

AROUND THE WORLD ON A BICYCLE.

III. THROUGH SLAVONIA AND SERVIA.

THE editor of *Der Drau*, the semi-weekly official organ of the Slavonian capital, and Mr. Freund, being the two citizens of Eszek capable of speaking English, join voices at the supper-table in hoping it will rain enough to compel us to remain over to-morrow, that they may have the pleasure of showing us around Eszek and of inviting us to dinner and supper; and Egali, I am constrained to believe, retired to his couch in full sympathy with them, being possessed of a decided weakness for stopping over and accepting invitations to dine. Their united wish is gratified, for when we rise in the morning it is still raining. Eszek is a fortified city, and has been in time past an important fortress. It has lost much of its importance since the introduction of modern arms, for it occupies perfectly level ground, and the fortifications consist merely of large trenches that have been excavated and walled, with a view of preventing the city from being taken by storm,—not a very overshadowing consideration these days, when the usual mode of procedure is to stand off and bombard a city into the conviction that further resistance is useless. After dinner the assistant editor of *Der Drau* comes around and pilots us about the city and its pleasant environments. The worthy assistant editor is a sprightly, versatile Slav, and, as together we promenade the parks and avenues, the number and extent of which appear to be the chief glory of Eszek, the ceaseless flow of language and well-nigh continuous interchange of gesticulations between himself and Egali are quite wonderful, and both of them certainly ought to retire to-night far more enlightened individuals than the found themselves this morning. The Hungarian seems in a particularly happy and gracious mood to-day, as I instinctively felt certain he would be if the fates decreed against a continuation of our journey. When our companion's conversation turns on any particularly interesting subject I am graciously given the benefit of it to the extent of some French or German word the meaning of which Egali has discovered I understand. During the afternoon we

wander through the intricacies of a yew-shrub maze, where a good-sized area of impenetrably thick vegetation has been trained and trimmed into a bewildering net-work of arched walks that almost exclude the light, and Egali pauses to favor me with the information that this maze is the favorite trysting-place of Slavonian nymphs and swains, and, furthermore, expresses his opinion that the spot must be indeed romantic, and an appropriate place to "come a wooin'" on nights when the moonbeams, penetrating through a thousand tiny interspaces, convert the gloomy interior into chambers of dancing light and shadow. All this information and these comments are embodied in the two short words, "*Amour, luna,*" accompanied by a few gesticulations, and is a fair sample of the manner in which conversation is carried on between us. It is quite astonishing how readily two persons constantly together will come to understand each other through the medium of a few words which they know the meaning of in common. Scores of ladies and gentlemen, the latter chiefly military officers, are enjoying a promenade in the rain-cooled atmosphere, and there is no mistaking the glances of interest with which many of them favor—Egali. His pronounced sportsmanlike make-up attracts universal attention and causes everybody to mistake him for myself,—a kindly office which I devoutly wish he would fill until the whole journey is accomplished. In the Casino garden a dozen bearded musicians are playing Slavonian airs, and, by request of the assistant editor, they play and sing the Slavonian national anthem and a popular air or two besides. The national musical instrument of Slavonia is the "tamborica,"—a small, steel-stringed instrument that is twanged with a chip-like piece of wood. Their singing is excellent in its way, but to the writer's taste there is no comparison between their tamboricas and the gypsy music of Hungary.

There are no bicycles in all Eszek save ours,—though Mr. Freund, who has lately returned from Paris, has ordered one, with which he expects to win the admiration of

all his countrymen,—and Egali and myself are lionized to our hearts' content; but this evening we are quite startled and taken aback by the reappearance of the assistant editor excitedly announcing the arrival of a tricycle in town! Upon going down, in breathless anticipation of summarily losing the universal admiration of Eszek, we find an itinerant cobbler, who has constructed a machine that would make the rudest bone-shaker of ancient memory seem like the most elegant product of Hartford or Coventry in comparison. The backbone and axle-tree are roughly hewn sticks of wood, ironed equally rough at the village blacksmith's; and as, for a twenty-kreutzer piece, the rider mounts and wobbles all over the sidewalk for a short distance, the spectacle would make a stoic roar with laughter, and the good people of the lower Danubian provinces are anything but stoical.

Six o'clock next morning finds us traveling southward into the interior of Slavonia; but we are not mounted, for the road presents an unridable surface of mud, stones and ruts, that causes my companion's favorite ejaculatory expletive to occur with more than its usual frequency. For a portion of the way there is a narrow side-path that is fairly ridable, but an uninvitingly deep ditch runs unpleasantly near, and no amount of persuasion can induce my companion to attempt wheeling along it. Egali's bump of cautiousness is fully developed, and day by day, as we journey together, I am becoming more and more convinced that he would be an invaluable companion to have accompany one around the world; true, the journey would occupy a decade, or thereabouts, but one would be morally certain of coming out safe and sound in the end; there would be no danger of sunstroke from over-exertion, no



THE PASSPORT OFFICE AT ZARIBROD.

breaking of limbs or neck from reckless riding, no running of heads into unnecessary danger, and no danger of inciting the prejudice and hostility of the natives of any country by running them down with our wheels. Egali has many admirable traits, but his utter lack of speed and venturesomeness on the wheel casts a shadow over them all.

During our progression southward there has been a perceptible softening in the dis-

“Yankee Doodle,” to which Egali has taken quite a fancy since first hearing it played by the gypsy band in the wine-garden at Szekszard three days ago, and the Hungarian national air,—this latter, of course, falling to Egali’s share of the entertainment. Having been to college in Paris, Egali is also to contribute the famous Marseillaise hymn, and, not to be outdone, I favor him with “God Save the Queen” and “Britannia Rules the



AT BELA PALANKA. A DISMAL PROSPECT.

position of the natives, this being more noticeably a marked characteristic of the Slavonians; the generous southern sun, shining on the great area of Oriental gentleness, casts a softening influence towards the sterner north, imparting to the people amiable and genial dispositions. It takes but comparatively small deeds to win the admiration and applause of the natives of the lower Danube, with their child-like manners; and, by slowly meandering along the roadways of Southern Hungary occasionally with his bicycle, Egali has become the pride and admiration of thousands.

