem of a king, and to the complete independence of Moldo-Wallachia from any control of the Porte. The population of the principality is about five millions of souls—larger than that of the Kingdom of Greece or Denmark, and about equal to that of the Netherlands. But there are many serious difficulties arising from the jealousies of the great powers, in the way of erecting it into a kingdom; though it may not improbably be attained as one of the results of the Russo-Turkish war.

Speaking of Prince Karl, an old Roumanian statesman not long ago said, "He is a better Roumanian than most of us. He has dismissed from his mind all other sympathies, all other associations. He lives only to serve his adopted country, and has given himself to us without the least reservation. We none of us know so much about the country, its qualities, properties, resources, susceptibilities, and capabilities, as he does. He examines into every thing himself; he works harder than any of his subjects. What he has done for the army is above all praise. He brought us order, calmness, the possibility of putting constitutional principles of government into practice. Even those whose pretensions to the Hosopdarat have been shelved for an indefinite period of time, by his steady mastery over the obstacles thrust in his way, have for the most part been won over by his amiability or fairly cowed by his straightforward honesty"

Thus the prince has made a very strong impression on the shifty, restless, impulsive, Oriental Boyards, by his strict German uprightness, quiet unemotional bearing, and steady adherence to the principles of order and discipline. It seems to have been his negatively good qualities rather than more positive ones, which irritated Roumanian society at one time against him; an irritation which has apparently subsided, leaving prince in a position of very comfortable popularity. It has always been, perhaps, the greatest of the misfortunes of Moldavia and Wallachia, that they are geographically wedged in between two empires at once so powerful, so inveterately hostile, so jealous, and so grasping, as Russia and Turkey, and to govern in such a state is a very different task from ruling over busy Belgians, or the peaceable and phlegmatic Dutch.

The new constitution, framed in the summer of 1866, and which is still in force, provides that the legislative power shall rest in two Houses, a Senate and a Chamber of Deputies. The members of both Houses are chosen by an indirect election. The people choose electors, and these electors choose the senators and deputies. The Senate comprises seventy-six members, and the Chamber of Deputies one hundred and fifty-seven, almost equally divided between Moldavia and Wallachia.

The only restrictions on the suffrage are as to age, intelligence, and citizenship. The voter must be a native Roumanian, be able to read and write, and be twenty-five years of age. The

executive power rests in the hands of the Domnu and the five ministers of the Interior, Justice, Foreign Affairs, Finance, and War. The prince can suspend the operation of a law by a temporary veto, which may be overruled, however, by the legislature. The laws of the principality are founded on the Roman civil law, and the unwritten customs of Moldo-Wallachia.

Moldavia is divided into thirteen, and Wallachia into eighteen provinces. These are each supplied with a governor, a receiver of taxes, and a civil court presided over by three judges. Moldavia, moreover, has prefects of police and, town- councils, for each municipality.

As in Servia, the chief source of the revenue of Roumania is the capitation tax, which is about \$ 1.75 per head of the country population, and a larger sum for dwellers in the towns, tradespeople, and merchants. This tax, with the revenue of the properties belonging to the principality, and the tobacco monopoly which it possesses, constitutes rather more than one-half of its financial resources. From the capitation tax about \$2,000,000, in round figures is raised; from tolls on roads, \$600,000; from general licenses, \$300,000; from liquor licenses, \$2,000,000; from the land impost, \$1,200,000; and from tax on inherited estates, \$65,000 The indirect taxes produce about the same amount as the direct. The customs yield about \$2,009,000; the salt mines, \$1,000,000; spirits, \$800,000; judicial fines, \$60,000 the tobacco monopoly, \$1,600,000; stamps, registration fees, &c., \$1,000,000.

The revenue of state properties is about \$4,000,000; while the post-office, telegraphs, railways, and other public services, produce about \$2,100,000. The total annual revenue of the principality is thus not far from \$18,300,000.

Roumania is one of the many European states which, disregarding political economy according to Mr. Micawber, spends more than its income. In 1875, while its revenue was as above, its expenditure reached about a million more; the principal amount spent being the interest on its already enormous debt (considering the size of the country) of \$106,000,000. It is worthy of note, however, that next to the payments necessitated by this debt, the highest sum spent by Roumania in any single branch of administration in 1875 was laid out upon public education and instruction, which in that year cost the government about 1,600,000. Public works, trade, and agriculture cost about \$1,000,000, and "justice" about \$800,000.