For mile after mile we have to trundle our way slowly along the muddy highway as best we can, our road leading through a flat and rather swampy area of broad, waving wheat-fields; we relieve the tedium of the journey by whistling, alternately,

“Waves,” both of which he thinks very good tunes,—the former seeming to strike his Hungarian ear, however, as rather solemn. In the middle of the forenoon we make a brief halt at a rude roadside tavern for some refreshments,—a thick, narrow slice of raw, fat bacon, white with salt, and a level pint of red wine, satisfying my companion; but I substitute for the bacon a slice of coarse, black bread, much to Egali’s wonderment. Here are congregated several Slavonian shepherds, in their large, ill-fitting, sheepskin garments, with the long wool turned inwards,—cloths that apparently serve them alike to keep out the summer’s heat and the winter’s cold. One of the peasants, with ideas a trifle befuddled with wine, perhaps, and face all aglow with admiration for our bicycles, produces a tattered memoranda and begs us to favor

him with our autographs, an act that of itself proves him not to be without a degree of intelligence one would scarcely look for in a sheepskin-clad shepherd of Slavonia. Egali gruffly bids the man "be-gone," and aims a careless kick at the proffered memoranda; but seeing no harm in the request, and, moreover, being perhaps by nature a trifle more considerate of others, I comply. As he reads aloud, "United States, America," to his comrades, they one and all lift their hats quite reverently and place their brown hands over their hearts, for I suppose they recognize in my ready compliance with the simple request, in comparison with Egali's rude rebuff,—which, by the way, no doubt comes natural enough,—the difference between the land of the prince and peasant, and the land where "liberty, equality, and fraternity" is not a meaningless motto,—a land which I find every downtrodden peasant of Europe has heard of, and looks upwards to. Soon after this incident we are passing a prune-orchard, when, as though for our especial benefit, a couple of peasants working there begin singing aloud, and with evident enthusiasm, some national melody, and as they observe not our presence, at my suggestion we crouch behind a convenient clump of bushes and for several minutes are favored with as fine a duet as I have heard for many a day; but the situation becomes too ridiculous for Egali, and it finally sends him into a roar of laughter that causes the performance to terminate abruptly, and, rising into full view, we doubtless repay the singers by letting them see us mount and ride into their native village, but a few hundred yards distant.

We are to-day passing through villages where a bicycle has never been seen—this being outside the area of Egali's peregrinations—and the whole

population invariably turns out *en masse*, clerks, proprietors, and customers in the shops unceremoniously dropping everything and running to the streets; there is verily a hurrying to and fro of all the citizens: husbands hastening from magazine to dwelling to inform their wives and families, mothers running to call their children, children their parents, and everybody scampering to call the attention of their sisters, cousins, and aunts, ere we are vanished in the distance, and it he everlastingly too late.

We have been worrying along at some sort of pace, with the exception of the usual noontide halt, since six o'clock this morning, and the busy mosquito is making life interesting for belated wayfarers, when we ride into Sarengrad and put up at the only *gasthaus* in the village. Our bedroom is



A BALKAN MOUNTAIN COSTUME.

situated on the ground floor, the only floor in fact the *gasthaus* boasts, and we are in a fail way of either being lulled to sleep or kept awake, as the case may be, by a howling chorus of wine-bibbers in the public room adjoining; but here again Egali shows up to good advantage by peremptorily ordering the singers to stop, and stop instant. The amiably disposed peasants, notwithstanding the wine they have been drinking, cease their singing and become silent and circumspect, in deference to the wishes of the two strangers with the wonderful machines. We now make a practice of taking our bicycles into our bedroom with us at night, otherwise every right hand in the whole village would busy itself pinching the "gum-elastic" tires and pedal-rubbers, twirling the pedals, feeling of spokes, backbone, and forks, and critically examining and commenting upon every visible portion of the mechanism; and who knows but that the latent cupidity of some easy-conscienced villager might be aroused at the unusual sight of so much "silver" standing around loose (the natives hereabouts don't even ask whether the nickled parts of the bicycle are silver or not; they take it for granted to be so), and surreptitiously attempt to chisel off enough to purchase an

embroidered coat for Sundays? From what I can understand of their comments among themselves, it is perfectly consistent with their ideas of the average Englishman that he should bestride a bicycle of solid silver, and if their vocabulary embraced no word corresponding to our "millionaire," and they desired to use one, they would probably pick upon the word "Englander" as the most appropriate. Whilst we are making our toilets in the morning eager faces are peering inquisitively through the bedroom windows; a murmur of voices, criticising us and our strange vehicles, greets our waking moments, and our privacy is often invaded, in spite of Egali's inconsiderate treatment of them whenever they happen to cross his path.

Many of the inhabitants of this part of Slavonia are Croatians,—people who are noted for their fondness of finery; and, as on this sunny Sunday morning we wheel through their villages, the crowds of peasantry who gather about us in all the bravery of their best clothes present, indeed, an appearance gay and picturesque beyond anything hitherto encountered. The garments of the men are covered with braidwork and silk embroidery wherever such



SLAVONIAN SHEPHERDS.

ornamentation is thought to be an embellishment, and, to the Croatian mind, that means pretty much everywhere; and the girls and women are arrayed in the gayest of colors, those displaying the brightest hues and the greatest contrasts seem to go tripping along conscious of being irresistible. Many of the Croatian peasants are fine, strapping fellows, and very handsome women are observed in the villages,—women with great, dreamy eyes, and faces with an expression of languor that bespeaks their owners to be gentleness personified. Egali shows evidence of more susceptibility to female charms than I should naturally have given him credit for, and shows a decided inclination to linger in these beauty-blessed villages longer than is necessary, and, as one dark-eyed damsel after another gathers around us, I usually take the initiative in mounting and clearing out.

Were a man to go suddenly flapping his way through the streets of Boston on the long-anticipated flying-machine, the average Bostonian would scarce betray the unfeigned astonishment that is depicted on the countenances of these Croatian villagers as we ride into their midst and dismount.

This afternoon my bicycle causes the first runaway since the trifling affair at Lembach, Austria. A brown-faced peasant woman and a little girl, driving a small, shaggy pony harnessed to a basket-work, four-wheeled vehicle, are approaching; their humble-looking steed betrays no evidence of restiveness until just as I am turning out to pass him, when, without warning, he gives a swift, sudden bound to the right, nearly upsetting the vehicle, and without more ado bolts down a considerable embankment and goes helter-skelter across a field of standing grain.

The old lady pluckily hangs on to the reins, and finally succeeds in bringing the runaway around into the road again without damaging anything save the corn. It might have ended much less satisfactorily, however, and the incident illustrates one possible source of trouble to a cyclist traveling alone through countries where the people neither understand, nor can be expected to understand, a wheelman's position; the situation would, of course, be aggravated in a country village where, not speaking the language, one could not make himself understood in his own defence. These people here, if not wise as serpents, are at least harmless as doves; but, in case

of the bicycle frightening a team and causing a runaway with the unpleasant sequel of broken limbs, or injured horse, they would scarce know what to do in the premises, since they would have no precedent to govern them, and, in the absence of any intelligent guidance, might conclude to wreak summary vengeance on the bicycle. In such a case would a wheelman be justified in using his revolver to defend his wheel?

Such is the reverie into which I fall whilst reclining beneath a spreading mulberry tree waiting for Egali to catch up; for he has promised that I shall see the Slavonian national dance sometime to-day, and a village is now visible in the distance. At the Danube-side village of Hamenitz an hour's halt is decided upon to give me the promised opportunity of witnessing the dance in its native land. It is a novel and interesting sight. A round hundred young gallants and maidens were rigged out in finery such as no other people save the Croatian and Slavonian peasants ever wear,—the young men braided and embroidered, and the damsels having their hair entwined with a profusion of natural flowers in addition to their costumes of all possible hues. Forming themselves into a large ring, distributed so that the sexes alternate, the young men extend and join their hands in front of the maidens, and the latter join hands behind their partners; the steel-strung tamboricas strike up a lively twanging air to which the circle of dancers endeavor to shuffle time with their feet, whilst at the same time moving around in a circle. Livelier and faster twang the tamboricas, and more and more animated becomes the scene as the dancing, shuffling ring endeavors to keep pace with it. As the fun progresses into the fast and furious stages the youths' hats have a knack of getting into a jaunty position on the side of their heads, and the wearers' faces assume a reckless, flushed appearance, like men half intoxicated, whilst the maidens' bright eyes and beaming faces betoken unutterable happiness; finally the music and the shuffling of feet terminate with a rapid flourish, everybody kisses everybody,—save, of course, mere luckless onlookers like myself and Egali,—and the Slavonian national dance is ended.

To-night we reach the strongly fortified town of Peterwardein, opposite which, just across a pontoon bridge spanning the Danube, is the larger city of Neusatz. At Hamenitz we met Professor Zaubaur, the

editor of the *Uj Videk*, who came down the Danube ahead of us by steamboat; and now, after housing our machines at our *gasthaus* in Peterwardein, he pilots us across the pontoon bridge in the twilight, and into one of those wine-gardens so universal in this part of the world. Here at Neusatz I listen to the genuine Hungarian gypsy music for the last time on the European tour ere bidding the territory of Hungary adieu, for Neusatz is on the Hungarian side of the Danube. The professor has evidently let no grass grow beneath his feet since leaving us scarcely an hour ago at Hamenitz, for he has, in the meantime, ferreted out the only English-speaking person at present in town: the good Frau Schrieber, an Austrian lady, formerly of Vienna, but now at Neusatz with her husband, a well-known advocate. This lady talks English quite fluently. Though not yet twenty-five she is very, very wise, and, among other things, she informs her admiring friends gathered round about us, listening to the—to them—unintelligible flow of a foreign language, that Englishmen are "very grave beings," a piece of information that wrings from Egali a really sympathetic response,—nothing less than the startling announcement that he hasn't seen me smile since we left Budapesth together, a week ago! "Having seen the Slavonian, I ought by all means to see the Hungarian, national dance," Frau Schrieber says; adding, "it is a nice dance for Englishmen to look at, though it is so very gay that English ladies would neither dance it nor look at it being danced." Ere parting company with this entertaining lad she agrees that, if I will but remain in Hungary permanently, she knows of a very handsome *fräulein* of sixteen summers, who, having heard of my "wonderful journey," is already predisposed in my favor, and with a little friendly tact and management on Frau Schrieber's part would no doubt be willing to waive the formalities of a long courtship, and yield up hand and heart at my request! I can scarcely think of breaking in twain my trip around the world even for so tempting a prospect, and I recommend the fair one to Egali; but "the *fräulein* has never heard of Herr Egali, and he will not do."

"Will the *fräulein* be willing to wait until my journey around the world is completed?"

"Yes; she vill vait mit much pleezure; I vill zee dat she vait; und I know you vill return, for an Englishman always

forgets his promeezes." Henceforth, when Egali and myself enter upon a program of whistling, "Yankee Doodle" is supplanted by "The girl I left behind me," much to his annoyance, since, not understanding the sentiment responsible for the change, he thinks "Yankee Doodle" a far better tune. So much attached, in fact, has Egali become to the American national air that he informs the professor and editor of *Uj Videk* of the circumstance of the band playing it at Szekszard. As, after supper, several of us promenade the streets of Neusatz, the professor links his arm in mine, and, taking the cue from Egali, begs me to favor him by whistling it. I try my best to palm this patriotic duty off on Egali, by paying flattering compliments to his style of whistling; but, after all, the duty falls on me, and I whistle the tune softly, yet merrily, as we walk along, the professor, spectacled and wise-looking, meanwhile exchanging numerous nods of recognition with his fellow-Neusatzers we meet.

The provost-judge of Neusatz shares the honors with Frau Schrieber of knowing more or less English; but this evening the judge is out of town. The enterprising professor lies in wait for him, however, and at 5:30 on Monday morning, whilst we are dressing, an invasion of our bed-chamber is made by the professor, the jolly-looking and portly provost-judge, a Slavonian lieutenant of artillery, and a druggist friend of the others. The provost-judge and the lieutenant actually own bicycles and ride them, the only representatives of the wheel in Neusatz and Peterwardein, and the judge is "very angry"—as he expresses it—that Monday is court day, and to-day an unusually busy one, for he would be most happy to wheel with us to Belgrade.

The lieutenant fetches his wheel and accompanies us to the next village. Peterwardein is a strongly fortified place, and, as a position commanding the Danube so completely, is furnished with thirty guns of large caliber, a batter certainly not to be despised when posted on a position so commanding as the hill on which Peterwardein fortress is built. As the editor and others at Eszek, so here the professor, the judge, and the druggist unite in a friendly protest against my attempt to wheel through Asia, and more especially through China, "for everybody knows it is quite dangerous," they say. These people cannot possibly understand why it is that an Englishman or American,

knowing of danger beforehand, will still venture ahead; and when, in reply to their questions, I modestly announce my intention of going ahead, notwithstanding possible danger and probable difficulties, they each, in turn, shake my hand as though reluctantly resigning me to a reckless determination, and the judge, acting as spokesman, and echoing and interpreting the sentiments of his companions, exclaims, "England and America forever! it is ze grandest peebles on ze world!" The lieutenant, when questioned on the subject by the judge and the professor, simply shrugs his shoulders and says nothing, as becomes a man whose first duty is to cultivate a supreme contempt for danger in all its forms. They all accompany us outside the city gates, when, after mutual farewells and assurances of good-will, we mount and wheel away down the Danube, the lieutenant's big mastiff trotting soberly alongside his master, whilst Egali, sometimes in and sometimes out of sight behind, brings up the rear. After the lieutenant leaves us we have to trundle our weary way up the steep gradients of the Fruskagora mountains for a number of kilometers. For Egali it is quite an adventurous morning. Ere we had left the shadows of Peterwardein fortress he upset whilst wheeling beneath some overhanging mulberry-boughs that threatened destruction to his jockey-cap; soon after parting company with the lieutenant he gets into an altercation with a gang of gypsies about being the cause of their horses breaking loose from their picket-ropes and stampeding, and then making uncivil comments upon the circumstance; an hour after this he overturns again and breaks a pedal, and when we dismount at Indjia, for our noontide halt, he discovers that his saddle-spring has snapped in the middle. As he ruefully surveys the breakage caused by the roughness of the Fruskagora roads, and sends out to scour the village for a mechanic capable of undertaking the repairs, he eyes my machine wistfully, and asks me for the address where one like it can be obtained. The blacksmith is not prepared to mend the spring, although he makes a good job of the pedal, and it takes a carpenter and his assistant from 1:30 to 4:30 o'clock to manufacture a grooved piece of wood to tit between the spring and backbone so that he can ride with me to Belgrade. It would have been a fifteen-minute task for a Yankee carpenter.

We have been traversing a spur of the

Fruskagora mountains all the morning, and our progress has been slow. The roads through here are mainly of the natural soil, and correspondingly bad; but the glorious views of the Danube, with its alternating wealth of green woods and greener cultivated areas, fully recompense for the extra toil. Prune-orchards, the trees weighed down with fruit yet green, clothe the hillsides with their luxuriance; indeed, the whole broad, rich valley of the Danube seems nodding and smiling in the consciousness of overflowing plenty; for days we have traversed roads leading through vineyards and orchards, and broad areas with promising-looking grain crops.