In view of the Russo-Turkish war, in which Roumania is practically a participant as an ally of the Czar against her nominal suzerain, the numbers and condition of her army become of special interest. From an authoritative statistical work issued within the present year, we take what is probably the most accurate account extant of the forces of Roumania. Those forces, according to our authority, "are divided into four classes, namely, the permanent army with its reserves; the territorial army and its reserves; the militia; the national guard in the towns, and the masses of the rural districts. The permanent army consists of eight regiments of infantry, four battalions of riflemen, one battalion of pompiers for the capital, two companies of pompiers for Jassy (the old capital of Moldavia), companies of foot gendarmes, and one company of discipline. The cavalry includes two regiments of hussars, one squadron of instruction, and five squadrons of horse gendarmes. The artillery consists of two regiments of seven batteries, one company of pontoniers, one company of armorers, and one section of transport service. The staff corps is formed of one battalion of four companies of engineers; and the administrative corps, of one company of workmen, one of hospital attendants, and one squadron of transport corps. The territorial army consists of eight regiments of infantry called 'Dorobanzi,' eight regiments of cavalry called 'Calarashi,' and one battery of artillery for each of the thirty-three districts into

which the principality is divided. The effective force of the territorial army in 1876 was 22,463 infantry, and 12,184 cavalry, with 12,192 horses. The territorial troops, localized in their respective districts, are divided into four series, one of which is under arms weekly, by which arrangement the men are on service for one week, and off service for three weeks. The conscription for the standing army and the territorial army takes place simultaneously, the smaller numbers drawn being taken for the permanent force; but those who are willing to find their own horses pass into the Calarashi, whatever number they may have drawn. The territorial force is subject to be mobilized, and concentrated for manoeuvres or other service. The militia is composed of two classes: the first class consists of all those from twenty-one to twenty-nine years of age who have not been drawn for the permanent or territorial armies; and the second class consists of all those from twenty-nine to thirty-seven years of age who have served either in the permanent or territorial army. They are exercised every Sunday in their own districts. The masses and national guard include all men from thirty-seven to forty-six years of age, are organized, and may be called out for garrison service in time of war, or to maintain order in time of peace.”

Of the population of Roumania, which, as we have stated, is about four millions, Wallachia contains two and a half millions, and Moldavia between fourteen and fifteen hundred thousand. There is a nearly equal division between the sexes, the males slightly preponderating. The main commerce of Roumania consists in the exportation of agricultural products. Its land, despite the frequent droughts, and the plague of locusts which now and then invades it and lays waste the crops, is very fruitful, and requires but little labor to make it yield abundantly. Wheat of the best quality is raised in large quantities, and among other profitable products are flax, tobacco, and hemp. Pigs, goats, and sheep form an important part of the products of the principality; and its rich meadows fatten many herds of cattle.

Game of every kind is abundant; and hares, black-cock, and wild turkeys are especially numerous. One of the chief industries is the rearing of bees, and the honey of Roumania is noted its delicious quality; the many lime-trees afford the bees an excellent staple for the making of honey. Roumania has a large trade with Great Britain; the latter country depending upon the Roumanian as well as the Russian markets to supply its deficiency in breadstuffs.

The exportation of wheat, barley, maize, and other cereals, to Great Britain has, however, greatly fallen off in the last six years: in 1871 it amounted to about \$5,000,000; in 1875, to but little over \$1,200,000. In return, Great Britain imports into Roumania cotton and other manufactured goods to the amount of \$3,400,000.

Giurgevo, which has become a familiar name, owing to its strategical position, and its occupation by a large body of the Russian troops, is the principal Danubian port of Wallachia, or South-western Roumania. Galatz and Ibraila, which also figured conspicuously in the early phases of the war, are the chief Moldavian river ports; and Galatz especially is the seat of busy traffic, having a large foreign population engaged in trade. Ismail, the most important town in that part of Bessarabia which Russia was forced to yield up as one of the penalties of defeat in the Crimea, is also a flourishing place, and the outlet of the productions of a rich and prolific district.