It is but thirty kilometers from Indjia to Semlin, on the river-bank opposite Belgrade, and since leaving the Fruskagora mountains the country has been a level plain, and the roads fairly smooth. But Egali has naturally become doubly cautious since his succession of misadventures this morning, and as, whilst waiting for him to overtake me, I recline beneath the mulberry-trees near the village of Batainitz and survey the blue mountains of Servia looming up to the southward through the evening haze, he rides up and proposes Batainitz as our halting-place for the night, adding persuasively, "There will be no ferryboat across to Belgrade to-night, and we can easily catch the first boat in the morning." I reluctantly agree, though advocating going on to Semlin this evening.

Whilst our supper is being prepared we are taken in hand by the leading merchant of the village and turned loose in an orchard of small fruits and early pears, and from thence conducted to a large gypsy encampment in the outskirts of the village, where, in acknowledgment of the honor of our visit,—and a few kreutzers by way of supplement,—the "flower of the camp," a blooming damsel, about the shade of a total eclipse, kisses the backs of our hands, and the men play a strumming monotone with sticks and an inverted wooden trough, whilst the women dance in a most lively and not ungraceful manner. These gypsy bands are a happy crowd of vagabonds, looking as though they had never a single care in all the world; the men wear long, flowing hair, and to the ordinary costume of the peasant is added many a gewgaw, worn with a careless, jaunty grace that fails not to carry with it a certain charm in spite of unkempt locks and dirty faces. The women wear a minimum of clothes, and a profusion of beads and trinkets, and the

children go stark naked or partly dressed. Unmistakable evidence that one is approaching the Orient appears in the semi-Oriental costumes of the peasantry and roving gypsy bands, as we gradually near the Servian capital. An Oriental costume in Eszek is sufficiently exceptional to be a novelty, and so it is until one gets south of Peterwardein, when the national costumes of Slavonia and Croatia are gradually merged into the tasseled fez, the many folded waistband, and the loose, flowing pantaloons of Eastern lands. Here at Bataintz the feet are encased in rude raw-hide moccasins, bound on with leathern thongs, and the ankle and calf are bandaged with many folds of heavy red material, also similarly bound. The scene around our *gasthaus*, after our arrival, resembles a popular meeting; for, although a few of the villagers have been to Belgrade and seen a bicycle, it is only within the last six months that Belgrade itself has boasted one, and the great majority of the Bataintz people have simply heard enough about them to whet their curiosity for a closer acquaintance. Moreover, from the interest taken in my tour at Belgrade on account of the bicycle's recent introduction in that capital, these villagers, but a dozen kilometers away, have heard more of my journey than people in villages farther north, and their curiosity is roused in proportion. We are astir by five o'clock next morning; but the same curious crowd is making the stone corridors of the rambling old *gasthaus* impassable, and filling the space in front, gazing curiously at us, and commenting on our appearance whenever we happen to become visible, whilst waiting with commendable patience to obtain a glimpse of our wonderful machines. They are a motley, and withal a ragged congregation; and old women devoutly cross themselves, as, after a slight repast of bread and milk, we sally forth with our wheels, prepared to start; and the spontaneous murmur of admiration which breaks forth as we mount becomes louder and more pronounced as I turn in the saddle and doff my helmet in deference to the homage paid us by hearts which are none the less warm because hidden beneath the rags of honest poverty and semi-civilization. It takes but little to win the hearts of these rude, unsophisticated people. A two hours' ride, from Bataintz, over level and reasonably smooth roads, brings us into Semlin, quite an important Slavonian city on the Danube, nearly opposite Bel-

grade, which is on the same side, but separated from it by a large tributary called the Save. Ferryboats ply regularly between the two cities, and, after an hour spent in hunting up different officials to gain permission for Egali to cross over into Servian territory without having a regular traveler's passport, we escape from the madding crowds of Semlinites by boarding the ferryboat, and ten minutes later are exchanging signals with three Servian wheelmen, who have come down to the landing in full uniform to meet and welcome us to Belgrade.

Many readers will doubtless be as surprised as I was to learn that at Belgrade, the capital of the little kingdom of Servia, independent only since the treaty of Berlin, a bicycle club was organized in January, 1885, and that now, in June of the same year, they have a promising club of thirty members, twelve of whom are riders owning their own wheels. Their club is named, in French, *La Société Velocipedique Serbe*; in the Servian language it is unpronounceable to an Anglo-Saxon, and printable only with Slav type. The president, Milorade M. Nicolitch Terzibachitch, is the Cyclists' Touring-Club Consul for Servia, and is the south-eastern picket of that organization, their club being the extreme cycle outpost in this direction. Our approach has been announced beforehand, and the club has thoughtfully "seen" the Servian authorities, and so far smoothed the way for our entrance into their country that the officials do not even make a pretence of examining my passport or packages,—an almost unprecedented occurrence, I should say, since they are more particular about passports here than perhaps in an other European country, save Russia and Turkey.

Here at Belgrade I am to part company with Egali, who, by the way, has applied for, and just received, his certificate of appointment to the Cyclists' Touring-Club consulship of Duna Szekesö and Mohacs, an honor of which he feels quite proud. True, there is no other cyclist in his whole district, and hardly likely to be for some time to come; but I can heartily recommend him to any wandering wheelman happening down the Danube Valley on a tour; he knows the best wine-cellars in all the country round, and, besides being an agreeable and accommodating road companion, will prove a salutary check upon the headlong career of any one disposed to over-exertion. I am not yet to be aban-

done entirely to my own resources, however; these hospitable Servian wheelmen couldn't think of such a thing. I am to remain over as their guest till to-morrow afternoon, when Mr. Douchan Popovitz, the best rider in Belgrade, is delegated to escort me through Servia to the Bulgarian frontier. When I get there I shall not be much astonished to see a Bulgarian wheelman offer to escort me to Roumelia, and so on clear to Constantinople, for I certainly never expected to find so jolly and enthusiastic a company of cyclers in this corner of the world. The good fellowship and hospitality of this Servian club know no bounds; Egali and I are banqueted and driven about in carriages all day, and even the postal card that I mail to OUTING, announcing my arrival in Belgrade, I am not permitted to pay for. Belgrade is a strongly fortified city, occupying a commanding hill overlooking the Danube; it is a rare old town, battle-scarred and rugged; having been a frontier position of importance in a country that has been debatable ground between Turk and Christian for centuries, it has been a coveted prize to be won and lost on the diplomatic chess-board, or, worse still, the football of contending armies and wrangling monarchs. Long before the Ottoman Turks first appeared like a small, dark cloud, no bigger than a man's hand, upon the southeastern horizon of Europe, to extend and overwhelm the budding flower of Christianity and civilization in these fairest portions of the continent, Belgrade was an important Roman fortress, and to-day its national museum and antiquarian stores are particularly rich in the treasure-trove of Byzantine antiquities, unearthed from time to time in the fortress itself and the region round about that came under its protection. So plentiful, indeed, are old coins and relics of all sorts at Belgrade, that, as I am standing looking at the collection in the window of an antiquary shop, the proprietor steps out and presents me a small handful of copper-coins of Byzantium as a sort of bait that might perchance tempt one to enter and make a closer examination of his stock. By the famous treaty of Berlin the Servians gained their complete independence, and their country, from a principality, paying tribute to the Sultan, changed to an independent kingdom with a Servian on the throne, owing allegiance to nobody, and the people have not yet ceased to show in a thousand little ways their thorough appreciation of the