Moldavia and Wallachia resemble Servia alike in the fertility of their soil and the laxity with which it is cultivated. Wallachia descends gradually from the mountain slopes on the west until it widens into broad level plains stretching to the banks of the Danube. In the upper lands of

the west are extensive pastures, prolific in aromatic herbs, where sheep are raised in great quantities; below, on the Danube, cattle are in like manner fattened.

A large portion of the country is covered by dense forests of fir, oak, and beech; its soil is dark and rich, and it is well irrigated by the tributaries of the Danube. Moldavia is less hilly than its sister principality. It is almost wholly a broad and fertile plain, with the picturesque Sereth running through the centre; and on the east many tributaries of the Pruth afford abundance of water. The soil of Moldavia is also very rich, and needs but little care from the hand of man. It is a common saying there, that "in Moldavia the millet in the low country has as little husk as the apple in the high land."

In the north-western section of the principality the scenery becomes beautifully varied and picturesque. There the gardens, orchards, and vineyards "smile with plenty." In the valleys are waving fields of grain and vineyards; the hills are crowned with noble forests. Wheat, millet, potatoes, and barley are grown with care and to great profit; while the wines of Moldavia, could they be properly made, would, it is said, equal Tokay itself in tone and flavor.

The discovery is not recent, that in the Carpathian Mountains there exist, as yet unworked, mines of silver, saltpetre, mercury, iron, salt, and sulphur. Were the people enterprising, the lumber trade of the principality would become probably its most valuable industry. As it is, a great deal of timber is cut for masts and casks.

Both Moldavia and Wallachia are noted for the healthfulness of their climate. Their summer and winter seasons are very long; their spring and autumn seasons very brief, and quick to go. It has long been observed that cholera, in its sweeping forays across the European continent, is less fatal and long-enduring in Roumania than in any other country. The people live long, and doctors rarely get rich there; the diseases are very few, and it is said that there are none indigenous to the soil.

With all their advantages, however, their political liberty, and the unsurpassed bounties with which nature has endowed them, the Moldo-Wallachians have long suffered under the Nights of conflict, and the rule of both foreign and domestic masters. The population of the principality has actually dwindled within the past quarter of a century. They are neither very enterprising nor hard-working. A less warlike race than the Servians, they are also less inclined than the Servians to adopt improvements or accept the later conditions of material civilization. That this is the case, is due in the main, no doubt, to the fact that their territory has been for so many centuries the battle-ground between the Cossack and the Moslem.

As a race, they have been in the habit of seeing their half-grown fields devastated, their half-built villages burned. Thus they got into the way of sowing but little, and that hastily, and of building the cheapest and least ornamental dwellings that they could contrive.

The beneficial results of Prince Karl's reign, however, may be seen by a brief comparison between Roumania as it was when Prince Alexander John abdicated eleven years ago, and Roumania as it is to-day. In 1866 the people were all but savages, of a mild and primitive type, neither knowing nor caring how they were ruled; living on wretched food, cooked in the most uncouth way, and eaten with the worst of manners; dominated and traded upon by an aristocracy of indolent, ignorant, and dissolute lords or boyards, who were also dishonest, unenterprising, and apparently devoid of the least sentiment of love of country. English, French, and German capitalists having, with unfortunate experience, tried to develop the undoubtedly

rich natural resources of the principality, and having given up the attempt in despair, foreign capital was shy of Roumanian risks, and kept clear of the country.

The Moldo-Wallachians, indeed, had at the time of Prince Alexander John's fall reached a degree of physical deterioration and of moral callousness from which it seemed that they could never be rid. They were taxed to death, while they were reduced to a starvation point. They had almost no internal means of carrying hither and thither the food products in which their soil is so fruitful. They were cheated by the boyards, fleeced by the priests, squeezed dry by the Jews, and their lot looked absolutely hopeless. The only salvation which seemed possible was the sorry one of annexation to Austria; that is, extinction in a great but neither united nor prosperous empire, ruled over by a proud imperial house, strange to their race and religion. "They wanted," says an intelligent observer of them as they then were, "nearly every thing. There were a few large fortunes amongst the boyards, but very little education, and less probity. Official corruption was a prevalent malady. Social immorality had attained its apogee, not only amongst the higher classes, but through out all strata of the social formation. Divorce was as common as the open disregard of the marriage tie. Nine-tenths of the population did not know how to read and write."