change; besides filling the picture-galleries Of their museum with portraits of Servian heroes, battle-flags, and other gentle reminders of their past history, they have, among other practical methods of manifesting how they feel about the departure of the dominating crescent from among them, turned the leading Turkish mosque into a gas-house. One of the most interesting relics in the Servian capital is an old Roman well, dug from the brow of the fortress hill to below the level of the Danube for furnishing water to the city when cut off from the river by a besieging army. It is an enormous affair, a tubular brick wall about forty feet in circumference and two hundred and fifty feet deep, outside of which a stone stairway, winding round and round the shaft, leads from top to bottom. Openings through the wall, six feet high and three wide, occur at regular intervals all the way down, and as we followed our ragged guide down, down, down into the damp and darkness by the feeble light of a tallow candle in a broken lantern, I cannot help thinking that these o'erhandy openings leading into the dark, watery depths have, in the tragic history of Belgrade, doubtless been responsible for the mysterious disappearance of more than one objectionable person, and it is not without certain involuntary misgivings that I take the lantern from the guide,—whose general appearance is, by the way, hardly calculated to be reassuring,—and, standing in one of the openings, peer down into the darksome depths, with him hanging on to my coat as an act of precaution.

The view from the ramparts of the Belgrade fortress is a magnificent panorama, extending over the broad valley of the Danube—which here winds about as though trying to bestow its favors with impartiality upon Hungary, Servia, and Slavonia—and of the Save. The Servian soldiers are camped in small tents in various parts of the fortress grounds and its environments, or lolling under the shade of a few scantily-verdured trees, for the sun is to-day broiling hot. With a population not exceeding one and a half millions, I am told that Servia supports a standing army of a hundred thousand; and, when required, every man in Servia, becomes a soldier. I am inclined to regard the above estimate of the regular army as exaggerated, however; since, although the cost of their maintenance is doubtless as little as men can possibly be supported for, I don't

see how a small, poor nation like the Servians can possibly afford to support that number, even if they really had any use for them. As one lands from the ferry-boat and looks about him he needs no interpreter to inform him that he has left the Occident on the other side of the Save, and to the observant stranger the streets of Belgrade furnish many a novel and interesting sight in the way of fanciful costumes and phases of Oriental life here encountered for the first time. In the afternoon we visited the national museum of old coins, arms, and Roman and Servian antiquities.

A banquet in a wine-garden, where Servian national music is dispensed by a band of female musicians, is given us in the evening by the club, and royal quarters are assigned us for the night at the hospitable mansion of Mr. Terzibachitch's father, who is the merchant-prince of Servia, and purveyor to the court. Wednesday morning we take a general ramble over the city, besides visiting the club's head-quarters, where we find a handsome new album has been purchased for receiving our autographs. The Belgrade wheelmen have names painted on their bicycles, as names are painted on steamboats or yachts; "Fairy," "Good Luck," and "Servian Queen," being fair specimens. The cyclers here are sons of leading citizens and business men of Belgrade, and, whilst they dress and conduct themselves as becomes thorough gentlemen, one fancies detecting a certain wild expression of the eye, as though their civilization were scarcely yet established; in fact, this peculiar expression is more noticeable at Belgrade and is apparently more general here than at any other place I visit in Europe. I apprehend it to be a peculiarity that has become hereditary with the citizens, from their city having been so often and for so long the theater of uncertain fate and distracting political disturbances. It is the half-startled expression of people with the ever-present knowledge of insecurity. But they are a warm-hearted, impulsive set of fellows, and when, whilst looking through the museum, we happen across Her Britannic Majesty's representative at the Servian court, who is doing the same thing, one of them unhesitatingly approaches that gentleman, cap in hand, and, with considerable enthusiasm of manner, announces that they have with them a countryman of his who is riding around the world on a bicycle. This cooler-blooded and dignified gentleman is

not near so demonstrative in his acknowledgment as they doubtless anticipated he would be; whereat they appear quite puzzled and mystified.

Three carriages with cyclers and their friends accompany us a dozen kilometers out to a wayside *mehana* (the Oriental name for hotels, wayside inns, etc.); Douchan Popovitz, and Hugo Tichy, the captain of the club, will ride forty-five kilometers with me to Semendria, and at 4 o'clock we mount our wheels and ride away southward into Servia. Arriving at the *mehana* wine is brought, and then the two Servians accompanying me, and those returning, kiss each other, after the manner and custom of their country; then a general hand-shaking and well-wishes all around, and the carriages turn towards Belgrade, whilst we wheelmen alternately ride and trundle over a muddy,—for it has rained since noon,—and mountainous road till 7:30, when relatives of Douchan Popovitz, in the village of Grotzka, kindly offer us the hospitality of their house till morning, which we hesitate not to avail ourselves of. When about to part at the *mehana*, the immortal Egali unwinds from around his waist that long blue girdle, the arranging and rearranging of which has been a familiar feature of the last week's experiences, and presents it to me for a *souvenir* of himself, a courtesy which I return by presenting him with several of the Byzantine coins given to me by the Belgrade antiquary as before mentioned. Beyond Semendria, where the captain leaves us for the return journey, we leave the course of the Danube, which I have been following in a general way for over two weeks, and strike due southward up the smaller, but not less beautiful, valley of the Morava river, where we have the intense satisfaction of finding roads that are both dry and level, enabling us, in spite of the broiling heat, to howl along at a sixteen-kilometer pace to the village, where we halt for dinner and the usual three hours noontide siesta. Seeing me jotting down my notes with a short piece of lead-pencil, the proprietor of the *mehana* at Semendria, where we take a parting glass of wine with the captain, and who admires America and the Americans, steps, indoors for a minute, and returns with a telescopic pencil-case, attached to a silken cord of the Servian national colors, which he places around my neck, requesting me to wear it around the world, and when I arrive at my journey's end sometimes to

think of Servia. With Egali's sky-blue girdle encompassing my waist, and the Servian national colors fondly encircling my neck, I begin to feel quite a heraldic tremor creeping over me, and actually surprise myself casting wistful glances at the huge antiquated horse-pistol stuck in yonder bull-whacker's ample waistband; moreover, I really think that a pair of these Servian moccasins would not be bad foot-gear for riding the bicycle! All up the Morava valley the roads continue far better than I ever expected to find in Servia, and we wheel merrily along, the Resara mountains, covered with dark pine forests, skirting the valley on the right, sometimes rising into peaks of quite respectable proportions. The sun sinks behind the receding hills, it grows dusk, and finally dark, save the feeble light vouchsafed by the new moon, and our destination still lies several kilometers ahead. But at about nine we roll safely into Jagodina, well-satisfied with the consciousness of having covered 145 kilometers to-day, in spite of delaying our start in the morning until eight o'clock, and the twenty kilometers of indifferent road between Grotzka and Semendria. There has been no reclining under road-side mulberry-trees for my companion to catch up to-day, however; the Servian wheelman is altogether a speedier man than Egali, and, whether the road is rough or smooth, level or hilly, he is found close behind my rear wheel; my own shadow follows not more faithfully than does the "best rider in Servia."

We start for Jagodina at 5:30 next morning, finding the roads a little heavy with sand in places, but otherwise all that a wheelman could wish. Crossing a bridge over the Morava river, into Tchupria, we are required not only to foot it across, but to pay a toll for the bicycles, like any other wheeled vehicle. At Tchupria it seems as though the whole town must be depopulated, so great is the throng of citizens that swarm about us. Motley and picturesque even in their rags, one's pen utterly fails to convey a correct idea of their appearance; besides Servians, Bulgarians, and Turks, and the Greek priests who never fail of being on hand, now appear Roumanians, wearing huge sheep-skin shakos, with the long, ragged edges of the wool dangling about eyes and ears, or, in the case of a more "dudish" person, clipped around smooth at the brim, making the head-gear look like a small, round, thatched roof. Urchins, whose daily duty is to promenade

the family goat around the streets, join in the procession, tugging their bearded charges after them; and a score of dogs, overjoyed beyond measure at the general commotion, romp about, and bark their joyous approval of it all. To have crowds like this following one out of town makes a sensitive person feel uncomfortably like being chased out of a community for borrowing chickens by moonlight, or on account of some irregularity concerning hotel bills. Orientals seemingly have not the slightest sense of dignity; portly, well-dressed citizens, priests, and military officers press forward among the crowds of peasants and unwashed frequenters of the streets, evidently more delighted with things about them than they have been for many a day before.

At Delegrad we wheel through the battle-field of the same name, where, in 1876, Turks and Servians were arrayed against each other. These battle-scarred hills above Delegrad command a glorious view of the lower Morava valley, which is hereabouts most beautiful, and just broad enough for its entire beauty to be comprehended. The Servians won the battle of Delegrad, and as I pause to admire the glorious prospect to the southward from the hills, methinks their general showed no little sagacity in opposing the invaders at a spot where the Morava vale, the jewel of Servia, was spread out like a panorama below his position, to fan with its loveliness the patriotism of his troops,—they could not otherwise than win, with the fairest portion of their well-beloved country spread out before them like a picture. A large cannon, captured from the Turks, is standing on its carriage by the road-side, a mute but eloquent witness of Servian prowess.

A few miles further on we halt for dinner at Alexinatz, near the old Servian boundary-line, also the scene of one of the greatest battles fought during the Servian struggle for independence. The Turks were victorious this time, and 15,000 Servians and 3,000 Russian allies yielded up their lives here to superior Turkish generalship, and Alexinatz was burned to ashes. The Russians have erected a granite monument on a hill overlooking the town, in memory of their comrades who perished in this fight.

The roads to-day average even better than yesterday, and at six o'clock we roll into Nisch, 120 kilometers from our starting point this morning, and 280 from Bel-

grade. As we enter the city a gang of convicts working on the fortifications forget their clanking shackles and chains, and the miseries of their state, long enough to greet us with a boisterous howl of approval, and the guards who are standing over them, for once at least, fail to check them, for their attention, too, is wholly engrossed in the same wondrous subject. Nisch appears to be a thoroughly Oriental city, and here I see the first Turkish ladies with their features hidden behind their white *yashmaks*.

Drawing my first impressions of life in a thoroughly Oriental town at Nisch, at seven or eight o'clock in the morning, when it is comparatively cool and people are patronizing the market, trafficking and bartering for the day's supply of provisions, the streets present quite an animated appearance; but during the heat of the day the scene changes to one of squalor and indolence; respectable citizens are smoking *narghalis* (Mark Twain's "hubble-bubble"), or sleeping somewhere out of sight; business is generally suspended; and in every shady nook and corner one sees a swarthy ragamuffin stretched out at full length, perfectly happy and contented if only he is allowed to snooze the hours away in peace.

Human nature is verily the same the world over, and here in the hotel at Nisch I meet an individual who recalls a few of the sensible questions that have been asked me from time to time at different places on both continents. This Nisch interrogator is a Hebrew commercial traveler, who has a smattering of English, and after ascertaining during a short conversation that, when a range of mountains or any other small obstruction is encountered, I get down and push the bicycle up, airs his knowledge of English and of cycling to the extent of inquiring whether I don't take a man along to push it up the hills!

Riding out of Nisch this morning we stop just beyond the suburbs to take a curious look at a grim monument of Turkish prowess, in the shape of a square stone structure which the Turks built in 1840, and then faced the whole exterior with grinning rows of Servian skulls partially embedded in mortar. The Servians, naturally objecting to having the skulls of their comrades thus exposed to the gaze of everybody, have since removed and buried them; but the rows of indentations in the thick mortared surface still bear unmistakable evidence of their former occupants.

An avenue of thrifty prune-trees shades a level road leading out of Nisch for several kilometers, but a heavy thunder-storm during the night has made it rather slavish wheeling, although the surface becomes harder and smoother, also hillier, as we gradually approach the Balkan Mountains that tower well up towards cloud-land immediately ahead. The morning is warm and muggy, indicating rain, and the long steep trundle, kilometer after kilometer up the Balkan slopes, is anything but child's play, albeit the scenery is most lovely, one prospect especially reminding me of a view in the Big Horn Mountains of northern Wyoming Territory. On the lower slopes we come to a *mehana*, where, besides plenty of shade-trees, we find springs of most delightfully cool water gushing out of crevices in the rocks, and, throwing our freely perspiring forms beneath the grateful shade and letting the cold water play on our wrists (the best method in the world of cooling one's self when overheated), we both vote that it would be a most agreeable place to spend the heat of the day. But the morning is too young yet to think of thus indulging, and the mountainous prospect ahead warns us that the distance covered to-day will be short enough at the best. The Balkans are clothed with green foliage to the topmost crags, wild-pear trees being no inconspicuous feature; charming little valleys wind about between the mountain spurs, and last night's downpour has imparted a freshness to the whole scene that perhaps it would not be one's good fortune to see every day, even were he here. This region of intermingled vales and forest-clad mountains might be the natural home of brigandage, and those ferocious-looking specimens of humanity with things like long guns in hand, running with scrambling haste down the mountain-side towards our road ahead, look like veritable brigands heading us off with a view to capturing us. But they are peacefully disposed goat-herds, who, alpenstocks in hand, are endeavoring to see "what in the world those queer-looking things are, coming up the road." Their tuneful noise, as they are playing on some kind of an instrument, greets our ears from a dozen mountain slopes round about us, as we put our shoulders to the wheel, and gradually approach the summit. Tortoises are occasionally surprised basking in the sun-beams in the middle of the road; when

molested they hiss quite audibly in protest, but if passed peacefully by they are seen shuffling off into the bushes, as though thankful to escape. Unhappy oxen are toiling patiently upwards, literally inch by inch, dragging heavy, creaking wagons, loaded with miscellaneous importations, prominent amongst which I notice square cans of American petroleum. Men on horseback are encountered, the long guns of the Orient slung at their back, and knife and pistols in sash, looking altogether ferocious. Not only are these people perfectly harmless, but I verily think it would take a good deal of aggravation to make them even think of fighting. The fellow whose horse we frightened down a rocky embankment, at the imminent risk of breaking the neck of both horse and rider, had both gun, knife, and pistols; yet, though he probably thinks us emissaries of the evil one, he is in no sense a dangerous character, his weapons being merely gewgaws to adorn his person. Finally the summit of this range is gained, and the long grateful descent into the valley of the Nissava river begins. The surface during this descent, though averaging very good, is not always of the smoothest; several dismounts are found to be necessary, and many places ridden over require a quick hand and ready eye to pass. The Servians have made a capital point in fixing their new boundary line south of this mountain range.