This decrepitude seemed to reach through every public and private class. The army was wretchedly officered; and the boyards, deriving their revenues from the oppression of the people, spent them outside of the country, in Paris and Vienna, in Baden and at Rome. One who had studied Roumania then would scarcely recognize it now. The country has been opened up to industry and trading enterprise by toads of all kinds; many reforms have been carried out in regard to the relations between the peasants and the squires; and on every hand the signs of a new life have already appeared, and give greater promise every day.

In 1869 the first railway in Roumania, a line forty-two miles long, was opened between Bucharest, the capital, and Giurgevo on the Danube; Giurgevo being opposite Rustchuk, on the Turkish bank of the river, from whence there is rail way communication to Varna, on the coast of the Black Sea. Since the building of this railway, others have been rapidly constructed. A network has been completed connecting Bucharest with eastern Europe, via Ploesti, Buzeo, Ibraila, Tekutel, Roman, and Sucaeva to Lernberg in Austria; and within the past year a railway line has been opened in Moldavia, between the frontier town of Ungheni on the Pruth, and Jassy, the ancient capital of Moldavia, which was finished just in time to enable the Russians to use it, when on the 2 of April, 1877, war was declared, and the forces of the Czar began their advance to the Danube. The Roumanian rail ways are all owned by the government.

The Moldo-Wallachian villages present an unfavorable contrast to those of Servia. A traveller who traversed the principality not long ago describes it as consisting of "huts half buried in the earth," betraying a miserable condition of the people. They are, indeed, almost a subterranean community. In some districts "these subterranean villages have been so effectually concealed, with grass growing on the top, that were it not for the tell-tale smoke we see making its way upward from the earth, like a spent volcano, we might ride over them without suspecting that several human families were living beneath."

Each village has its common granary — a curious edifice about six feet high and several hundred feet long; it is made of open trellis-work, so that the grain may be properly dried. This is always the most conspicuous object which catches the traveller's eye.

The Moldo-Wallachian cities and towns, if we except Bucharest, Jassy, and one or two others, are scarcely more prepossessing than are the villages. The streets are seldom paved. The

inns are execrable, and quite as uncomfortable as those of the Turkish towns beyond the Danube. The beds at these houses of entertainment consist of "a board elevated a few feet from the ground, furnished with a round piece of wood or a bag stuffed with hay as a pillow." The food, too, is unpalatable to him who has been accustomed to the epicurean luxuries of the Western capitals. The principal dish offered at the inns is a porridge made of corn called "mama linga." The walls of the rooms are mostly bare of ornament, except that one may always be certain of being able to pay his devotions to a picture or plaster statuette of the Virgin.

The two ancient capitals of the principalities, Bucharest and Jassy, have some pretensions to elegance and life, and are at least interesting in their quaint antique architecture. Bucharest, situated in a picturesque plain in Central Wallachia, forty miles north of the Danube, on a vast plain which spreads out southward of the Carpathian range from Turnu-Severin to the Sereth, and comprising some two hundred thousand souls, is notable for its convents, its many Greek churches, its pleasant gardens and groves. Near by runs the charming river Dimbowitza, of which an old Wallachian song says, "Sweet water! he who drinks once of thy crystal stream shall never leave thy banks."

"The plain between the Danube and Bucharest," says a recent writer, "rises to a considerable height above the noble river, and on reaching the capital suddenly sinks, forming the hollow in which Bucharest is placed, and through which the stream of the Dimbowitza flows. Seen from a distance, Bucharest appears a handsome city; its numerous domes, spires, and turrets are covered with tin, and sparkle in the sun with an almost dazzling brightness. It covers ground to the extent of twenty English square miles, about a third of which is taken up by trees and gardens. A public promenade outside the town, about a mile and a half in length, and bordered with trees, is covered every afternoon by the equipages of the boyards and foreign agents. The view of the city from the hill on which the metropolitan church is placed is very fine. The Podo Mogochoi, the principal street, is well paved and well watered, and contains the chief shops and hotels and many of the best private houses, besides the prince's residence, and the national theatre. Curious wooden bridges are thrown across the Dimbowitza, and connect portions of the town.

The palace is not an elegant or enviable structure, but the reigning prince has done much to render it comfortable."