Mountaineers are said to be "always freemen;" one can with equal truthfulness add that the costumes of mountaineers' wives and daughters are always more picturesque than those of their sisters in the valleys. In these Balkan mountains their costumes are a truly wonderful blending of colors, to say nothing of fantastic patterns, apparently a medley of ideas borrowed from Occident and Orient. One woman we just passed is wearing the loose flowing pantaloons of the Orient, of a bright yellow color, a tight-fitting jacket of equally bright blue; around her waist is folded many times a red and blue striped waistband, whilst both head and feet are bare. This is no holiday attire, it is plainly the ordinary every-day costume. At the foot of the range we halt at a way-side *mehana* for dinner. A daily diligence, with horses four abreast, runs over the Balkans from Nisch to Sophia, Bulgaria, and one of them is halted at the *mehana* for refreshments and a change of horses. Refreshments at these *mehanas* are not always

palatable to travelers, who almost invariably carry a supply of provisions along. Of bread nothing but the coarse, black variety common to the country is forthcoming at this *mehana*, and a gentleman, learning from Mr. Popovitz that I have not yet been educated up to black bread, fishes a large roll of excellent *milch-Brod* out of his traps and kindly presents it to us; and obtaining from the *mehana* some *hune-ben fabrica* and wine we make a very good meal. This *hune-ben fabrica* is nothing more nor less than cooked chicken. Whether *hune-ben fabrica* is genuine Hungarian for cooked chicken, or whether Egali manufactured the term especially for use between us, I cannot quite understand. Be this as it may, before we started from Belgrade, Egali imparted the secret to Mr. Popovitz that I was possessed with a sort of a wild appetite, as it were, for *hune-ben fabrica* and cherries, three times a day, the consequence being that Mr. Popovitz thoughtfully orders those viands whenever we halt. After dinner the mutterings of thunder over the mountains warn us that unless we wish to experience the doubtful luxuries of a road-side *mehana* for the night we had better make all speed to the village of Bela Palanka, twelve kilometers distant over rather hilly roads. In forty minutes we arrive at Bela Palanka *mehana*, some time before the rain begins. It is but twenty kilometers to Pirot, near the Bulgarian frontier, whither my companion has purposed to accompany me, but we are forced to change this program and remain at Bela Palanka.

It rains hard all night, converting the unassuming Nissava into a roaring yellow torrent, and the streets of the little Balkan village into mud-holes. It is still raining on Sunday morning, and as Mr. Popovitz is obliged to be back to his duties as foreign correspondent in the Servian national bank at Belgrade on Tuesday, and the Balkan roads have been rendered impassable for a bicycle, he is compelled to hire a team and wagon to haul him and his wheel back over the mountains to Nisch, whilst I have to remain over Sunday amidst the dirt and squalor and discomforts—to say nothing of a second night among the fleas—of an Oriental village *mehana*. We only made fifty kilometers over the mountains yesterday, but during the three days from Belgrade together the aggregate has been satisfactory, and Mr. Popovitz has proven a most agreeable and interesting companion. When but fourteen years of age he served

under the banner of the Red Cross in the war between the Turks and Servians, and is altogether an ardent patriot.

My Sunday in Bela Palanka impresses me with the conviction that an Oriental village is a splendid place not to live in. In dry weather it is disagreeable enough, but to-day it is a disorderly aggregation of miserable-looking villagers, pigs, ducks, geese, chickens, and dogs, paddling around the muddy streets. The Oriental peasant's costume is picturesque or otherwise, according to the fancy of the observer. The red fez or turban, the upper garment, and the ample red sash wound round and round the waist until it is eighteen inches broad, look picturesque enough for anybody; but when it comes to having the seat of the pantaloons dangling about the calves of the legs, a person imbued with Western ideas naturally thinks that if the line between picturesqueness and a two-bushel gunny-sack is to be drawn anywhere it should most assuredly be drawn here. As I notice how prevalent this ungainly style of nether garment is in the Orient, I find myself getting quite uneasy lest perchance anything serious should happen to mine, and I should be compelled to ride the bicycle in a pair of natives, which would, however, be an altogether impossible feat unless it were feasible to gather the surplus area up in a bunch and wear it like a bustle. I cannot think, however, that fate, cruel as she sometimes is, has anything so outrageous as this in store for me or any other cyclist.

Although Turkish ladies have almost entirely disappeared from Servia since its severance from Turkey, they have left, in a certain degree, an impress upon the women of the country villages; although the Bela Palanka maidens, as I notice on the streets in their Sunday clothes to-day, do not wear the regulation *yashmak*, but a head-gear that partially obscures the face, their whole demeanor giving one the impression that their one object in life is to appear the pink of propriety in the eyes of the whole world, they walk along the streets at a most circumspect gait, looking neither to the right nor left, neither stopping to converse with each other by the way, nor paying any sort of attention to the men. The two proprietors of the *mehana* where I am stopping are subjects for a student of human nature. With their wretched little pigsty in this poverty-stricken village, they are gradually accumulating a fortune. Whenever a luckless traveler happens in their clutches

they make the incident count for something. They stand expectantly about in their box-like public room; their whole stock consists of a little diluted wine and mastic, and if a bite of black bread and *smear-käse* is ordered one is putting it down in the book whilst the other is ferreting it out of a little cabinet where they keep a starvation quantity of edibles; when the one acting as waiter has placed the inexpensive morsel before you he goes over to the book to make sure that number two has put down enough; and, although the maximum value of the provisions is perhaps not over two-pence, this precious pair will actually put their heads together in consultation over the amount to be chalked down. Ere the shades of Sunday evening have settled down I have arrived at the conclusion that if these two are average specimens of the Oriental Jew they are the curse of the earth.

The rain ceased soon after noon on Sunday, and, although the roads are all but impassable, I pull out southward at five o'clock on Monday morning, trundling up the mountain roads through mud that frequently compels me to stop and use the scraper. After the summit of the hills between Bela Palanka and Pirot is gained, the road descending into the valley beyond becomes better, enabling me to make quite good time into Pirot, where my passport undergoes an examination, and is favored with a *visa* by the Servian officials preparatory to crossing the Servian and Bulgarian frontier about twenty kilometers to the southward. Pirot is quite a large and important village, and my appearance is the signal for more excitement than the Piroters have experienced for many a day.