The houses in Bucharest are mainly of two stories, built of clay and wood, with bay-windows jutting from the upper stories. Only the principal streets are paved; the rest are long, narrow, and irregular, and, withal, wretchedly lighted. Quite elegant mansions stand cheek by jowl with miserable hovels; there is no fashionable quarter, no paupers' quarter: rich and poor live side by side. Bucharest is in these respects more Oriental than European in character.

It is a peculiar place for several reasons. There are so many dogs in the Roumanian capital as to be a downright plague; and more than once it has been found necessary to inaugurate a general massacre of them. The dogs thus killed are given over to be skinned by the peasantry outside the town. A permanent fashion in Bucharest is that of using vehicles. Nobody will go from place to place on foot if he or she can help it.

M. de Girardin says, in a letter from there, "To go on foot in Bucharest is like going through a French town with bare feet." A traveller gives an amusing description of one of these turn-outs: "From a house in which a decent English workman would be ashamed to live, so dirty and dilapidated is it, you see the 'noble' proprietor driving out in his own, carriage, a half-naked

slave with a few rags hanging loosely about him acting as coachman; the great man himself enjoying his easy dignity within, not in the cleanest habiliments, with all the comfort the execrable road and the wretched springs, or want of springs, in his carriage, will admit of.”

The following is a concise description of the motley character of the denizens of Roumania’s capital: “It is a strangely varied mass of human beings. First in rank are the great boyards, or aristocrats, who, though they have lost their distinctive privileges, keep up as before their haughty exclusiveness. In the second rank come the military, judicial, and civil authorities, and members of the learned professions, who, with the smaller proprietors, form a separate category. Next, those engaged in commercial pursuits, chiefly foreigners, — Germans, Austrians, Greeks, Frenchmen, and Swiss, — who, again, keep very separate from each other. Down in the scale are the artisans of the better class, chiefly Germans, Transylvanians, and some Frenchmen. Those of inferior calling, are Roumanians and Jews. The laboring population is Roumanian, Transylvanian, Bulgarian, and gypsy; while the owners and drivers of public vehicles are mainly Russians, and may easily be distinguished by their voices and appearance. Very recently the gypsies have been released from the state of serfdom in which they were held by the great boyards.”

Jassy, which was the capital of Moldavia when the principalities were separate, stands picturesquely on the bank of a small branch of the Pruth, and is in the northernmost corner of Prince Karl’s dominions. It is in the midst of a smiling and fruitful country; and undulating hills, vineclad, almost entirely surround it. In some respects it is a more attractive, though a smaller city, than Bucharest: its population is about ninety thousand. Its principal street is a very spacious and handsome one, the shops being as large and brilliant as those of the Rue de Rivoli in Paris, or Regent Street in London. The rail way between Jassy and Ungheni has done much to lend new life and growth to the former.

A superficial observation of the Moldo-Wallachians in the towns gives rise, to the inference that theirs is mainly an Oriental type of civilization. A brief acquaintance with the society of Bucharest reveals that there is a universal craving to imitate the French.

The French language is generally used in “the best circles;” no one is worthy of social consideration who is not familiar with it. The young ladies sing French songs; and not only they, but the lower classes, are extravagantly fond of the French opera. French fashions are followed almost slavishly:

The people of Moldo-Wallachia, though unhappily given over to what seems inveterate sloth and an inordinate love of frivolous pleasures, are still a tall, strong, and comely race, “with oblong countenance, black hair, thick and well-arched brows, a lively eye, small lips, and white teeth.” The Wallachians are more vivacious and pleasure-loving than their Moldavian compatriots; amidst their indolence and ignorance, however, both peoples are sober, frugal, and courageous on occasion. It has been remarked that while the Moldo-Wallachians of the cities and towns betray a Greek type of physiognomy, those of the rural districts retain marked Roman features.

The upper classes are excessively and even ludicrously haughty. They keep themselves ostentatiously aloof from the rest of the community, and are not disposed to be hospitable to strangers. The nobility, divided into many grades, and numerous, were; under the old order of things, the controlling political element, and still retain no small portion of their formerly unquestioned authority. The “boyards,” or old Dacian nobility, have become much degenerated

by the fashionable and dissipated life of the city; but the remains of the old landed aristocracy are still to be found in the rural districts. The country boyard is usually athletic and handsome, and, retaining as he does the ancient national costume, is a very picturesque personage. He wears a black Astrakhan cap shaped like a turban, and a large mantle of fur or sheep-skin, this being embroidered in gay colors. It is observed that the costumes of the upper Wallachian peasants, with their sandals, cloaks, and tunics, are very similar to those worn by the Roman peasantry in the days of the empire.