Whilst I am partaking of bread and coffee in the hotel the main street becomes crowded as on some festive occasion, the grown-up people's faces beaming with as much joyous anticipation of what they expect to behold when I emerge from the hotel as the unwashed countenances of the ragged youngsters around them. Leading citizens who have been to Paris or Vienna, and have learned something about what sort of road a cyclist needs, have imparted the secret to many of their fellow-townsmen, and there is a general stampede to the highway leading out of town to the southward. This road is found to be most excellent, and the enterprising people who have walked, ridden, or driven out there, in order to see me ride past to the best possible advantage, are rewarded by witnessing what they never saw before,—a

cycler speeding along past them at ten miles an hour. This gives such general satisfaction that for some considerable distance I ride between a double row of lifted hats and general salutations, and a swelling murmur of applause runs all along the line. Two citizens, more enterprising even than the others, have determined to follow me with team and light wagon to a road-side office ten kilometers ahead, where passports have again to be examined. The road for the whole distance is level and fairly smooth; the Servian horses are, like the Indian ponies of the West, small, but wiry and tough, and although I press forward quite energetically, the whip is applied without stint, and when the passport office is reached we pull up alongside it together, but their ponies' sides are white with lather. The passport officer is so delighted at the story of the race, as narrated to him by the others, that he fetches me out a common refreshment partaken of in this country,—a piece of lump sugar and a glass of water. Yet a third time I am halted by a roadside official and required to produce my passport, and again at the village of Zaribrod, just over the Bulgarian frontier, which I reach about ten o'clock. To the Bulgarian official I present a small stamped card-board check, which was given me for that purpose at the last Servian examination, but he doesn't seem to understand it, and demands to see the original passport. When my English passport is produced he examines it, and straightway assures me of the Bulgarian official respect for an Englishman by grasping me warmly by the hand. The passport office is in the second story of a mud hovel, and is reached by a dilapidated flight of out-door stairs. My bicycle is left leaning against the building, and during my brief interview with the officer a noisy crowd of semi-civilized Bulgarians have collected about, examining it and commenting unreservedly concerning it and myself. The officer, ashamed of the rudeness of his countrymen and their evidently untutored minds, leans out of the window, and in a chiding voice explains to the crowd that I am a private individual, and not a traveling mountebank going about the country giving exhibitions, and advises them to uphold the dignity of the Bulgarian character by scattering forthwith. But the crowd doesn't scatter to any appreciable extent; they don't care whether I am public or private; they have never seen anything like me and the bicycle before, and the one opportunity of

a lifetime is not to be lightly passed over. They are a wild, untamed lot, these Bulgarians here at Zaribrod, little given to self-restraint.

When I emerge, the silence of eager anticipation takes entire possession of the crowd, only to break forth into a spontaneous howl of delight from three hundred bared throats when I mount into the saddle and ride away into—Bulgaria.

My ride through Servia, save over the Balkans, has been most enjoyable, and the roads, I am agreeably surprised to have to record, have averaged as good as any country in Europe, save England and France, though being for the most part unmacadamized, with wet weather they would scarcely show to such advantage. My impression of the Servians is most favorable; they are evidently a warm-hearted, hospitable, and, withal, a patriotic people, loving their little country and appreciating their independence as only people who have but recently had then dream of self-government realized know how to appreciate it; they even paint the wood-work of their bridges and public buildings with the national colors. I am assured that the Servians have progressed wonderfully since acquiring their full independence; but as one journeys down the beautiful and fertile valley of the Morava, where improvements would naturally be seen, if anywhere, one falls to wondering where they can possibly have come in. Some of their methods would, indeed, seem to indicate a most deplorable lack of practicability; one of the most ridiculous, to the writer's mind, is the erection of small, long sheds, substantially built of heavy hewn timber supports and thick, home-made tiles, over ordinary plank fences and gates to protect them from the weather, when a good coating of tar or paint would answer the purpose of preservation much better. These structures give one the impression of a dollar placed over a penny to protect the latter from harm. Every peasant owns a few acres of land, and, if he produces anything above his own wants, he hauls it to market in an ox-wagon with roughly hewn wheels without tires, and whose creaking can plainly be heard a mile away. At present the Servian tills his little freehold with the clumsiest of implements, some his own rude handiwork, and the best imperfectly fashioned and forged on native anvils. His plow is chiefly the forked limb of a tree, pointed with iron sufficiently to enable him

to root around in the surface soil. One would think the country might offer a promising field for some enterprising manufacturer of such implements as hoes, scythes, hay-forks, small, strong plows, cultivators, etc.

These people are industrious; especially the women. I have frequently met a Servian peasant woman returning homeward in the evening from her labor in the fields, carrying a fat, heavy baby, a clumsy hoe not much lighter than the

youngster, and an earthen-ware water-pitcher, and, at the same time, industriously spinning wool with a small hand-spindle. And yet some people argue about the impossibility of doing two things at once! Whether these poor women have been hoeing potatoes, carrying the infant, and spinning wool at the same time all day, I am unable to say, not having been an eye-witness, though I really should not be much astonished if they had.

Thomas Stevens.

RURAL RECREATIONS.

ALL work and no play has ever made Jack a dull boy; and it has wrought precisely the same effect upon Gill, except that the possibilities of dullness may be greater in the case of the boy. As night and morning alternate, so must work and recreation, even as the sweet restorer nightly mends the torn tissues of the toiler. The fierce activities of young life, so necessary to rapid growth, are punctuated with many a short stop, and lubricated with the oil of gladness. The boy that finds continued exercise under inevitable compulsion a monotonous grind, wearisome to the flesh, will realize recuperation from the same effort spiced with a little fun, and flavored with a flow of jocund humor. The element of joy is prominent in all young life, in the twitter of the bird, in the gambol of the lamb, as in the buoyancy of boyhood and the glee of girlishness. The waters of young life are aerated with bubbling mirth and sparkling with cheerfulness. They become stagnant and deadly under the drudgery of monotonous toil unrelieved and hopeless.

And "the boy is father of the man;" the early habit of plodding, without cheer or respite, becomes a chain that binds in life-time servitude. The love of lucre, the greed of gain, in a country like ours, so full of opportunities, so rich in material resources begging for development, are powerful stimulants to unremitting persistence in business; they are so persuasive, so engrossing, and ultimately so tyrannical in their control of thought and action, heart and life of their victim, that a vacation comes only with death. It comes, too, sooner than it is expected,—comes pre-

maturely, in what should be the prime of life; sometimes comes with little warning, in the midst of business complications, and entailing the risk of loss to family and dependents. Among funereal offerings of respect and affection the floral symbol of "Rest" sometimes suggests a painful retrospect as well as a glorious future. A larger, fuller, happier, and more beneficent life would distribute recuperative periods of rest wisely and frequently along its course.

Climate, conspiring with ambition and opportunity, oppresses the slave of business routine. It is subject to extremes of temperature; in summer great heat combines with much humidity to weaken vitality and exhaust the nerve forces. It is a sunny climate, and should be full of vital and electrical influences, suggestive of vigor and development, as it is when enjoyed with moderation and wisdom, with due regard to the operation of sanitary law and the dictates of common prudence. Ours is a climate conducive to the best development of sturdy manhood and beautiful womanhood, as is attested in thousands of noble specimens of the *genus homo* who have grown up in the open air, with a due admixture of labor and recreation, in the field and in the saddle, in the midst of the beauty and freedom of nature.

Unfortunately American girls are grown in too large proportion "under glass;" delicate, graceful, and many-hued as foliage plants; some are as beautiful and dependent as orchids. Transplanted in the open fields of life, subjected to rough winds of ordinary human experience, perhaps to the chills of adversity, they fade and wither,