The state religion of Roumania is that of the Greek Church, which comprises almost the entire population.

There are but few Catholics, and still fewer Protestants; the Jews number about a quarter of a million, and the gypsies two hundred thousand. The higher prelates and priests of the Roumanian Greek Church are endowed with generous incomes, with which they live in considerable state; and the church possesses very large and rich domains throughout the principality. In Bucharest alone there are over one hundred church edifices of the orthodox faith. Every village has its sanctuary — a very curious edifice, low, but with a very high and slender spire. As in Servia, the Roumanian Church is virtually independent of the jurisdiction of the Patriarch of Constantinople, choosing its own head, bishops, and priests. The curates of the churches are elected from among the people, and, after performing their clerical functions on Sunday, return each to his own secular avocation, which may be that of a shepherd, farmer, or wood-cutter, on week-days.

The Roumanian priests are generally ignorant and unprogressive, and content themselves with the humdrum performance of their religious rites. Many are the superstitions and traditions peculiar to the Roumanian Greeks. The practice of procuring absolution by the payment of fees is carried to a far greater extent than in the Romish Church; the Roumanian is able easily to compound for any sin he may commit, if he only has the requisite funds. Miracles abound; there is scarcely a plaster image of a saint in the country that has not some supernatural property or power. Holy water blessed by the bishops is said to protect one from the “evil-eye,” from witchcraft and disease; it preserves cattle from lightning and the forests from blight, a house from fire and a ship from shipwreck.

Unlike the Romish Church, too, that of the Moldo-Wallachians provides for an easy divorce. The secular power in Roumania has not yet succeeded in freeing itself from the bonds which unite it with the church. The country is full of monasteries, which have been able to preserve their wealth through all the vicissitudes of war and pillage.

Despite the evidences of a decline in population and national production in Moldo-Wallachia, there are sonic signs, at least, of a better state of things than formerly prevailed. One of these is the gradual rise of a distinct commercial middle class. Half a century ago the native population consisted almost entirely of two classes, between whom there was a wide gulf, — the nobles and the peasants. What trade there was mostly monopolized by Greeks and Jews.

The Jews form a large population, and are easily distinguished from the Roumanians by their high fur caps and long peliss. They have been much persecuted by the natives, who are very jealous of their superior commercial cunning and their grasping disposition. Despite this, the Jews thrive in Roumania, their numbers rapidly increasing in striking contrast with the native population. There is but one banking-house in Moldavia which is not kept by Jews, whose

rate of interest is seldom less than twelve per cent, and more often is twenty or twenty-five. Among the most interesting figures to be seen in Bucharest are the Jewish men and women.

“These wanderers of eighteen centuries,” says the author of “Frontier Lands,” “wear at Bucharest a flowing Eastern costume. Their unmarried women have their heads uncovered, but wives and widows wear a handkerchief, generally of a bright yellow color, over their jet-black hair, or a cap edged with fur. They are rarely handsome; and the prominent eye, the eagle nose, and heavy lips are as remarkable in the streets of Bucharest on a Saturday morning, as they are on the walls of the tomb at Thebes, where the Israelites are represented making bricks under the lash of their taskmasters.” Now, however, natives are establishing mercantile houses, and are the active rivals of the foreigners.

Roumania boasts of two universities, one at each of the capitals. That of Bucharest is for general higher education, and is similar to the German universities in organization and method of teaching. The university of Jassy on the other hand, is especially devoted to instruction in the law and in literature. There are also in the principality eight theological seminaries, in which Greek Church priests are bred, but the scholastic character and standard of which are by no means. The number of common schools in the cities and towns is between two and three thousand, and in the country districts about two thousand.

What the future of these interesting peoples will be, it is impossible to predict. They may form a portion of a revived Slavonic Empire, like that which flourished under the Servian Grand Zupans; they may fall finally to the lot of Austria on one side, and of Russia on the other; they may linger for generations in the precarious situation of nominal vassalage to the Sultan, and of real wardship under the protection of the powers; but, whatever their destiny, they are likely to retain, as they have done in the past, despite all their vicissitudes, the distinct characteristics of their ancient lineages.